

A Change of Heart

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Date: 03 November 2024

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[0 : 00] We're going to listen to God's words and so it's good to pray that we'd have receptive hearts. So why don't we pray together before Cecilia comes up and reads today's passage.

Father, thank you that you are the living speaking God, that you speak to us words of grace, words of life. Pray that each of us would listen for each of us. Would you speak to our hearts by your spirit?

My words can't do anything unless you make them come alive, unless you make them your words in people's hearts. Make each of us hear what we need to hear and would we see Jesus and his glory and would we turn to him.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Great. Cecilia. Our passage today is from 2 Samuel chapter 15 and 16. Absalom, David's ambitious son spent four years endearing himself to the people of Israel. Then he secretly plans a coronation ceremony with representatives from the whole country and has himself openly crowned king.

[1 : 25] We pick up the story in chapter 15, verse 13. We read, And a messenger came to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom.

Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, Arise and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom.

Go quickly, lest it overtake us quickly, and bring down ruin on us, and strike the city with the edge of sword. And the king's servants said to the king, Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord king decides.

So the king went out, and all his household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house. And the king went out, and all the people after him.

And they halted at the last house. And all his servants passed by him, and all the Carathais, and all the Palathais, and all the 600 Gittais, who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.

[2 : 34] Then the king said to Ittai the Gittai, Why do you also go with us? Go back and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner, and also an exile from your home.

You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us? Since I go, I know not where. Go back and take your brothers with you, and may the Lord show steadfast love and faithfulness to you.

But Ittai answered the king, As the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servants be.

And David said to Ittai, Go then, pass on. So Ittai the Gittai passed on with all his men, and all the little ones who were with him.

And all the land wept aloud, as all the people passed by. And the king crossed the brood Kidron, and all the people passed on towards the wilderness.

[3 : 40] And Abiathar came up, and behold, Sedar came also with the Levites, bearing the art of covenant of God. And they set down the art of God, until the people had all passed out of the city.

Then the king said to Sedar, Carry the art of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back, and let me see both it and its dwelling place.

But if he said, I have no pleasure in you, behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him. The king also said to Sedar, to the priest, Are you not a share?

Go back to the city in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaeus, your son, and Jonathan, the sons of Abiathar. See, I will wait at the fort of the wilderness, until word comes from you, to inform me.

So Sedar and Abiathar carried the art of God, back to Jerusalem, and they remained there. But David went up to the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot, and with his head covered.

[4 : 57] And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went. And it was told David, Ahibophil is among the conspirators with Absalom.

And David said, Oh Lord, please turn the counsel of Ahibophil into foolishness. Chapter 16, verse 1, reread.

When David has passed a little beyond the summit, Seba, the servant of Abishav, met him, with a couple of donkeys settled, bearing two hundred sles of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skein of wine.

And the king said to Seba, Why have you brought these? Seba answered, The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and the summer fruits for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to drink.

And the king said, And where is your master's son? Seba said to the king, Behold, he remains in Jerusalem, for he said, Today the house of Israel will give me back the kingdom of my father.

[6 : 14] The king said to Seba, Behold, all that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours. And Seba said, I pay homage.

Let me ever find favor in your sight, my lord the king. When King David came to Behurim, There came out a man of a family of the house of Saul, whose name is Shimear, the son of Gerar.

And he came, he cursed continually. And he threw stones at David, and all the servants of King David, and all the people, and all the mighty men who were on his right hand and on his left.

And Shimear said, as he cursed, Get out, get out, you men of blood, you worthless men. The lord has avenged on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned.

And the lord has given the king into the hand of your son Absalom. See, your evil is on you, for you are a man of blood. Then Abijah, the son of Shuriah, said to the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?

[7 : 28] Let me go over and take off his head. But the king said, What have I to do with you, your son of Shuriah? If he is cursing because the lord has said to me, Curse David, who then shall say, Why have you done so?

And David said to Abijah, and to all his servants, Behold, my own son seek my life. How much more now may this Benjaminite leave him alone and let him curse, for the lord has told him to.

It may be that the lord will look on the wrong done to me, and that the lord will repay me the good for his cursing today. So David and his men went on the road, while Shimea went along on the hillside opposite him, and cursed as he went, and threw stone at him, and flung dust.

And the king, and all the people who were with him, arrived weary at the Jordan. And there he refreshed himself. This is the word of God.

Thanks so much, Cecilia. Man, that's a hard reading, right? All these Hebrew names. It's very difficult. But that's what we're doing.

[8 : 46] We're doing 2 Samuel. It's a narrative. There's characters. And so, yeah, we have all these names. And don't worry.

Great. Yeah. Well, if you're visiting, we're in the middle of a story. But let me go back to... I used to help at a summer camp somewhere in Eastern Europe, a kind of Bible holiday for some churches. And that was always really nice, being out in the mountains with Bible talks, and it's a good holiday. We had a campfire regularly, and then people would share, like, testimonies about kind of, you know, what God was doing.

And usually it was pretty tame. It was, you know, God is so nice. He does this. He does that. And then one time, though, a local woman, she felt God wanted her to share.

And she shared... I think she shared, like, 25 minutes, and then it had to be translated, so it took, like, nearly an hour. But it was just unbelievable what she had gone through.

[9 : 47] Incredible difficulties. So she had a child with some serious medical condition, and she was constantly in hospital. Her house burned down twice, right?

So can you imagine two times losing everything because your house burns down? And just what this woman had gone through was incredible. And you just wonder, we all were thinking, how would I respond in such an event, right?

What would I do if I lose everything, if my life falls apart? I don't know. For some of you in the Philippines, maybe you have family losing their home in a typhoon or something, right? That is difficult.

Or, you know, all your money is... All your savings and investments, and then this company is corrupt and goes bankrupt, and you lose everything that you wanted to retire with. Those kind of things, right?

That can happen, right? Now, how would you respond? What do you do when that happens? I guess for many of us, I know what we're thinking, right? We just wonder why.

[10:43] Why? And where is God in this? Is he against me? Have I done something that, yeah, made this happen, right? If you... Maybe if you're here, you're visiting, I guess it's a very natural question, right?

Is God against me? What is happening? I mean, sometimes that actually... You can imagine that's the case because for some of us, okay, life falls apart, and it's really our fault, right?

Here's the guy at work, has a one-night stand. It comes out. He loses his marriage. He loses his job. Yeah, he loses everything, but that's very much his fault, right?

He has done something wrong, and yeah, if he thinks, well, God is against me, that seems understandable. But even then, how would you respond if you've done that, right?

We all still sin every day, sometimes seriously, and sometimes we face serious consequences, and then life can fall apart, and so how do we respond? I think that is what today is about because, yeah, what we hear, we hear of David, and his life falls apart, and how does he respond?

[11:49] I think that is, for some of us, maybe that may be a reality now as we go into the coming week, but for others, you know, it's something we need to store up for the future.

Now, if you don't know who David is, David was God's chosen king, and, you know, under him, God built this beautiful kingdom. However, as we've gone through this series, things went wrong because a few weeks ago, David committed adultery and murder, and God warned him there would be very serious consequences.

Sin needs to be dealt with, as we heard last week, and God is doing that. He is, yeah, David is facing consequences, and his whole life falls apart. And, well, what happens?

I guess, yeah, it's a long passage. One can't go into everything. So, last week, we met Absalom, one of David's sons, and he and his dad were estranged. He had, he'd committed revenge on his half-brother, who was David's favorite son.

So, David didn't want to speak to him for like five years. And so, they were really embittered, really estranged. And, he starts plotting a rebellion. He goes on a kind of election tour, and he waits outside the palace, and whenever someone comes, he says, yeah, sorry, David can't see you.

[13:07] He won't give you justice. Oh, if I were king, then I could give you justice. And so, he does that for four years. He's a really determined guy, right? Four years of plotting, four years of kind of campaigning, making himself impressive, and, yeah, turning the people to him.

And then, at some point, yeah, he goes, he secretly goes to a place. Well, he goes there, he asks David, oh, can I go to Hebron? where David became king, and, you know, have some religious ceremony there, but actually, it's a sign of coronation, where he's invited a lot of people, some top guys, and gets himself crowned the new king.

And, yeah, David hears of it in verse 13. He has to run away, right? Verse 13, and a messenger came to David, saying, the hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom.

And then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest they overtake us quickly, and bring down ruin on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.

And he, yeah, he flees the city. In a way, that's a very good thing. You know, if there's a war, and a lot of people would suffer if they are fighting inside the city, and so they're going out, you know?

[14:25] Imagine in Ukraine, if all the fighting was just outside the cities, and the people were safe, that would be nicer. But, yeah, they, yeah, he runs away. It's, of course, so hard, right?

He has to leave his palace, leave his home, leave, leave the city, with all his servants, and his family. Then, yeah, you can hear the sadness in the reading. I mean, verse 30, but David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot, and with his head covered.

And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went. And it was told David, right? So, all the weeping, they're mourning, they're covering their heads, they're, this is such a sad day, you hear it.

And then all the betrayal, right? So, so much betrayal. First, this guy, Ahithophel, is, you know, that was one of his top advisors, one of the wisest men in the kingdom, and he's gone over to Absalom.

You know, that must be, yeah, that must be terrible, but then, he hears, Jeba comes to him. We met him a few weeks ago. He was a servant of the previous king, and, uh, he was now taking care of Mephibosheth, who was, you know, the crippled grandson of the previous king, and two weeks ago, if you, three weeks ago, if you were here, David was so kind to him, right?

[15:47] I mean, this guy, in some way, you know, he's from the enemy's family, and yet David gave him everything from that belonged to Saul, and invited him to always come sit with me at the table, right?

What we just sang, once your enemy now seated at my table. Except Jeba brings all this food, and, hey, Jeba, where's Mephibosheth? And, and he says, well, you know, he remains in Jerusalem, because he says, behold, uh, today, the house of Israel, 16 verse 3, will give me back the kingdom of my father, right?

Just to hear that, this guy I've been so kind to, and now he's wringing his hands, because I'm fleeing for my life. What a betrayal, right? Just to, such a stab in the back, uh, for David, and so, yeah.

Okay, Zeba, why don't you take everything then? And then, yeah, he goes further on, and then there's guys, Shime is, uh, uh, cursing him. I guess they're going through a ravine, and he's standing higher up, throwing stones at him, cursing him.

That doesn't mean bad language. It's really, you know, pronouncing God's judgment on him, cursing, right? Uh, you heard it, well read by, uh, Cecilia, right?

[16:58] Uh, Shime said as he cursed, get out, get out, you man of blood, you worthless man, the Lord has avenged on you all the blood of the house of Saul in whose place you have reigned, and the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son, Absalom.

See, your evil is on you, for you are a man of blood. Now, it's not really true, right? Because if you were here for one Samuel in the past, you know, David had nothing to do with Saul's death. He was innocent, but he was a man of blood, right? He had one of his most loyal soldiers killed to cover up his own sin. And now, yeah, uh, he is a man of blood, but basically everything falls apart, right?

Everyone betrays. So many people betray him. He has to flee for his life and, and it's punishments for his sin, right? God had said to him, chapter 12, verse 10, now the sword will never depart from your house, right?

There's going to be severe consequences because of what you've done. And that's happening. God seems very much against him. It's terrible for David. Although you may wonder, okay, yeah, David has a terrible time.

[18:07] Well, what relevance does that have for us? Well, what's interesting is that this is David's exile. The language is that of exile. If you know what exile is, exile of course is when you are, you know, like the Dalai Lama, right?

When you're sent away and, uh, you know, you're forced to leave your home, uh, sent away. Uh, yeah. Uh, so in this case, uh, I guess most famous in the Bible, right?

The people of Israel, they had to leave the country. They were taken away, away from God's presence, away from their home, uh, for their sin. But in a way that's happening with David, right? He has to leave his home. He has to leave the presence of God who is in the temple in Jerusalem. Um, when he talks to this guy, Ittai, and he says, Oh, you don't need to come with me.

End of 15 verse 19. He says, uh, because you are a foreigner and also an exile from your home. So David thinks he's going into exile. And then there's all the geography, right?

[19:08] Because, uh, uh, verse 23, uh, and all the land wept aloud as all the people passed by and the king crossed the brook Kidron and all the people passed on towards the wilderness.

Uh, he crosses a river and goes to the wilderness. And quite often it talks about the wilderness and the crossing the Jordan. Now, if you know, you know, the story of the Bible, you probably know the prince of Egypt, right?

You know, the Exodus. How did they, how did they get to the promised land? Well, they went through the water and, uh, they came out of the wilderness into the land, but this is kind of going out again, right?

Crossing the Jordan, crossing the rivers into the wilderness. And the wilderness is that place outside where you die for your sin. So it's very much language and imagery of exile.

And that's very relevant. So for the readers, they were in exile. They were, you know, in Babylon for their sins. And now David is facing the same thing in a way that they faced.

[20 : 11] They would suddenly listen up, right? He, God's kingdom fell apart because of sin. Well, Hey, that's happened to us. And even for us, it's pretty similar. Now I guess we're not in exile in the same way, right?

Because half of you are probably from Hong Kong and the other half chose to come to Hong Kong. None of you have been forced to live here. And yet the Bible says we are all exiles, right?

If you've done the reading plan, all of us, well, we used to live in the garden of Eden, right?

Humanity used to be in God's presence and everything was perfect except we rejected him.

And Adam and Eve broke his commandments. They were sent out. And since then we live in a broken world. We are away from God's presence. We're in this world of suffering and pain and frustration and brokenness.

And the Bible says we are in exile. So this, this is, and it's, it's for our sin, right? So in a way, this is, this is for us. Yeah. Whatever, you know, broken marriage, losing your job, losing your money.

[21 : 12] All of that is just a broken world, right? We, that's, we're facing exile. Don't know if you think like that of your life. Maybe some of us, we, you know, when life isn't good, we think, okay, God, hey, why are you doing this?

Well, we are sinners, right? If you think, why is God doing this to me? Well, how's your relationship with God? What would you expect from God? No, he, he, he doesn't owe you anything, right?

Some of us are very aware of that. But the question is, how would you respond? How would you respond? Well, would you give up hope? Would you grow bitter?

Or would you urgently try to save yourself, right? If things go wrong? Well, let's look at how David responds. Because what we see, David, David hopes in God.

If you read this chapter, you see David, he really turns to God and hopes in him, which is such a change, right? The past two weeks, what did we see? Well, we see adultery and murder.

[22 : 14] And last week he was so passive. But now, look at David. It's like a new David. Or actually, it's like the old David coming back. So, you can see his trust, right?

So, Ittai, one of his army commanders, comes with 600 soldiers. Now, I know, if I'm a king facing a rebellion, and, you know, 600 soldiers come to me, I'd say, great, right?

I need that. Except, what does David, David sends them away, in a way. He says, hey, you know, I can't make you do that. He does, you know, hey, it's not right to take advantage of you, right?

Why don't you stay? You have no loyalty to me. You can stay here. He doesn't take advantage. He trusts God, in a way, and wishes them God's kindness, right? Verse 20, May the Lord show you steadfast love and faithfulness.

His humility, right? Because they bring the ark, they bring God's presence. And again, David says, hey, I don't deserve that, right? You know, verse 25, chapter 15, carry the ark of God back to the city.

[23 : 24] If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back. And let me see both it and his dwelling place. But if he says, I have no pleasure in you, behold, here I am. Let him do to me what seems good to him.

Yeah, so, so humble. Prayerful. You know, this is 11 years since last week, right? Since, for 11 years, we haven't had a single prayer.

We haven't heard him talk about God at any point. And yeah, now, he prays. He hears about Ahithophel. And the first thing he does, verse 31, oh Lord, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

And, of course, he plots as well, but the first thing he does is pray. He immediately prays. And he's really spiritually alive. Real dependence.

He's even repentant. In a way, he knows he's done wrong. We see that in chapter 16, right? When Shimei curses him, and he kind of says, I deserve it.

[24 : 25] Verse 11, leave him alone. Let him curse, for the Lord has told him to, right? He kind of, he admits he deserves to be cursed. He deserves God's judgment.

I think verse 12 belongs to that as well. Verse 12 is a little bit weird. It's a, it's not an easy verse. It's a bit confusing. Uh, it may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today.

It feels a bit like it doesn't match the previous verse, right? Because on the one end he says, well, you know, I deserve to be cursed. And then he says, well, this is unjust and God should repay me.

Actually, probably, probably he doesn't say the wrong done to me. He says the wrong done by me. Literally, it says, uh, my wrongdoing. I don't do this every week, but literally it just says my wrongdoing.

And that can mean two different things, right? If someone says my surgery went well today. Well, who is saying that? It's the surgeon or it's the patient and it means something else, right?

[25 : 30] Uh, are you the one doing it or receiving it? But it's more far more likely grammatically and the rest of the Bible usage that it's, uh, the wrong done by me.

Then my wrongdoing that I've done. And so in a way, he's admitting his sin. He's saying, yeah, my wrongdoing. He, he knows he's guilty.

He, yeah, he is so aware of his sin. Although the weird, the weird thing is then that he says, well, that maybe God will see my, my sin, my wrongdoing and will repay me with good.

That's why, you know, that's why the ESV thought not. It can't be right. But you know, if you're a sinner, why would you ask God for mercy? But actually he knows God. That's what God is like.

Yeah. I know I'm a sinner, but maybe God will repay me with good.

Yeah. And so we can see David's change of heart. No more dullness and sin. The discipline turns him to God. Right? You think if life falls apart, it will turn you away from God.

[26 : 30] No, it turns David to God. And I think that is supposed to be a model for us. Now it's supposed to be a model for how we should respond.

I think if you know me, then probably, Hey, you know, I'm always saying, well, we're not David.

David is the King and you're not. What? Like David and Goliath. Why am I saying that now?

I think that's, I think that's the idea here. I mean, David is here a sinner. He's a good sinner because he's repentant, but he's still a sinner. In that sense, he's not a picture of Jesus. Normally, David is a picture of Jesus, but here he is just a sinner under judgment and an example.

In a way, the King is an example, right? Jesus. Okay. He calms storms and we can't do that. He raises the dead and we can't do that. But when he loves people, he says, love one another as I have loved you.

Yeah. He says, follow me. Well, David, this is here so we would follow David. His heart is a good model. And so David hopes in God.

[27 : 39] And so can we. If you're in exile, if your life falls apart and God seems against you, it's easy to give up hope, easy to think you can do nothing.

And yet this passage says, no, you can turn to God. David, everything fell apart, yet he turned to God. And so can we. What would that look like? I mean, one obvious one, repentance, right?

If you've done wrong and everything is, it's all your fault, you know, admit it, repent, don't try to cover it up. And so that's what we always do, right? We try to cover up our sin or minimize it, try to defend it ourselves, try to explain it away.

Not just repent. Just, yeah, this is my fault. I've done, I've done wrong. That is in a way. So freeing, right? But that is, that's the right thing to do. Repentance. Yeah.

And even when it's, when it's other suffering, because of course, not everything we face is due to our sin, right? So many things happen to us, sicknesses that are just because we're in a fallen world.

[28 : 45] And we, we, it's very important. We don't think, you know, what happens to me is because of my sin. That's, you know, three weeks ago, I committed this sin. And therefore now my washing machine breaks down or something like that.

It doesn't work like that. That's, you know, that's Job's friends. If you know the book of Job, they say, well, you, you've suffered. Therefore, you must have sinned. No, that doesn't work like that. And so, because then you would feel pretty guilty. But the general thing is true though, right? Why do we live in a broken world? Why do we suffer?

Well, because we are sinners. We generally suffer because we are generally sinners, right? Not a one-to-one relationship, but generally this is true, right?

And so I think generally it's good to have a, you know, just like David is humble and repentant. We, we should have a kind of general feeling of humility and repentance, right?

[29 : 42] You know, if something bad happens to us, we can't say, Hey God, I don't deserve this. I mean, the only thing that I deserve from God is going to hell. Nothing else. Actually, we can be humble and just generally, you know, feel, man, I need mercy.

I need forgiveness, right? Not for a specific sin, but just in general, humility. It's really weird, right? Because normally when, you know, we want things to change, we, it's very tempting to think, no, I'm a good person and look how good I am.

Bible says, no, no, you need to admit that you've done wrong. It's the opposite because we can't be good enough, right? So if you're here, you think the Bible is about being good and trying to be good enough.

No, it's, it's about humility. Actually seeing that we can't save ourselves. We can't be good enough, but not in a hopeless way, not just, you know, I'm, I'm nothing.

I deserve nothing. No, we can still hope in God. That's what David does. He, he says, yeah, even though I've done wrong, I hope, I pray to God for mercy. He hopes in God.

[30 : 44] He, he prays. He, he still turns to God. So a hopeful humility and yet remain humble. And he, he does that even though things are against him, right?

Even your circumstances may say, God isn't with you. God seems against you. No, you can always turn and don't, don't rely on your circumstances. Yeah. And you don't know what will happen.

You know, God may restore your marriage. He may not. He may give you another job. He may not. We, we don't know. We need to trust his wisdom with humility, but in general, we can hope in him.

And then, well, how do we act first?

I guess, do what is right. Right? David does what is right. He doesn't take advantage of people. I guess it's so easy when things go wrong to then think it's okay to sin, right?

You know, you've lost your job. Okay. I'm now allowed to cheat on my taxes because, you know, no, of course not. Keep doing what's right. Oh, my relationship is broken. It's okay to watch porn.

[31 : 43] No, it's not. Right? Do what is right. Keep doing the right thing. And of course, pray, right? Never give up praying. Looks like God is against you.

You may think what's the point of praying. Now, David prays. You can pray. Oh, you can always come to God. Don't forget what he's like. He is a God of steadfast love and faithfulness.

You can come to him and you can pray for forgiveness, pray for mercy, pray for help, pray for the right attitude, pray. You might learn the right lesson. Always pray. And that's what he is doing.

And sometimes that really works. I mean, going back to that campfire, you know, that whole week we were so impressed with this woman. She is so prayerful. She has such a deep relationship with God.

And that, that came through all the things she went through because it had just made her turn to God for everything. Because she, she had nothing. She couldn't do anything except pray. No, pray.

[32 : 43] There's always hope because you're praying to God, the God who is unchanging. And that is for the readers. It's for us. Although you do wonder, was David right?

You know, David did that, but was he right? Wasn't this blind faith? Why would I come to God? And he doesn't hear anything. I mean, think about it from David's perspective.

What encouragement does he have? Isn't he a bit naive? The thing is, God himself is never mentioned in this, right? It never says that the narrator says, and God listened to David's prayer or something like that.

God never sends a message to him or anything. The last thing David heard was judgment. Chapter 12, that he heard from God. He hasn't heard anything from God, right?

He's just purely, in a way, blindly trusting. Except, of course, it's not fully blind, right? Because, why can he do that?

[33 : 40] Well, David knows God. Because he's walked with God in the past for decades. And partly, he knows his Bible, right? When he says, hey, the Lord gives you steadfast love and faithfulness.

That's from Exodus, right? He knows the God of the Bible. And that's what, even though he can't see anything, if he doesn't hear anything right now, that's what he trusts.

He trusts in the God he knows, kind of from before all this. Even though he's never faced anything like this before, he's never faced such consequences for his sin. Same for the readers, right?

They'd never faced exile before. They'd never, this has never happened to them. But, look back at the past. For us, yeah, the same.

I mean, David, David was right. We, we will, we won't preach on the next passage, but there we'll see actually, yeah, God is on David's side. He is against Absalom. He will sort it out. But ultimately, well, what do we look back to?

[34 : 46] Well, as Christians, yeah, we look back to, of course, to, to Jesus going into exile. How can we, trusting God? How can we come to God for mercy?

Well, because Jesus went into exile. Because as you read this, I don't know if you, if it seems very familiar, right? It seems very familiar because David, he went out of Jerusalem. He crossed the book, Bruchidron, went up the Mount of Olives, was betrayed by his friends, all that stuff.

Well, a thousand years later, the son of David, God's chosen king, did exactly the same thing, right? Yeah. That's funny details. John 18, verse one. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Bruchidron.

You may wonder, why that detail? Why mention a Bruchidron? Well, that's what David faced. And then Jesus went up the Mount of Olives, and was betrayed by his friends.

People with swords came to him and said, hey, we'll defend you. And he said, I don't need this. And he fully entrusted himself to God, right? Jesus is going exactly through this.

[35 : 55] And why is he exactly following this? Well, David did this because, well, he was being punished for his sin. He went into exile. And in a way that shows, what was Jesus doing?

He was facing exile. He was facing punishment for sin. Except not, not his sin, but our sin. That's what he was doing. Doesn't mean David is here a picture of Jesus.

Now, of course, David was forced. Jesus did it voluntary. Now, David, Jesus is making himself like David. He is copying him so that we can understand.

He is, yeah, he's going into exile for us. And that is the secret. I mean, how can we, we're sinners. How can we expect mercy from God?

When we know we deserve mercy. Well, because Jesus took it, right? And when, that's why David's in a way, he doesn't know yet about the cross. He knows God's mercy.

[36 : 55] We can see the secret that we can have mercy. We can be repaid for good, even though we've done wrong. And, and that is our hope, right? When everything goes wrong, how do we know we can trust God?

How can we hope in him? Well, because we see the cross. We see how Jesus went into exile for us, how he paid for us. And, and that is, yeah, that we can have mercy. So, yeah, next time life falls apart, and remember this, and in turn, and, yeah, and find mercy and hope in God.

Why don't we take a moment, and I'll pray, and then we're going to respond in song. both. If you're looking forward to it, and everything goes fine. grieving. I'm Let's pray.

Our Father, as many of us here, we're facing different things, and many of us wonder where you are. Thank you that on the cross we see your mercy.

We see that our sin is faithful. Therefore, we see how Jesus went into exile for us. And that can make us come to you. Lord, we pray that we would hope in him, not because of anything we have done, because we know we're not anywhere near the people we should be.

[38 : 44] But we can come to you with our sin. We can come to you with everything. And knowing your mercy, knowing your grace from the cross. Help us do that. Whatever we may face this week, whatever we may face this year, Lord, nothing is beyond you.

Nothing shows that you're against us. We know you're for us, because he who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how we also along with him gave us all things.

Lord, help us trust you. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.