

“Lessons from the Life of David” – Pastor Jim Ruddy

Study # 43 – Found Fighting Against God – 2 Samuel 16:15 - 17:23

I. ABSALOM’S ARRIVAL HAILED 16:15-19

A. THE PROMOTING OF DAVID’S ENEMIES 16:15

1. THE CONSPIRACY OF ABSALOM 2 Sam. 15:1 - 16:14

- David’s son Absalom rebelled against his father, overtaking the throne by *“stealing the hearts of the men of Israel!”*
- Seeking to spare the city from the destruction, David and his men moved quickly from Jerusalem and traveled until they found a resting place near the Jordan.

2. THE DUPLICITY OF AHITHOPHEL 2 Sam. 16:15

- David’s former counselor, Ahithophel, who was also the grandfather of Bathsheba, was essential to the collusion.

B. THE POSITIONING OF DAVID’S FRIENDS 16:16-19

1. THE SECRECY OF ZADOK & ABIATHAR 2 Sam. 15:27-37

- Zadok and Abiathar, along with their sons, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, take-up “listening posts” within Jerusalem in order to keep David informed of Absalom’s advancements.

2. THE LOYALTY OF HUSHAI 2 Sam. 15:32-37, 16:16-19

- David encourages Hushai to return to Jerusalem and join Absalom’s court as an “insider.”
- At great risk to himself, Hushai ventured into the lion’s den, in order to help David, his friend and King.
- In the same way that Jonathan was in Saul’s palace to give David warning of his father’s plans, now Hushai was within the headquarters of Absalom and could inform David of any impending plans. cf. 1 Sam 19:1-3; 20:1-42

II. AHITHOPHEL’S COUNSEL HEARD 16:20-17:4

A. HIS PLAN TO HUMILIATE DAVID 16:20-23

- Ahithophel advises Absalom to lie with David’s concubines, knowing that the king’s harem was expected to be passed on to his successor.
- This is to be seen as the fulfillment of the judgment of God that was announced through Nathan. cf. 2 Sam 12:11-12

B. HIS PLOT TO ANNIHILATE DAVID 17:1-4

- Ahithophel then encouraged Absalom to take swift action against David, striking while his father and his men were tired and disheartened.
- The condition of Absalom’s heart is seen in the fact that he heartily approved of Ahithophel’s counsel to slay David, The LORD’s anointed, and his own father. cf. 2 Sam. 1:14

III. HUSHAI'S COUNSEL HEEDED 17:5-14

- Although Ahithophel's saying "*pleased Absalom,*" he balked and consulted with Hushai, David's secret friend.
- Hushai presented a clever and credible argument that caused Absalom to change his mind and postpone his immediate pursuit and attack upon the fugitive king.
- The delay on Absalom's part afforded David the opportunity to rest his weary men and position them to his best advantage.
- Had Absalom followed Ahithophel's counsel, David would have been defeated and the kingdom given over to his rebellious son.
- Hushai's counsel, that Absalom "*go to battle in person*" would ultimately result in Absalom losing his own life. cf. 2 Sam. 18:9-17
- Absalom's change of heart (v14) is attributed to The LORD.
 - cf. Prov. 21:1; 2 Sam. 15:34; Isa. 8:10;
 - "for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it — lest you even be found to fight against God."* Acts 5:38-39

IV. HUSHAI'S WARNING HERALDED 17:15-20

A. ZADOK AND ABIATHAR INFORMED 17:15-16

- Uncertain that Absalom will stay with his strategy, Hushai tells the undercover priests to get an urgent message to David, instructing him to cross the Jordan without haste.

B. JONATHAN AND AHIMAAZ ENDANGERED 17:17– 20

1. Waiting by Enrogel v17

- Not risking to be seen in the city, Jonathan and Ahimaaz wait at Enrogel, a spring less than a mile from Jerusalem.
- A servant girl relays the news from Zadok and Abiathar, but despite their precaution, a young man observes the rendezvous and reports back to Absalom. cf. 1 Sam. 21:7

2. Hiding in Bahurim v18-20

- The dispatched troops are unable to locate the informants, who are hidden in a well by some farmers sympathetic to David's cause. cf. Note the parallels to Joshua 2:1-21

V. DAVID'S ESCAPE HASTENED 17:21-22

- Receiving the word from the spies, and with no time to lose, David and his entourage use the cover of darkness to cross over to the eastern side of the Jordan.

VI. AHITHOPHEL'S LIFE HALTED 17:23

- Knowing that David will now escape and eventually return to power, and that he had devised a plan to annihilate David, Ahithophel, a marked man, takes his own life. cf. Ps. 7:10-16