

2 Samuel 16/17

- David has fled the city of Jerusalem in anticipation of his son Absalom's invasion
 - David is followed by a small army of loyal (mostly Gentile) men with no real plan for holding onto power
 - In the wake of David's departure, Absalom enters the city of Jerusalem declaring himself to be the new king
 - It was an audacious act on Absalom's part...trying to take the throne of his father while his father was still alive
 - It was an act of rebellion and presumption comparable to the prodigal son demanding his inheritance before his father died
 - Absalom's antics were directly related to David's handling of his family life, and in particular his unwillingness to hold his sons accountable
 - Absalom was spoiled, ignored, and marginalized by his father, and now his son has decided he is ready to replace David
 - But David knew Solomon was God's choice to follow David, so Absalom's rebellion couldn't stand
 - Therefore, David is escaping the city and biding his time expecting the Lord to solve the problem in His own way
 - And we will see David's confidence reflected in his responses to this trial, beginning with how he exited the city
 - Last week we heard David telling the priests to keep the ark in the city rather than following David into exile
 - This was not the pattern of kings fleeing enemies...normally a king kept the symbols of his power near to him at all times
 - But David correctly recognized that the ark was not a symbol of his power or his reign...it represented God's reign over Israel
 - So as David said, if God wants David gone, then David must accept that judgment
 - Likewise, if God wants to bring David back, He can, and David said in that day the ark would still be there waiting for him

- David recognized God's sovereignty in this situation, and that recognition allowed David to move with God through these circumstances
 - And as he does, two things happen...first, David is able to learn from the experience and receive the Lord's discipline
 - David will still make mistakes, and in fact, David makes some in the course of his flight
 - But David will also deal more strongly with his children and those around him in his later years than he did before
 - Secondly, David's willingness to follow the Lord creates a powerful picture of Jesus doing the Father's will
 - David's flight can be compared to Christ's departure after His first coming, and that connection is intended
 - And I introduced that picture briefly last week as we finished Chapter 15
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- To summarize, there were six points of comparison between the two events
 - David entered Jerusalem to a joyous reception as did Christ, but later David was rejected as was Christ
 - When David left he was followed mostly by Gentile supporters, and after Jesus departed, His Church became largely Gentile
 - And when David departed the city, he left by way of the Mount of Olives, and Jesus ascended to the Father the same way
 - And David ordered that the ark remain in the city just as Jesus commanded that His disciples await the arrival of the Spirit
 - This picture continues today, and with it we find the purpose in the picture, that is why the Lord wanted us to see this connection
 - But first, we return to the story of David's departure

2Sam. 16:1 Now when David had passed a little beyond the summit, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them were two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred clusters of raisins, a hundred summer fruits, and a jug of wine.

[2Sam. 16:2](#) The king said to Ziba, "Why do you have these?" And Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine, for whoever is faint in the wilderness to drink."

[2Sam. 16:3](#) Then the king said, "And where is your master's son?" And Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.'"

[2Sam. 16:4](#) So the king said to Ziba, "Behold, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." And Ziba said, "I prostrate myself; let me find favor in your sight, O my lord, the king!"

- As David passes beyond the summit of the Mount of Olives, David is met by a servant of Mephibosheth
 - David gave the crippled Mephibosheth all of Saul's property, which was substantial
 - And David reassigned Ziba, one of David's key servants, to care for Mephibosheth's property
 - Ziba was probably not happy about the reassignment, since it meant trading a place in the palace for working in the fields
 - No doubt Ziba has resented the change and resented Mephibosheth's good fortune
 - And now Ziba sees opportunity to play David's circumstances to his own advantage
 - In v.1 we're told that Ziba rides out on donkeys to meet David and brings with him a large provision of supplies
 - It's obvious Ziba has heard the news of David's departure and responded quickly, so David asks why Ziba has made the effort
 - Ziba says these supplies are to support the army as they ride out, but given the high value of the provision, David begins to wonder
 - He notices that Mephibosheth is not present, and that's unusual because in times like this, men were pledging their support
 - David might have expected a man with as much power and wealth as Mephibosheth to make a personal appearance
 - After all, Mephibosheth is the only living relative of the prior king, so his loyalties would have been of great interest to others

- Ziba reports that Mephibosheth has gone to Jerusalem saying he expects his father's kingdom to be restored as a result of this infighting
 - This is a cleverly calculated ploy to gain control of Mephibosheth's property
 - Ziba knows that by showing his loyalty to David while reporting Mephibosheth's betrayal, David will likely reward Ziba
 - And that's exactly what David does, assigning all of Mephibosheth's estate to Ziba
 - Ziba's treachery will be exposed later, but even then David won't deal with it as he should
- This moment gives us another opportunity to highlight David's chief weakness as a leader and king: he was too trusting of bad men
 - Many of these bad decisions came to haunt David later, and ultimately his son Solomon had to deal with them when he came to power
 - Discernment is the ability to separate truth from falsehood and to recognize the difference between wisdom and foolishness
 - It's both a natural ability and it can also be given by God as a spiritual gift, and it's important in a leader
 - David lacked discernment at times, especially in the counsel he received and the counselors he trusted
 - David was forgiving to a fault at times, especially toward family or close aids like this man
 - Although mercy is a positive character trait, there comes a point where mercy taken too far works against the cause of godliness
 - Here is another example of David trusting too easily and not discerning that this man had good cause to lie
 - David's pattern of lacking discernment sets up his son, Solomon, to be gifted with an excess of discernment to his own folly
 - The juxtaposition of David's gullibility with Solomon's wisdom seems to be God's way to make a point
 - By ourselves, we can never possess enough mercy or wisdom or anything else to substitute for God's provision in Christ

- So David's flight from the city was met by dishonest men attempting to take advantage of him, and by hateful men who curse him...

2Sam. 16:5 When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came.

2Sam. 16:6 He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left.

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2Sam. 16:7 Thus Shimei said when he cursed, "Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow!"

2Sam. 16:8 "The LORD has returned upon you all the bloodshed 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. And behold, you are taken in your own evil, for you are a man of bloodshed!"

- A short time later, still only a mile or two outside the city of Jerusalem, in a place called Bahurim, David comes upon another man
 - This man is called Shimei, and he is another relative of Saul
 - Remember, Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin, and the border of Judah and Benjamin ran through the middle of Jerusalem
 - So as David leaves Jerusalem, he immediately passed into the territory of Saul, which put David on unfriendly ground
 - So this man, Shimei, comes out of his home to see David and his men escaping from Absalom, and Shimei decides to mock David
 - He calls David a man of bloodshed and a worthless fellow and throws rocks at the king defiantly daring David to respond
 - Shimei is surrounded on both sides by a crowd of Benjamites and their leaders, indicating that Shimei spoke for all Benjamin
 - Then Shimei says what would have been obvious to everyone... his hatred for David resulted from David replacing Saul as king
 - They blamed David for Saul's death, for Jonathan's death and for Abner's death
 - Of course, this was not the truth, and David knew it, but notice how David responds

[2Sam. 16:9](#) Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now and cut off his head.”

[2Sam. 16:10](#) But the king said, “What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah? If he curses, and if the LORD has told him, ‘Curse David,’ then who shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’”

[2Sam. 16:11](#) Then David said to Abishai and to all his servants, “Behold, my son who came out from me seeks my life; how much more now this Benjamite? Let him alone and let him curse, for the LORD has told him.

[2Sam. 16:12](#) “Perhaps the LORD will look on my affliction and return good to me instead of his cursing this day.”

[2Sam. 16:13](#) So David and his men went on the way; and Shimei went along on the hillside parallel with him and as he went he cursed and cast stones and threw dust at him.

- First, David gets counsel from Abishai, one of Joab’s brothers, who recommends killing Shimei, which meant attacking the whole group
 - That was the style of Abishai and his family in general...they sought to resolve their troubles with force as in their conference with Abner
 - But David saw the situation differently...he saw the Lord at work in his circumstances to accomplish His will
 - And by acknowledging God in his circumstances, David had good reason to be patient and trusting of God
 - In fact, our response to every set of circumstances will largely depend on whether we understand and acknowledge God’s sovereignty
 - When we forget God sets our circumstances, then we see them as merely happenstance or bad luck
 - And if so, then we will act on our own to address them, which means we often work against God, and He will frustrate us
 - But when we correctly acknowledge God works through difficulties to get our attention, to grow us and ultimately to change us, then we learn
 - That’s David’s response here...he rebukes Abishai and refuses his counsel
 - David asks if the Lord has led Shimei to curse David this day, how can David question the Lord’s decision?

- So David reasons with his men that if David wasn't willing to fight his own son for the throne, why would he fight this nobody?
 - So let him curse David, because the Lord has told this man to do so
 - And in the Lord's providence, it must serve some good purpose and in time the Lord may reverse David's fortunes
- Shimei was wrongly blaming David for killing Saul and Abner, but David correctly heard it as the Lord chastising him for killing Uriah
 - David knew this was a right and proper judgment, and so he asks his men how could he stand in judgment of God?
 - David was keeping God at the center of the circumstances, and in doing so, David was led to ask the right questions
 - David asked how can I challenge God's judgments in these things?
 - And he adds, if I respond well now, perhaps God will turn this cursing back to blessing
 - Can we say we respond to our trials this well? By saying, "God I know you are doing this for good reason so I accept it"
 - Or do we run ourselves ragged trying to fix the problem?
 - Do we appreciate that accepting the trial and learning the lesson through it is the fastest way to bypass it?
 - So David continues walking as Shimei swears at him and throws stones and dust at David
 - This man's violation of the law by dishonoring God's anointed will not go unpunished forever
 - David eventually brings this man to task, so don't interpret David's mercy as a sign that Shimei isn't wrong
 - David is just saying that this wasn't the time to take matters into his own hands...he believed God intended this situation
- Interestingly, these two stories reveal both David's greatest weakness and strength back-to-back

- On the one hand, David was too easily deceived by those close to him who ingratiated themselves to David
 - Men like Ziba pulled the wool over David's eyes at times, and at other times David willfully turned a blind eye to their mistakes
 - This pattern led to cascading troubles for David, as bad actors close to the king often caused bigger problems later
- On the other hand, David's dependence on God often saved him from those very same bad actors because he allowed God to work
 - David readily accepted the rebukes of God as he does here with Shimei
 - That allowed David to recover quickly and move ahead in the plan of God
- The best course of action is always to avoid sinning in the first place, but since we all sin, the next best plan is to accept God's correction
 - Even as David continued to misjudge his enemies from time to time, he remained blessed by God for walking with Him
 - Perhaps more than anything else, this is what the Bible means when it calls David a man after God's own heart
- So David hides out in Bahurim, and his men are freshened there, thanks to the provision of Ziba, and meanwhile Absalom enters Jerusalem
 - And David's little spy sets up shop in Absalom's presence

2Sam. 16:15 Then Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, entered Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him.

2Sam. 16:16 Now it came about when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

2Sam. 16:17 Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?"

2Sam. 16:18 Then Hushai said to Absalom, "No! For whom the LORD, this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain.

2Sam. 16:19 "Besides, whom should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, so I will be in your presence."

- We remember that as David was leaving Jerusalem, he encountered this man, Hushai
- Hushai was a man of integrity, and as such, he supported David because he knew David was the Lord's anointed
- Hushai pledged his support to David, but David told him to stay in the city and serve as David's spy in Absalom's court
 - This put Hushai in a tough situation, because though he wanted to assist David, he was not a man to lie or deceive
 - So how could he fulfill his role without compromising his integrity?
- His solution was to speak truth at all times but in such a way that Absalom's prideful and arrogant heart would hear them a certain way
 - For example, in v.16 as Hushai comes to meet Absalom in the king's court, Hushai declares "Long live the king!"
 - In Hushai's heart, he is thinking of David as he speaks these words – but of course Absalom hears them as if about himself
 - This pattern continues throughout the story of Hushai
- In v.17 Absalom begins to interrogate Hushai, since he knows the man was a friend of David and a counselor
 - He asks Hushai are you not loyal to David? Is he not your friend? Why don't you go to be with David?
 - Hushai responds adamantly he will only follow the king that the Lord and the people of Israel have chosen
 - Here again, Hushai is speaking of David though it would sound to Absalom if he was speaking of the people's support for him
 - In v.18 Hushai shows himself to be a master of the double entendre, saying should I not serve in the presence of the king's son?
 - Just as Hushai served in David's presence, now he shall serve in the presence of the king's son, he says
 - Now Absalom hears the statement this way, "Just as I served David before, now I'm ready to serve you in his place."

- But what Hushai meant was, “Just as I served David when he was present, now I serve David in his absence by staying with you.”
- We can clearly see how Hushai is the answer to David’s prayer request to God in 2 Samuel 15:31
 - After David learned his counselor, Ahithophel, betrayed him to join Absalom’s court, David asked God to undermine his counsel
 - And immediately Hushai appeared as an answer to David’s request
 - And with an ally on the inside, David can now thwart his son’s military advantage through bad counsel
- And immediately Hushai begins to make an impact for David’s side

[2Sam. 16:20](#) Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, “Give your advice. What shall we do?”

[2Sam. 16:21](#) Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Go in to your father’s concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father. The hands of all who are with you will also be strengthened.”

[2Sam. 16:22](#) So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went in to his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel.

[2Sam. 16:23](#) The advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one inquired of the word of God; so was all the advice of Ahithophel regarded by both David and Absalom.

- When Absalom turns to Ahithophel asking advice, Bathsheba’s grandfather advises that Absalom sleep with David’s concubines
 - A concubine was the word used for a slave wife...a woman who was taken as a wife but yet not a free woman
 - A concubine worked like any slave in the home or field, but she was also married to her owner which elevated her among slaves
 - But her status in the household was always below that of a free wife, and she was never treated as more than a slave
 - Moreover, concubines were property, which meant they were transferred as part of the estate when their master died
- David had at least ten concubines in addition to his multiple free wives, which as we’ve discussed before was contrary to God’s plan

- And again that decision brings problems for David, as Absalom sees opportunity to take advantage of these women
- Ahithophel recommends that Absalom bed these ten concubines because of the symbolism involved
- When a king died, the new king inherited the concubines, so he consummated the relationships as a symbol
- Sleeping with the kings' slave wives was a bold statement that made it clear Absalom was taking over
- And to make sure that the message was communicated clearly, they pitched a tent on the roof of David's house
 - And then they paraded the ten concubines one at a time into the tent in full view of everyone
 - I'm supposing this was done over a series of evenings, so the spectacle would have built over the days until everyone knew
 - Ironically, this roof is where David stood spying Bathsheba, which seems to be the Lord's way of connecting the events
 - David's infidelity with Uriah's wife began a spiral of events that could be traced to this moment where David's son commits adultery on David
 - We can't say that God will always bring things back upon our heads in such a way
 - But we can say He uses everything we give Him to discipline us, to teach us and grow us
 - The effect of Absalom's behavior is to solidify his claims to the throne and to put an end to any hope of a compromise
 - The entire city is now on notice that Absalom intends to fight David for the throne and that fight has now become nasty
 - So if anyone was still on the fence over who they supported, everyone knew they had to pick a side now
 - Because they could expect that those who lose this fight will be put to death and perhaps all who sided with them as well
- Finally, the chapter ends in v.23 with a comment about Ahithophel's authority in Absalom's court

- The writer says this man's counsel had become equal to the word of God for Absalom and even for David when he served in David's court
 - The point is that the man's counsel was never challenged, probably because he had proven to give sound advice
 - But the man's counsel wasn't without error, of course, and in the end Absalom's trust of Ahithophel gives Hushai an opening

2Sam. 17:1 Furthermore, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Please let me choose 12,000 men that I may arise and pursue David tonight.

2Sam. 17:2 "I will come upon him while he is weary and exhausted and terrify him, so that all the people who are with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king alone, **2Sam. 17:3** and I will bring back all the people to you. The return of everyone depends on the man you seek; then all the people will be at peace."

2Sam. 17:4 So the plan pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

- Ahithophel gives more counsel to Absalom recommending a battle plan to attack David, and the plan is sound and likely to succeed
 - He says to attack with 12,000 men, which was far more than David possessed at that time
 - Attack now while David is weary and expect that such an overwhelming force will demoralize David's support
 - They will flee David, and then Ahithophel can strike David personally, since few others were willing to do so
- Ahithophel correctly concludes that David is the key to winning the nation...if David dies, then the nation would fall behind Absalom
 - And the plan pleases Absalom, because as usual Ahithophel's advice is good and no one challenges it
 - Then Absalom sees an opportunity to test Hushai's loyalty

2Sam. 17:5 Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he has to say."

2Sam. 17:6 When Hushai had come to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "Ahithophel has spoken thus. Shall we carry out his plan? If not, you speak."

2Sam. 17:7 So Hushai said to Absalom, "This time the advice that Ahithophel has given is not good."

[2Sam. 17:8](#) Moreover, Hushai said, “You know your father and his men, that they are mighty men and they are fierce, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. And your father is an expert in warfare, and will not spend the night with the people.

[2Sam. 17:9](#) “Behold, he has now hidden himself in one of the caves or in another place; and it will be when he falls on them at the first attack, that whoever hears it will say, ‘There has been a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.’

[2Sam. 17:10](#) “And even the one who is valiant, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will completely lose heart; for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man and those who are with him are valiant men.

[2Sam. 17:11](#) “But I counsel that all Israel be surely gathered to you, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea in abundance, and that you personally go into battle.

[2Sam. 17:12](#) “So we shall come to him in one of the places where he can be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and of all the men who are with him, not even one will be left.

[2Sam. 17:13](#) “If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it into the valley until not even a small stone is found there.”

- Abishai calls Hushai into the room to answer the same question, but first they tell Hushai what Ahithophel counseled
 - The trap was this: if Hushai was still on David’s side, then surely he would try to talk Absalom out of the attack, since it was likely to succeed
 - Of course, Hushai can recognize the trap for what it is, so he searches for a way to respond that will maintain Absalom’s trust
 - And yet, Hushai continues to preserve his integrity and steer around deception or lies
 - So his strategy is to simultaneously undermine Absalom’s confidence in his attack plan while arguing for the attack to take place
 - In v.7 Hushai opens provocatively by saying Ahithophel’s advice was not good
 - He says that Absalom remembers how mighty David’s army has always been and how good a military leader David is
 - Therefore, he should not expect David to be resting in the open in the city

- Instead, in v.9 Hushai insists that David is in a cave by now, out of sight and out of reach
 - And if his troops go looking for David, he will respond with a surprise attack and Absalom will lose
 - Then all the people will hear that those who follow Absalom were slaughtered and the tide will turn against him
- Instead, Hushai counsels, Absalom ought to gather everyone who sides with him, every man from Dan to Beersheba, and he should lead them
 - Then they would fall upon him in a place where he can be found and of him and all who are with him, none will be left
 - And if David should go into a city, then Israel shall destroy the city, as if pulling it down into the valley, to defeat David
- The entire story is make-believe and hyperbole designed to excite Absalom
 - Hushai was trying to buy David time by leading Absalom to alter his plan
 - Rather than attack right away, he would take time to build up a massive army from across Israel
 - And then he would enter into the open to attack David or perhaps he didn't know how the battle would go
 - The main point was delay to give David time to prepare
 - And predictably, Absalom likes the advice, since it seems even more likely to win and it plays to Absalom's ego
 - So Absalom gives orders to follow Hushai's advice over Ahithophel's advice
 - And in v.14 we're told that this was in keeping with David's prayer request that the Lord thwart Ahithophel's counsel
 - So now the cloak and daggers part of the story ensues, as Hushai must now get word to David of Absalom's plan

2Sam. 17:15 Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, "This is what Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is what I have counseled.

[2Sam. 17:16](#) “Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, ‘Do not spend the night at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means cross over, or else the king and all the people who are with him will be destroyed.’”

[2Sam. 17:17](#) Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En-rogel, and a maidservant would go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David, for they could not be seen entering the city.

[2Sam. 17:18](#) But a lad did see them and told Absalom; so the two of them departed quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard, and they went down into it.

[2Sam. 17:19](#) And the woman took a covering and spread it over the well’s mouth and scattered grain on it, so that nothing was known.

[2Sam. 17:20](#) Then Absalom’s servants came to the woman at the house and said, “Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?” And the woman said to them, “They have crossed the brook of water.” And when they searched and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

- We remember that David told Hushai that he had allies among the priests, Zadok and Abiathar
 - So Hushai directs that David be informed that he not remain in the town in the open
 - Although Hushai counseled against an immediate attack, he couldn’t be sure that his advice would be followed
 - He hopes he has bought David some time, but meanwhile he wants to warn David to hide his men
 - So the priests take the news and relay it to their sons, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, so they can run to David
 - If the priests themselves left, it would be noticed, but their sons could be gone without causing much suspicion
 - To further avoid arousing suspicions, the two sons stayed outside the city of Jerusalem in En-Rogel
 - En-Rogel was a town at the juncture of the Kidron and Hinnom valleys, just outside the walls of Jerusalem to the south
 - A maidservant was sent to find them with the message for David, and then they would leave En-rogel undetected

- Except that a young boy did see them leaving, and for some reason this led the boy to report the news back to Absalom
- The priests' sons realize they were seen, so they decide to hide in the city of Bahurim rather than risk exposing David's location
- When Absalom's servants came looking for the priests' sons, they can't be found because a woman hid them in her well
 - The story reads similar to the spies of Jericho and Rahab, and there is a similar feel to the story
 - In both cases, the Lord was working through undercover methods to preserve His people
- Hushai and the others with him are demonstrating an interesting principle of spiritual warfare at work: being wise as serpents and innocent as doves
 - The enemy is crafty like a serpent, always at work to undermine the church and God's work through us
 - And the Lord tells us that as we stand against the enemy, we need to understand what warfare looks like sometimes
 - It's not pretty...it involves working undercover and appreciating the need for creativity, resourcefulness and secrecy at times
 - The enemy has spies everywhere, people you think are on your side, yet secretly they are reporting back to Satan in one way or another
 - They are his eyes and ears and they can become his hands and feet
 - So when we work to advance the kingdom, we need to be wise in how we do it
 - We must not underestimate the enemy's power or his reach or resources
 - I've heard it said that in every new church that forms, the enemy will send some of his people into that body to serve as spies and agents
 - These people don't know they are serving Satan, of course
 - None of us see that in ourselves, especially before we come to faith in Jesus

- But as Paul says, we do not war against flesh and blood, and therefore we should recognize that everyone is serving someone
- So we must be wise in how we pursue ministry, expecting the enemy to disrupt us at every chance and not making that easier than necessary
 - Which is why Jesus says being wise as a serpent must come with innocence
 - We must do as Hushai does here...being resourceful in the battle without sinning
 - Because when we lower our standards and use the enemy's tactics, he can turn that against us
 - If we sin, we give the enemy opportunity to accuse us, and that may come back to stop us
 - We need to remain above reproach but willing to do whatever is necessary short of sin to outmaneuver the enemy
 - These young men are acting as spies in a real-life war, but they are also working behind enemy lines in a battle with Satan

2Sam. 17:21 It came about after they had departed that they came up out of the well and went and told King David; and they said to David, "Arise and cross over the water quickly for thus Ahithophel has counseled against you."

2Sam. 17:22 Then David and all the people who were with him arose and crossed the Jordan; and by dawn not even one remained who had not crossed the Jordan.

- In this case, the young men are successful in hiding and avoid capture, and so they were able to continue to David and pass along the message
 - David receives the counsel, moves his men across the Jordan and into safety outside Absalom's reach
 - At some point the news of David's escape would have made its way back to Absalom's court
 - And as it does, Ahithophel recognizes that this likely means Absalom's eventual defeat
 - Hushai's advice was correct: David was the superior military leader, and if Absalom tried to fight David on equal terms, he would lose

- Absalom foolishly heard it as a challenge and opportunity for glory
- But Ahithophel understood the folly of trying to challenge David on the battlefield, so David's escape spelled doom for Absalom
- And when Absalom lost, David would return to the city, and anyone who aligned with Absalom would die
- So Ahithophel decides that he will come to his end in this way, and so he decides to take matters into his own hands

2Sam. 17:23 Now when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and arose and went to his home, to his city, and set his house in order, and strangled himself; thus he died and was buried in the grave of his father.

- Death was coming for this man one way or another, he knew, so he preferred it at his own hand on his own terms
- He had betrayed God's anointed, yet in the end, it was he who was left without friends

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2Sam. 17:24 Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

- After David had crossed the Jordan, Absalom eventually amassed his army and begins his pursuit
 - The army also crosses the Jordan and heads toward Mahanaim, where David is encamped
 - We will pick up the story there next time
 - But now it's time to revisit our picture of Christ found in this story
 - We began this picture looking at how David's departure paralleled Jesus' departure after His death and resurrection
 - And now we see more parallels emerge in today's chapter
 - But as we look at them, remember that the picture isn't being built in perfect chronological order
 - The parallels today, in some cases, relate to earlier events in Jesus' time on earth

- The common factor in all these details is their relationship to Jesus' first coming
 - So we're not trying to find a chronological story of Jesus in the story of David
 - The connection is present in broad strokes, similar to the way the story of Joseph parallels Jesus in the broad strokes
- And we see that clearly today, beginning with the account of Zima meeting David
 - As David reaches the pinnacle of the Mount of Olives, he is given a donkey so the king may ride it
 - Which reminds us that as Jesus entered the city on Palm Sunday, He too was met in roughly the same place by a donkey
 - The disciples found the donkey where Jesus told them, and they brought it to Him to ride into the city
 - Next, we have the meeting of David and Shimei, and this man plays a particularly powerful role in creating a picture of Christ
 - We'll see much more of that picture later, but for now he serves as a representative of the people in Israel who rejected Jesus
 - As David walks out of the city, Shimei curses at him, throws stones and dirt and declares he is not the rightful king
 - And yet David does nothing to stop the man, and even declares that the cursing is from God
 - And likewise, as Jesus was taken to the cross, the crowd spit on Him and mocked Him and declared Jesus was not their rightful king
 - But in response, Jesus did not retaliate
 - Moreover, Scripture says that the crowd's rejection was Jesus taking a curse from God the Father on our behalf
 - And David's circumstances were made far worse by the betrayal of a close confidant, Ahithophel, who gave counsel to David's enemy
 - His counsel to David, in effect, was that it was expedient for the king to die for the people so that the whole nation not perish

- But after that counsel came to nothing, Ahithophel decided to take his own life
- And Jesus was betrayed by a close confidant, Judas, who went to Jesus' enemies as an informant
 - Judas assisted the Pharisees in their battle plan against Jesus
 - That plan was in keeping with the High Priest who said it was good for one man to die so the whole nation would not perish
 - But after his advice led to an unexpected outcome, Judas took his own life
- Here again, we see parallel after parallel between David's situation and the story of Jesus, though the parallels are scattered and not in order
 - Nevertheless, it does beg the question of why these parallels exist
 - And the answer is because of where it's leading us ultimately
 - The parallels to Jesus' first coming were never intended to be the point, because you couldn't see it in advance anyway
 - By the time someone could notice the parallels were evident, Christ's first coming was over and obvious to all
 - The purpose in the parallels is to prepare us for the second part of the story, David's return
 - And that's where our story is headed next...