

Commentary on 2 Samuel chapters 16 and 17, by Chuck Smith 3.30.22

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March memory verse John 16:33 (NKJV) These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

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Chapter 16

And when David was a little past the top of the hill, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys that were loaded down with bread, raisins, summer fruits, a bottle of wine. David said, What do you mean by all these things? And Ziba [lied to him,] he said, The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on; the bread and the summer fruit are for the young men to eat; and the wine, so that those that are faint in the wilderness may drink. The king said, And where is Mephibosheth? And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he abides at Jerusalem: because he said, Today they'll restore the kingdom back to me ([2Sa 16:1-3](#)).

In other words, he's lying to David about Mephibosheth declaring that Mephibosheth was looking to this and saying, "Hey, I'm going to get the kingdom back." That's not true. That's a lie of Ziba.

So David said,

Well everything that I gave to Mephibosheth is yours if we ever get back ([2Sa 16:4](#)).

Of course later on David found out that he was lying to them.

As he was going along, another relative of Saul, a cousin of sorts, Shimei, the guy's name.

And Shimei came out and began to curse David, running along and throwing rocks at David, throwing dirt in the air, and cursing him. Now Abishai said to David, David that dirty dog, he has no right doing that, let me go take his head off. And David said, No let him go. Maybe God's put it in his heart to curse me ([2Sa 16:5-10](#)).

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David has no fire, just you know, "Maybe God wants him to curse me. Maybe that's what's in God's heart." David is so broken at this point, realizing that this is the fruit of my sin, and yet there is a beautiful submission of David unto God, and unto the will of God, and even unto the judgment of God that which made David a man after God's own heart. He was willing to just commit himself now totally to God, to the judgment of God, "God, if You want to wipe me out, if You want to destroy me, if You want to curse me, whatever You want to do God, do what You want to me."

David isn't resisting any longer. His life now is one of total and complete commitment. He was brought to that place of brokenness. Which so often is necessary in order that we might enter into that place of complete and total submission unto the will of God. Though it is sort of sad to see the fire gone, yet in another way it's beautiful to see now no more resisting, no more defending himself, but just that total commitment, "whatever God wants, let it be."

So Absalom came into Jerusalem, [and David had left ten of his concubines to keep his palace.] And so Ahithophel said to Absalom, Look, put up a tent on the roof of the house, and take the ten concubines in the sight of all the people and take them into the tent. And there in a sense, humiliate them ([2Sa 16:15, 21](#)).

Now this was showing that a breach was being created between Absalom and David that could not be healed. In other words, the people would feel secure now in following Absalom, because they feel, "Wow, there's no way David could ever forgive this sin." Also, this was a common practice for a king who took over the kingdom from his predecessor, one of the acts of taking the kingdom from his predecessor was taking the king's wives. Even as David took Saul's wives. Taking of the wives of the predecessor again was a part of the succession in the kingdom. So Absalom was really taking this position of superseding David as king, and also creating a breach irreparable between himself and his father.

This was the counsel of Ahithophel and Absalom followed it ([2Sa 16:23](#)).

The further prophecy of Nathan was fulfilled as we find the wives of David there in the sun before all the people, being publicly humiliated.

Chapter 17

At the end of the last chapter David was in very sad state. His son Absalom had rebelled against him, had gone down to Hebron and had gathered Israel to his support, who he had gradually been enticing people away from his father. When

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he felt that he had enough strength, he announced his kingdom, and began moving with his troops towards Jerusalem.

David, rather than having a direct confrontation with his son Absalom, began to flee from Jerusalem with a great company of people with him. Leaving the city of Jerusalem, going through the valley of the Kidron, and up over the mount of Olives, covering his head with a handkerchief, and weeping as he went.

At this particular time it seemed that it gave David's enemies all a chance to come out and get their licks in against David. Shimei who was one of the relatives of Saul came along, cursed David, threw rocks at him and his company. Abishai one of David's generals wanted to take the guy's head off, but David said, "No, maybe God laid upon his heart to curse me, let him go."

We notice that David was very resigned to all of these things that were happening. He accepted them as really God's judgment against him for his sins. For when David sinned against the Lord, and Nathan the prophet came to David, Nathan told him that, "Because of this sin the sword will not depart from your house, but your very children will rise up in rebellion against you. Your wives will be humiliated in the sight of all of the people." So the fact that his own son is now rising up against him, David accepted this as just a part of God's judgment. So rather than trying to fight God's judgment upon his life, David is submitting himself totally to the judgment of God. He makes no endeavor to defend himself against this judgment of God, but he accepts it. When his men would stand up and fight, he'd say, "No, maybe God's meaning this as a part of His judgment. Let's things fall where they will."

He received this in a very submitting way, submitting himself unto God in these things, and submitting the whole case unto God. In this submission to the Lord, David is extremely honorable. It is just really remarkable to me how that David, this tremendous man of war, and valor, and all, just really makes no endeavor to fight, or to hold up his cause, but yields to the extent that he allows this Shimei to run along the hillside above him throwing rocks at him, and cursing him and all.

So we left David at that point, fleeing from Jerusalem, and his counselor of old times, Ahithophel turning unto Absalom, and joining with Absalom against David. Of course we pointed out that this actually was the basis of one of David's psalms, concerning, "it was you, mine own equal who turned against me. If it were an enemy, I could've taken it, but you my friend, we went into the house of God together." And David's lament over Ahithophel turning from him.

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Now as we get into chapter seventeen, Ahithophel formerly David's counselor is now advising his son Absalom.

And he said, Now the best thing to do is to let me have ten thousand men, and let me pursue after David immediately: And we will catch him while he is weak and while he is tired: and the men that are with him will flee from him; and I'll only kill David: [The rest of the people, when they see that David is dead, they'll have no further cause to fight, and so they will all submit to you as king] ([2Sa 17:1-2](#)):

So Ahithophel was counseling Absalom in this way. The counsel seemed good to all of the men to attack while the opportunity was there, and while it seemed right, while David was fleeing, while he was weakened, and in this weakened state, catch him now, kill only David, and then the rest falling into Absalom.

So Hushai who was David's friend, who David sent back to sort of counter man the counsel of Ahithophel.

Hushai now suggested that,

No the counsel of Ahithophel isn't good ([2Sa 17:7](#)).

For David and his men, they are valiant men, you know how tough they are, and they are right now like a lion that has been robbed of her little cubs. They're like a lion that has been cornered; you attack them now, and they're gonna be vicious. Their backs are against the wall, and they're gonna be even more valiant than normal if you seek to attack them now. What's gonna happen is that with their backs against the wall, they're gonna be fighting like everything. And after they wipe out the first contingent, then news is gonna spread through all of Israel that your unit that went out to capture David was wiped out, and all of Israel is gonna be afraid, because they know how tough and how valiant David and his men are.

So he said don't attack them right away, but wait and summon together all of Israel. Get the whole nation down here that you might go with a great invasion against David, and thus take him. And let Absalom lead the armies against David and so that the people will see that Absalom is able to lead the people into war. So the counsel of Hushai seemed to be good, and they all went along with Hushai's counsel to wait and gather all of Israel together, and then let Absalom lead in the battle against David.

So David did have his men stationed in Jerusalem, his CIA, and they said to these two fellas, "Run and tell David what the counsel of Ahithophel was, and let him know what's going on."

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So these two fellows went out to-well, they said go tell this wench and let her go tell him. So the story goes how they hid in a well, and so forth.

But Ahithophel [was a sore loser, because he saw that his advice was not followed, verse twenty three] when Ahithophel saw that the counsel, his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey, and he arose, and went home to his house, to his city, he put his house in order, and hung himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father ([2Sa 17:23](#)).

That's what you call a poor loser. Absalom didn't follow his counsel, and so the guy went home, set his house in order, and committed suicide.

Now probably Ahithophel was wise enough to realize that Absalom was so vain that the counsel of Hushai actually catered to the vanity of Absalom.

"Let Absalom lead the armies so the people can see how wonderful Absalom is."

He probably at this point realized, "I've made a blunder in hitching myself to Absalom's rising star. This young guy doesn't have enough sense." He probably realized that Absalom was going to fall. Thus, he figured if Absalom fell, then it would be his neck in the noose, anyhow, because of the fact that he had dealt so treacherously with David, and turned against David his friend, the one that he had counseled, and the one that had been so close to him. He realized that when Absalom was destroyed that he would also probably be destroyed by David for this treacherous turnaround on his part. And therefore, rather than fall into the hands of David, realizing that Hushai's counsel was going to lead to disaster, he was only seeking to bail out before the disaster came.

Ahithophel, a very wise man, noted for his counsel; he shows certain wisdom in that he set his house in order, got everything all prepared, but then he shows great folly in taking his own life. Wise men often do stupid things. Ahithophel is a classic example.

So Absalom led the troops over Jordan, and all of the men of Israel with him [as he was pursuing after his father David.] And Absalom made Amasa the captain of his host instead of Joab: [Now Joab, of course, was captain or general over the armies of Israel under David, Joab and his brother Abashi. But now Absalom makes Amasa the general over the armies of Israel.] And Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead. [Which is the area up around the southern end of the Sea of Galilee over on the Jordanian side.] And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of the children of Ammon, and Machir the Gileadite, brought beads, and basons, and earthen vessels, and

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wheat, and barley, and flour, parched corn, beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of the cows, for David, and for the people that were with him to eat: for they said, The people are hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in this wilderness ([2Sa 17:24-29](#)).