



2 Samuel 15-16

Tape #7097
II Samuel 15-16
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn in our Bibles now to II Samuel, chapter fifteen. There has developed a breach between David and his son Absalom. As the result of Absalom, having ordered his servants to kill his older brother Amnon, for raping his sister. Absalom first fled, was three years in the land of the Geshurites, his mother's family, before David called him back. After David called him back, David still would not see him. It was two years that David just refused him an audience. When Absalom finally came in, David kissed him, and it would seem that things were forgiven. But in chapter fifteen...

It came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. [He began to exalt his own position.] And he rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgement, then Absalom called to him, and said, Of what city are you? And he said, Your servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, your matters are good and right; but there is no man that has been deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom would say to them, Oh that I were made the judge in the land, that every man which had a suit or a cause might come to me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came near to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all of Israel that came to the king for judgement: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel (15:1-6).

Absalom being the oldest living son of David, was the heir apparent to the throne of David, however he decided that he would not wait until his father died. He started by these guises, to draw a popular movement after himself. David was a busy man, no doubt. But Absalom, there at the gates of the city would wait for these people to come from the different tribes. Coming to Jerusalem for judgement of the issues that involved themselves, or their tribes. Absalom would meet them, and greet them, and say, "Oh you know, what city are you from, wow! Right. Oh you've come to see my dad. Oh, what a shame. You know dad is just too busy to see people. He really has made a real mistake in establishing someone to take care of these matters. But you know how that goes, they get so busy with themselves, and so involved in you know, going to Hawaii, that they don't really have time to take care of the things of the kingdom. But, oh what a shame. If I were only the judge, then I could take care of this for you!". And the guys would go to bow to him, and he'd take their hand and kiss them. Thus he sought to steal the hearts of the people.

So it came to pass after forty years, [That is probably after about the fortieth year of David's reign. Towards the end of the reign of David. But, Absalom said. It isn't of course, forty years after Absalom came back, because man that would, David only reigned a little over forty years. "So it came to pass after forty years,"] that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. For your servant vowed a vow while I was still at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord (15:7-8).

"I promise God, you bring me back to Jerusalem, I'm gonna serve you." So, "I made this vow to God".

So the king said to him, Go in peace. And he arose, and went to Hebron. But Absalom had sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say that, Absalom reigns in Hebron (15:9-10).

Now David first began his reign in Hebron. He reigned in Hebron for seven years, before he came to Jerusalem. So Absalom goes down there, sends messages out saying, "As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then declare, 'Absalom is reigning in Hebron'."

And with Absalom there went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; [He invited them.] and they went in their simplicity, they didn't know anything. [They didn't really realize the conspiracy of Absalom, his plan to overthrow the kingdom of David. They weren't really a part of the movement of Absalom.] But Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from Giloh,

while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; and the people increased continually with Absalom. And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. And David said unto all of his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword (15:11-14).

So David recognized that Absalom had developed a strong power base. David was not anxious to see the city of Jerusalem besieged by the forces of Absalom. The city of Jerusalem was a very strong city. David could've no doubt, held out in Jerusalem for a long period of time. As the city was under siege of Absalom. But David, rather than making the city of Jerusalem a place for a blood bath, decided to flee, to just make Jerusalem an open city. To allow Absalom to just come in, and to take it.

And so the king's servants said to the king, Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever the Lord shall appoint. ["Hey David, whatever you say. We're ready to serve."] And the king went forth, and all of his household after him. And he left ten women, which were a part of his harem, the concubines, to keep the palace. And the king went forth, and all of the people after him, and they tarried in a place that was far off (15:15-17).

This was probably the name of the place, because it was just outside of the gates of Jerusalem. It was before he crossed the Kidron valley. It was more or less, to gather everybody together. To let everybody grab the stuff they're gonna try and take, and get their stuff packed, and meet outside of the city, so that their departure from Jerusalem would not be a harem-scarem kind of a scattered thing, but an orderly departure from Jerusalem.

And so all of his servants passed on beside him; the Cherethites, [Who were his personal bodyguards.] and the Pelethites, [Who were also personal messengers of the king.] and all of the Gittites, [Six hundred men. They think that those are the six hundred men that were with David when he fled to Gath.] which came after him from Gath, they passed on before the king. Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why are you also going with us? return to your place, and abide with the king: for you are a stranger, and also an exile (15:18-19).

Ittai was probably one of the high ranking generals of the Philistines, from the city of Gath, who probably had gotten into trouble in Gath, but in his earlier days had admired David when he had seen him living there around Gath. So, he came to David, as an exile. He was a stranger and he had just arrived the day before. So he comes out to go with David, and said, "Hey man, you know you just arrived. There's no sense you going and putting yourself with us. You know, we're, we're facing, we don't even know where we're going man! It's gonna be a hazard going with us. You ought to go back and just join with the king.

And Ittai answered David, and said, As the Lord liveth, and as my Lord the king liveth, surely in what place my Lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there will your servant be (15:21).

So swearing by the Lord, and by the life of king David, he pledged his undying obedience to David. "I'll be with you in death or life. Wherever you are, that's where I'm going to be." Tremendous commitment, friendship, commitment of love!

So often when we want to express words of deep commitment, we turn to the book of Ruth. How that as Naomi was pressing the girls to go back to their parents, and her one daughter-in-law, Orpah, kissed her and said, "Goodbye". Ruth said, "Please do not ask me to leave you or forsake you, or to return from following after you, because wherever you go I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God, and God forbid if anything but death, should separate us". Those are tremendous words of commitment, words of love and faithfulness. But really they are not any greater than Ittai, and his pledge to David, "Whether in life or death. Where you are, there's where your servant wants to be".

And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over, ["Okay man, let's go!"] And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all of his men, and all of the little ones that were with him. [So he brought a group of defectors when he came from Gath.] And all of the country wept with a loud voice, [There was a great wailing, a lamentation,] as David and the people passed over: and the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, [This is in the bottom of the Kidron valley.] and all of the people passed over, toward the way of the wildernesses. And lo

Zadok also, and all of the Levites were with him, and they were bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all of the people had finished passing out of the city. And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation: But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him to unto me as seemeth good unto him (15:22-26).

So, as they are escaping, Zadok the priest, with the Levites, brought with them this ark of the covenant. The children of Israel had taken the ark of the covenant into battle against the Philistines. They sort of looked to it for power and protection. It was a religious article, a religious relic. But there was no power in the ark of the covenant. The Philistines captured it, it was a problem to them. Every place it went, the men broke out with boils, until they finally brought it to the Philistines, city of Ekron. The guys said, "Hey what have you got against us? We don't want that thing here! We know what happens to the men. You know, they get hemorrhoids, and all when that thing comes into town. Get it out of here!". So they, uh, they said, "Well then let's send it back to Israel". So they put it on a cart, and sent it back to Israel.

There are people today who feel that there is some kind of spiritual power in religious relics. There are some people that use a cross for power. Sort of a good luck charm, rather than a rabbit's foot. But there is no power in religious relics. At best, they can only be reminders of the reality. But the power lies in a relationship with God. But there is always that desire, it seems, to take something that reminds me of the work of God, of the power of God, and sort of make a shrine out of it. You know, "There is where God touched my life! Oh, I want to go back, where God touched my life. Oh they changed the carpet! How could they change the carpet? Can God move in the hearts of people with a mauve colored carpet? It was beige", or, "It was green when I was here, and God touched me. Oh my! Sacrilege that you've changed the thing!".

At the time that the children of Israel were in the wilderness, and these poisonous snakes were biting them, and thousands of them died. Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord said, "Take and make a serpent of brass, put it on a pole, and put it in the middle of the camp. And it shall come to pass that whoever is bitten by one of these serpents, if they will look to that brass serpent on the pole, they'll be healed. They'll not die." So, Moses made that brass serpent. He put it on the pole in the middle of the camp, and whoever was bitten by one of these poisonous snakes, if they would look at that brass serpent on the pole, they didn't die. A lot of symbolism.

Brass is always a symbol of judgement. They had sinned against the Lord, and that's why God had allowed these poisonous snakes to come in. But this brass serpent on the pole, was a symbol that their sin had been judged. It was just a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. For Jesus said to Nicodemus, "You must be born again". And he said, "How can I? When I'm old I can't return to my mother's womb and be born!", and Jesus said, in answer to the question, "How can a man be born again when he is old?", Jesus said, "For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up".

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." So, even as God raised, had Moses put this brass serpent on the pole, and raised it there in the wilderness, whoever was bitten could look and be healed, so Jesus Christ. Sin was judged on the cross, and we who have had the deadly venom of sin, destroying us, can look to Jesus upon the cross, and be saved. Be forgiven, be cleansed. It is sad that in later history, the children of Israel, had kept this brass serpent.

At the time that Hezekiah was the king, they had made this an object of worship. People would go and pray near it, and they would go and sort of worship it. It was just a shrine for worship, and they began to worship this brass serpent. It became an idol for the people of Israel. It reminded them of the day when God's power was working in their midst. They had gotten so far away from God, that they didn't experience His presence and power any longer in a conscious way. They were longing for the consciousness of the presence of God, and thus they made an idol out of the serpent, and worshiped it. When Hezekiah, the good king, found out that the people were actually worshiping this brass serpent, he broke the thing in pieces, and he said, "Nehushtan!", which in Hebrew means, "a thing of brass". "It's not a god, it's not to be worshiped! It's only a thing of brass!" There is no power in religious relics to help! The power is in God, to help.

They were bringing the ark of the covenant, perhaps thinking, "If we have the ark of the covenant, we'll

have God with us". But David, having even a deeper understanding of the things of God than the priests, said, "Take the ark of the covenant back, and put it back there in the tabernacle. If God so desires, if we find favor with God, He'll bring us back and we'll see it again. You know, we're not gonna lose it. We'll see it again, if we find favor with God, and we'll see it there in the house of God. But if God doesn't delight in us, then here I am. Let God do what He will, what seems good to Him". Just a commitment, a total commitment of himself to God, for whatever! And even as Ittai committed himself in friendship to David, so David committed himself completely to God. "No matter how it falls Lord, I've just committed myself to you."

So the king said to Zadok, [verse twenty seven] are you not a seer? ["Or a prophet?" For the prophets were called seers in the days of old. One who sees into spiritual things.] return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and your nephew, Jonathan, the son of Abiathar. And see I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me (15:27-28).

"To let me know what's going on. I'll stay down in the plain of the wilderness." Actually down in the Jordan river. "And we'll go down, and we'll camp there, and we will wait to hear from you as to what's happening, and how things are going." So, David is beginning really, to set up his little CIA, his spy network. "You go back, and you know your son, and all with you. The son of Abiathar, Jonathan, and you guys find out how things are going, and then send the boys. They're fast runners. Send em on down, and let me know what's going on."

So Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they stayed there. And David went up by the ascent of the mount Olivet, and he wept as he went, and he had his head covered, and he was barefoot: and all of the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up (15:29-30).

And so this sad procession, going up the mount of Olives, towards the Judean wilderness. The people weeping. David his head covered, and barefooted. Weeping as he went. And the people that were with him also weeping.

And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness (15:31-32).

Of Ahithophel's defection, there are two Psalms that make reference to it. One is in Psalm fifty five, as David is speaking to the Lord, concerning the situation. "Give ear to my prayer, O God; hide not thyself from thy supplication. Attend unto me and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise; Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then I would fly away, and be at rest." So, you know, "I would like to escape, but fear, the fear of death, horrors of death are upon me." "Lo then I would wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and the tempest. Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city. Day and night they go about it upon the walls: mischief also and sorrow in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets." And then concerning Ahithophel, "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was you, a man my equal, my guide, and my acquaintance." He had been David's counselor. "We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company." So then David prays vengeance upon them.

Again in Psalm forty one, verse nine. Speaking of Ahithophel, David said, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Interestingly enough, though this was a reference by David, of what Ahithophel had done, it is quoted in the new testament of a prophecy, as a prophecy of the betrayal of Jesus Christ by Judas Iscariot.

In John thirteen, eighteen and nineteen, Jesus makes reference to this particular Psalm, as speaking of the betrayal by Judas Iscariot. Then also, Psalms three and four were written at this very same time, when David was fleeing from Absalom, his son. So, as you read Psalm three and four, if you'll put that now in context of David weeping, going up the mount of Olives with the people, and weeping as they went.

So it came to pass that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshiped God, [Now this, again, though David is fleeing, though David is being banished from his kingdom, yet so committed is he to the ways and the will of God, that he worships God there on the top of the mount of Olives, as he looks back over the city. Interesting, he wept as he was on the mount of Olives, thinking about Jerusalem. We remember of Jesus, who as He was on the mount of Olives, looking at Jerusalem, wept over the city.] and as he was worshipping God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn, and earth upon his head (15:32):

Hushai also was one of David's counselors. Probably an older man.

And unto whom David said, If you pass on with me, you'll be a burden to me: [He was probably feeble, and not able to really move rapidly. So David said, "Look if you go with me, you're apt to be a burden".] So you return to the city, and say to Absalom, I will be your servant, O king; as I've been your father's servant before, so will I now also be your servant: that you may for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. And has thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar [Now there's some other guys, Zadok and Abiathar] and it shall be, that whatever you hear from the king's house, you shall tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. And they have with them their two sons, who will bring the messages to me. So Hushai David's friend came to the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem (15:33-37).

So David now has set spies, Hushai, Abiathar, Zadok, and the two boys, and they are to bring David word of what goes on.

Chapter 16

So when David was a little past the top of the hill, [Now he's heading down towards Jericho.] behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys that were saddled, and upon them were two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, and a hundred of the summer fruits, and a bottle of wine (16:1).

Now this fellow Ziba, had been the servant to king Saul. You remember when David decided to show kindness to the house of Saul, in order to keep the covenant with Jonathan. He called in Ziba, who had been Saul's servant. He said, "Are there any of Saul's descendants still alive?", and Ziba told him of Mephibosheth, who was over in the area of Gilead, that he was still alive. David went over to Mephibosheth. And he gave to Mephibosheth all that belonged to his grandfather, Saul. Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, David's close companion. But Mephibosheth was lame in his feet. His nurse had dropped him when they were running away, and probably his final injury caused a lameness in his feet. So, he was to sit and eat bread at David's table, though Ziba was to be his servant, and with his family he was to till the fields, and to take care of all of the property, that David had restored to Mephibosheth, that had belonged to Saul. Now this same Ziba, comes to David. Couple of donkeys that were saddled, loaded down with the two hundred loaves of bread, hundred bunches of raisins, and all.

And the king said, Where is your master's son? [The master, being Saul, his son, Mephibosheth.] And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he stayed at Jerusalem: for he said, Today shall the house of Israel restore to me the kingdom of my father. Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained to Mephibosheth. And Ziba said O I humbly beseech thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, my Lord, O king (16:3).

Now, Ziba was lying. He was lying about Mephibosheth, as David will later discover. This is just a big lie. But it only added of course, to David's sorrows. I'm sure that to think that, "Here's a fellow that I took care of. I gave him back everything that belonged to his grandfather's house, I let him eat at my table, and he too has turned from me! Yet, that was not the case. Mephibosheth tried to go, but because of his lameness, he couldn't get with David. We'll find that out later, and we'll find out how Ziba is taken care of. But, right now, this guy is lying and adding to David's misery. But there was more to add to David's misery.

When the king David came to Bahurim, [Bout four miles from Jerusalem.] behold, from there, there came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, a Benjamite, his name was Shimei, he was the son of Gera: and he came forth, and he cursed as he came. [He came out of his house just cursing David.] And he started throwing rocks at David, and at all the servants of the king David: and all the people and all the

might men were on his right hand and on his left (16:5-6).

And here's this guy coming out, cursing David, throwing rocks.

And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: [Or literally, it's "Get out! Get out of here you bloody man, you son of Satan!" or, "Man of Satan."] Then the Lord hath returned upon you all of the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead you have reigned; and the Lord has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son: and, behold, you are taken in your mischief, because you're a bloody man. ["You're getting what you deserve!"] Then Abishai [Who was a tough cookie, and not one to be messed with.] the son of Zeruiah, [One of David's generals.] he said to the king, Why should this dead dog curse my Lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, I'll take his head off. [And he would've, he would've! But David restrained him.] The king said, What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? let him curse, because who knows, maybe the Lord has said to him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so (16:7-10)?

In other words, "How do we know but what God hasn't said, Go out and curse David!" David, you remember has committed himself totally to God. "If I find favor, God will bring me back, if He doesn't delight in me, then let Him do what He will. Here I am. Let God do it." And David now, is still in that commitment. "Maybe God told him to curse me! So why should we say, 'Why are you cursing David?', if it was God that told him to do it?"

David is still feeling guilty over his sin. When Absalom rebelled, he remembered no doubt, the words of Nathan, that, "The sword would not depart from his house". Part of the tragic consequences of David's sin. He's still reaping them. You know, he feels that maybe if God, you know, "If I get low enough, God will have mercy on me". So David is not striking out in his own defense. He's just accepting everything that comes. "Maybe it's of God, I don't know. But I'm not gonna defend myself." And so, he restrained Abishai from going over and taking care of Shimei.

And [the king said, and,] David said to Abishai, and to all of his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth out of my own loins, seeks my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? [In other words, "My own son is seeking to kill me! How much more this guy. Let him alone! Let him curse! For maybe the Lord has bidden him.] And it may be that the Lord will look upon my affliction, ["Maybe God will feel sorry for me.] and the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day (16:11-12).

Now later on, when David was turning the kingdom over to Solomon, he said, "You know when I left Jerusalem, and I was in all that hardship, this guy Shimei came out and cursed me. Take care of him son". So, David at this point is willing to commit it, but later on, he had Solomon take care of Shimei.

And so as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along the hillside over against him, [And that is on, there was a ravine between them.] and he cursed as he went, [He was close enough, they could hear the cursings, and they were close enough that the stones were landing among them. He was throwing dust in the air.] And the king and all the people that were with him, became weary, and they refreshed themselves there. Absalom, and all of the people of the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with them. And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, God save the king, God save the king. And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this the way to show kindness to your friend? why did you not go with your friend? And Hushai said unto Absalom, No; but whom the Lord, and these people, and all of the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide (16:13-18).

"I know a winning cause man! Whoever the Lord chooses, in all of Israel, you know, I'll go along."

And again, [he said] whom shall I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his son? as I have served in your father's presence, so will I be in your presence. [He was a man of respective counsel and advice. A wise man.] Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, What shall we do give counsel. And Ahithophel said to Absalom, Go in unto your father's concubines, which he has left to keep the house; and all of Israel shall hear that you are abhorred of your father: and then shall the hands of all of those that are with you be strong. So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all of Israel. And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counseled in those days, was as if a man had inquired from an oracle of God: [In other words, they looked at his counsel as coming from

God.] and so was all of the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom (16:19-23).

The man was a brilliant man, a wise, uh, he was a extremely wise in his strategies and all. And they looked upon his counsel as though it came directly from God. Now what this is, what the idea is behind this, whenever a man succeeded a king, the king's harem actually became the property of the new king. By Absalom going in to David's concubine, there in the tent on the top of the house.

You remember again, when David's sin, and Nathan faced him with his sin, David's sin with Bathsheba. You know, uh David said, "You did it in secret, but it's gonna come back on you openly. In the eyes of all of Israel". In other words you, "You did it secretly, you tried to hide it, but man, it's gonna come, what you reap, you're gonna sow. But you're gonna sow it openly and publicly". And herein is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Nathan, as his son Absalom, on the tent on the top of David's house, where the concubines were staying, he went into them publicly, in the eyes of the people.

Then they realized that this was a breach that there could be no turning back, as far as Absalom was concerned. Up to this point you see, the people may think, "Well maybe Absalom will make peace with his dad, and then all of us will be in trouble, once David is back on the throne". Absalom making this move, he cast really the die, so that there's no turning back. David cannot just come back now, and just ignore what has happened. This is such a breach of ethics and all, that but what it did is solidify the people with Absalom, saying, "Ha ha, we don't have to worry man!" Absalom's done this disgraceful thing, that precludes any treaty being created between David and Absalom in the future.

Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom,

You know, it's too late to go to the next chapter. We're not moving as fast as I had planned folks. So next week, we'll take chapter seventeen and eighteen, and who knows, we might get nineteen. But we'll just plod along. The Lord knows we'll get there some day.

It is interesting that out of these dark hours of David, there came forth a depth of commitment of himself to God, that preserved David during these difficult times. I believe that God often boxes us in. Sort of puts us in a corner, where we have to just turn to Him, and depend upon Him, and commit the situation to the Lord. "There's nothing I can do."

There is a saying, not a scripture, a lot of people have tried to find this in their Concordance, because it is such a popular saying, and there is so much truth. It could very well be a scripture, there's a lot of truth to it. "Man's extremities are God's opportunities." Now that's not a scripture, so don't go quoting me saying, "Chuck quoted the scripture...", no that's not a scripture. That's a saying, part of a poem actually. But there's a lot of truth to that.

When we come to our limits, to our extremities, where we have to just give up. "I can't go any further. There's nothing more I can do. I've had it." That is the time that God has the opportunity of taking over, and doing His work, and showing His salvation. Now some of us are a little tougher than others. A little stronger willed than others. This works a hardship on us. Because we have to get deeper in the hole, and we have to suffer the misery longer.

But God in His love for me, and His desire to bring me to His highest, often allows me the place of the recognition of my limitations, in order that I might just cast my life, and all of the situations that surround it, over onto the Lord, that He might show Himself strong and powerful, and that He might deliver, that I might praise Him, and trust Him more.

Some of you who have been asking, "God, why have you allowed this to happen to me? Oh God why haven't you helped me?" It's because you're still struggling. It's because you're still trying. It's because you're still seeking to manipulate and work things out for yourself. As long as you've got one idea left, God'll hang back, until you've exhausted. Because, you see, we are such, God help us, but we are such that we can be totally bankrupt in a situation, there's really nothing that we can do about it, except we think, "Maybe, if I would do that, possibly?". So we're that, we're just about, and we, and, and God moves in, and He helps and delivers. "I knew I could, I knew I could! All he had to do was just get to that place where I said." And we're prone to take the credit and the glory, so God let's us get to that place of desperation, hopelessness. Where I have despaired of ever coming, "There's no way I'm gonna get out of this. No way can I climb out of this hole". And God let's me get to that place where I have to just say, "Lord, man if I die,

I've had it Lord, I can't do it!" And then God steps in, and God works. But, I have to, at that point, just say, "Well, God did it!", I can't say, "Well, I knew that.", or, "I was hoping that. Well, I thought that. I figured that maybe, you know...", and I have no place to glory now, I have no place to boast, except in the Lord. "I was through. I had given up. I had exhausted all of my ideas, all of my resources, it was over, but Oh thank God, He lifted me out of the horrible pit!, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon the rock, and He established my goings, to God be the glory! Great things He has done!" God wants to work.

You're still kicking? Well, God help ya, you know. Give up! Turn it over! Commit! Give it to God, let Him work. Just acknowledge you can't do it. "You're extremities often become the time of God's opportunity of showing His power, and showing His love, and showing His work.

God bless you and may you see the hand of God, and the work of God in your life this week, as He does for you, what you can't possibly do for yourself. As you learn to walk with Him, in trust, and in confidence, committing your ways unto the Lord, knowing that God is able to do exceedingly above all that you might ask or think, and He will not let you fall, but He will keep you, by His power, through His grace.