

October 21, 2026
“Shimei Curses David”
2 Samuel 16-17

Tonight as we go through these two chapters, will hear about the terrible suffering King David experiences as he flees Jerusalem—but it will also show us how King David is able to shine through... even in this darkest time of his life. We will see how David encounters Ziba's evil manipulation and treachery, in deceiving King David with false accusations against Mephibosheth). Then, he encounters this crazy man Shimei who unleashes a savage public cursing on David and his men and then David's unexpected response, followed up in chapter 17 with the counsel being given to Absalom's camp.

The lesson for us tonight is to help us see how King David's humility and his trust in our awesome God's sovereignty, allowed him to receive even cursing and insults and threats of death with grace, *while his enemies were driven by bitterness and self-interest.*

As we have discovered in the last few chapters, David's life was in danger, Absalom his son had King David on the run and he knew he had to flee Jerusalem. Yet, he took time to stop at the top of the Mount of Olives, look back upon Jerusalem and the tabernacle, and he worshiped God.

Like so many of us, David knew worship was always important... and all the more important to worship when circumstances were at their worst.

2 Samuel 16: Mephibosheth's Servant

16 When David was a little past the top of *the mountain*, there was Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth, who met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them two hundred *loaves* of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred summer fruits, and a skin of wine. **2** And the king said to Ziba, “What do you mean to do with these?” So Ziba said, “The donkeys *are* for the king’s household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who are faint in the wilderness to drink.”

Then the king said, “And where is your master’s son?”

And Ziba said to the king, “Indeed he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, ‘Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.’ ”

There’s actually a lot going on here so let’s dig in.

So who is Ziba?

Ziba, was Jonathan, King Saul’s son’s *servant*, but he’s now Mephibosheth’s servant and he’s made a decision to meet king David as he crests the top of the mountain with deception as his motivation.

And who is Mephibosheth? We know him from from chapter 4 of 2 Samuel. He was the little guy the nurse dropped when fleeing with him and he was crippled in both feet, he’s King Saul’s only surviving relative, Jonathan’s son and of course Saul’s grandson, *the last male descendant of Saul*. He had a strong legal claim to the throne, but he was lame and too young to become king at the time of Saul and Jonathan’s death.

David has always shown great kindness to Mephibosheth, who was a good friend and supporter of king David.

So back to Ziba. He meets king David with an impressive offering of saddled donkeys, bread and wine, summer fruits and raisins to replenish those who are travelling with David, as well as an *elaborate lie* with which to deceive king David into believing that his friend Mephibosheth, *has turned against him*.

Basically, Ziba told David that Mephibosheth was in Jerusalem, waiting to come to power after David and Absalom ruined each other. Ziba told David that Mephibosheth longed to restore the family of Saul to power by saying, "*Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.*"

So how does David respond to what he's being told by Ziba?

4 So the king said to Ziba, "Here... all that *belongs* to Mephibosheth is yours."

Sadly, Ziba's lie has deceived David, mostly because he just wasn't thinking clearly and he actually gives Ziba, everything that belongs to Mephibosheth.

This evil deception, this lie from Ziba, hurt David deeply and in a time of crisis it was the last thing he needed to hear, *that another friend had turned against him*. It was a time when David had been without prayer and under considerable duress and he was exhausted.

He should have taken time to seek the Lord and check the facts, *but instead*, he made a rash decision, thinking that Mephibosheth is double crossing him and after all he had done for him. So he decides to give all that belongs to Mephibosheth, *to that lying, conniving, deceiving wretch of a man* Ziba and that one decision affected many people, including Mephibosheth.

David has rewarded what he thought was Ziba's loyalty, while punishing what he thought was Mephibosheth's disloyalty!

The opposite was true!

Ziba had used this crisis to create a personal advantage and the word despicable, is too good of a word to describe him!

And even though we'll see in 2 Samuel 19 (*not tonight though*) that Mephibosheth is eventually proven innocent of Ziba's charges, *sadly David never completely reverses his decision.*

Now listen to how this 'horrible man' Ziba responds to David's generosity. And Ziba said, "I humbly bow before you *that I may find favour in your sight, my lord, O king!*"

Now keep in mind that David was at a very low point in his life and sadly was easily deceived by Ziba, perhaps because he was blinded by the gifts and overwhelmed by Ziba's generosity, *to the point he believed Ziba was a good man?*

And yet what a lying serpent he was, he bows down to the ground, convinced that his wicked deception has succeeded *and you know, for a time it did!*

But apparently he had never read (or believed) [Nu 32:23](#) that warns "*behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out.*"

And as we'll see in one of our upcoming Wednesday night studies together, *Ziba's sin would soon be found out.*

Church, I know that all of you sitting here tonight would never sin against the Lord, *but should it ever happen, be sure, even **your sin** will be found out.*

Well, if David's life wasn't bad enough, let's read the next few verses...

Shimei Curses David

5 Now when King David came to Bahurim, there was a man from the family of the house of Saul, whose name was... Shimei the son of Gera, coming from there. He came out... cursing continuously as he came. **6** And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left. **7** Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you rogue! **8** The Lord has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the Lord has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you *are caught* in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"

Wow! David arrives in Bahurim, which is east of Jerusalem on the way to the Jericho, when he encounters a crazy man named Shimei. Who is this crazy man Shimei? *He was a distant relative of King Saul* and apparently he still resented, *or even hated* David for believing that David caused King Saul's death and by replacing the dynasty of Saul.

Shimei is cursing David relentlessly and starts throwing stones at him as well as the mighty men who were with him and he's wrongly accusing him of being a bloodthirsty man.

It seems he knew David was at a low point in his life and Shimei, *being about as offensive a person as one can be*, was consumed with destroying any shred of dignity or confidence that David had left.

“It is very hard to bear a cowardly attack. One is very apt to reply and use hard words to one who takes advantage of your position and deals you the coward’s blow. Only the coward strikes a man when he is down.” (Spurgeon)

Sadly, there are always people ready to rejoice when a leader falls, and it seems Shimei had this hatred in his heart against David for a long time. He probably kept quiet when David was ruling with absolute authority, but now he feels it’s the time to unload all the pent up hatred and unleashes it when he knew David was at a very low point.

In the world we live in today, Shimei would have had the backing from numerous interest groups that like to join in on any *anti-everything*, without knowing anything about what they’re protesting about or even caring to know the truth, *but Shimei is alone and will not be deterred, even though David’s mighty men are right there with him.*

And the reality here is, *that Shimei was completely wrong.*
In reality, none of this came upon David because of what he did to Saul or Saul’s family.

Lets look at the facts

1: Shimei was wrong because David actually treated Saul and his family with great love and graciousness. He truly cared and loved Saul and his family. David didn’t overthrow a Saul. In fact, *time and time again*, when he had the opportunity to kill Saul, *what did he do*, David spared his life.

2: Shimei was wrong because David was not a bloodthirsty man. It is true that he was a man of war, but he was not a bloodthirsty man.

3: Shimei was wrong because David didn't bring Saul and his family to ruin – Saul himself brought the family to ruin.

This last point is where Shimei was right, in saying that the LORD had brought this upon David, *but not for any of the reasons Shimei had in his corrupt mind.*

9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!”

You've got to know this was coming and you can bet Abishai knew exactly how he was going to take care of this dead dog and all he needed was King David's blessing.

Sadly, if I was in David's position, I might have said, “*Why haven't you done so already, this guy is really annoying!*”

But David was a man after God's own heart and he handled this very differently.

Technically speaking, in those days Abishai had right to say this because in Exodus 22:28, the Law specifically says, “*You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.*”

Ecclesiastes 10:20 says, *Do not curse the king, even in your thought;*

But listen now to how David responded...

10 But the king said, “What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah?

David says, Abishai, what am I going to do with you?

Church, remember in (1 Samuel 26:11) *as I’m sure you do*, when Abishai was with David in the wilderness of Ziph and they were hiding from Saul, because he was trying to kill David?

Well one day, David and Abishai came upon Saul sleeping in a cave and Abishai said, “**Let me pin him to the ground. The Lord has delivered him into our hands,**” and David said, “No,” “**The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed**”.

As Peter would do the centuries later in the garden of Gethsemane, Abishai seemed determined to defend his king with a sword. But David knew better and look how he responds.

The last part of verse 10 says, **So let him curse, because the Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David.’ Who then shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’ ”**

This is a mindset that many of us need to hear and understand...

David let Shimei speak because he *wasn’t* a bloodthirsty man and ironically, if David were the kind of man Shimei said he was, David would have killed Shimei himself, without giving it a thought.

But he doesn’t and surprisingly says, “*So let him curse, because the Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David.’ Who then shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’*”

David is basically telling Abishai. If the LORD has told him to curse me, then who are you to stop him?"

David's maturity in his knowledge of His Lord is showing through here. David was willing to hear what God might say to him, through a cursing critic.

I like what Pastor Jon Courson had to say regarding David's response.

How I appreciate David's attitude here. Notice how he handled this criticism. First, he looked up. At this point in his life, David understood that God was in all things. Earlier, he didn't have such understanding. Earlier, he was pugnacious, a fighter. Earlier, it was the only kindness of Abigail that kept him from destroying Nabel. (1 Samuel 25). But now David understood that this attack upon him could not come forth without the Lord allowing it. Oh, that we might have the same understanding. Dear Saint, the Lord has allowed that person to criticize you not to destroy you, but to develop you. Norman Vincent Peele said, "I am concerned that Christians are more willing to be destroyed by praise than to be saved by criticism." It's true. We are more willing to march off to battle with the applause of men ringing in our ears than to hear a valid criticism - one the Lord has allowed to surface.

11 And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now *may this* Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the Lord has ordered him.

David reflects back on decisions he's made and the mess he has with his son Absalom. *He's basically saying, if you think Shimei's words are harsh, they're nothing compared to what my own son Absalom is trying to do me.*

David realizes, that he has erred greatly in dealing with his own family *and saying, look at the mess my own family is in.*

Church, when someone puts you down, starts criticizing you, *don't lash back at them*, do what David did. Maybe some of what they're saying is true, *oh they might not have the details right*, but you can see some truth in what they're saying.

Paul declared Romans 7:18. *“In my flesh dwells no good thing.”*

It's truly a turning point in life, when you finally get it, *you realize that there's nothing good in your flesh* and it's at that point, that you no longer seek to defend, or feel the need to protect yourself, or to stand up for yourself and you're free.

David goes on to say,

12 *It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing this day.”*

Instead of getting caught up in his present circumstances, David looks to the future. He knows that God is hearing Shimei's cursing words and he's thinking, *maybe God will be kind and merciful to me because of Shimei's cursing.*

Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 5:11, **Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.**

And that's exactly what was happening here!

Listen to what Charles Spurgeon had to say, **Let him alone, and let him curse: “David could take this fellow's head off and that in a moment, and yet he said, ‘Let him alone. Let him curse.’ And this makes a splendid example. If you can revenge yourself, DON'T.**

If you could do it as easily as open your hand, keep it shut. If one bitter word could end the argument, ask for grace to spare that bitter word.” (Spurgeon)

In my old life, *I used to have a quick wit*. I could easily tear someone down if I felt it was needed, *but since getting saved*, I no longer have that same desire. *Occasionally my flesh wants to*, but I will not go there.

As an example, **In my job outside of the church**, I work with someone that spends so much of their day firing off humorous *and sometimes derogatory comments*, especially ‘**old man jokes**’ that he loves to send my way. *He says it’s how he shows me love*.

Often his comments are meant in fun, but sometimes they actually cause me to think, like David, and ask myself, was that one from the Lord, to remind me of what I still need to work on?

So, I never get mad or annoyed at my coworker or ever unleash a scathing reply, I just ask our LORD for grace to spare any bitter word.

13 And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and kicked up dust. **14** Now the king and all the people who were with him became weary; so they refreshed themselves there.

Shimei would just not go away, he continued to throw rocks and kick up dust all the way to the river, in fact, Shimei was a thorn in King David’s life right up to the end because of David’s oath not to kill him. *But, in (1 Kings 2:9) we see that on his deathbed, David charged his son Solomon with the task of executing Shimei:*

He said, “Do not consider him innocent. You are a man of wisdom; you will know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood.”

Listen to what Morgan had to say, in refusing to cling to the throne, David was like Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:6-8). “As we thus follow David through these days of humiliation and shame...we nevertheless understand more perfectly that he was indeed a man after God’s own heart.” (Morgan)

The Advice of Ahithophel

We now go back to Jerusalem where Absalom has just arrived and is looking at his options to defeat once and for all, his father David .

15 Meanwhile Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him. **16** And so it was, when Hushai the Archite, David’s friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, “*Long live the king! Long live the king!*”

17 So Absalom said to Hushai, “*Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?*”

18 And Hushai said to Absalom, “No, but whom the Lord and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his I will be, and with him I will remain. **19** Furthermore, whom should 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.*”

Okay, so Hushai the Archite is a loyal friend of David and when he came to Absalom saying things like “*Long* live the king! *Long* live the king!” Absalom is suspicious and asks Hushai, “Is this how you show loyalty to your friend? Why aren’t you with him?”

So Hushai turns up the praise and tells him exactly what David had instructed him to say and he lays it on thick:

“Just as I served your father, so, I will serve you.”

Hushai lied to Absalom... concealing his motives – Just like any good spy hides his or her, *true intentions*.

Surprisingly, or not surprisingly, Absalom took the bait and was satisfied that Hushai meant what he said.

Verse 19 continues....

Absalom said to Ahithophel, “Give advice as to what we should do.”

21 And Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Go in to your father’s concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong.”

Now remember that Ahithophel was one of David’s original and most respected advisors, who has now turned against David.

Why would he have done that?

Well there is an interesting detail in the biblical record that might help explain what motivated Ahithophel’s treachery, at least in part.

According to [2 Samuel 23:34](#), the son of Ahithophel was named Eliam. And, according to [2 Samuel 11:3](#), Bathsheba’s father was named Eliam.

So, if the Eliam in both passages is the same person, then Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba. It's possible that what David did to Bathsheba and her husband, prompted Ahithophel to, one, betray David and second, advise Absalom to sleep with his concubine as a further insult for what he had done? The connection between Ahithophel and Bathsheba is possible, but to be clear, not biblically conclusive.

So, his evil advice to Absalom, is that now that you're in the city, have physical relations with David's concubines. Such an act is disgraceful and would be an unspeakable insult to his father the king.

Ahithophel says, if you do this, you'll show all of the people that you despise your father and the people will know that you're completely committed to a course of rebellion and that any hope of reconciliation with your father is out of the question and then they *the people*, won't be afraid to follow you wholeheartedly.

So what does Absalom do?

22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

23 Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

Church, think back to (2 Samuel 12) and what Nathan had said to David, after what he had done to Bathsheba's husband Uriah. He said,

"This is what the Lord says:

Because of what you have done, I will cause your own household (*Absalom*) to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man before your very eyes, and he will go to bed with them in public view. **12** You did it secretly, but I will make this happen to you openly in the sight of all Israel.”

Was a Ahithophel’s Counsel righteous and holy? No. But it was clever, cunning, and very effective and in reality, it fulfilled God’s promise to David regarding his sin with Bathsheba .

Church, Like David, when we face betrayal or insult and lose what we thought was ours to keep, we can receive those trials with grace, ***if we truly believe that God***—not us—holds the future and that our role is simply to do what is right in the present moment.

2 Samuel 17 - The Advice of Ahithophel and Hushai

17 Moreover Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Now let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. **2** I will come upon him while he *is* weary and weak, and make him afraid. And all the people who *are* with him will flee, and I will strike only the king. **3** Then I will bring back all the people to you. When all return except the man whom you seek, all the people will be at peace.” **4** And the saying pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

So Ahithophel says, “I’m going to choose 12,000 men and we’ll leave tonight and pursue David:

This is actually wise counsel from Ahithophel. His plan calls for a quick, selective attack against David and that he’ll (strike only the king).

His plan called for urgency, because he knew David was on the run, he was tired and weary and not in a good place and the best chance they had, was to overtake David while he was still west of the Jordan River.

But notice this slip of the tongue. What did Ahithophel say? He said **“I will strike only the king:”** This slip of the tongue was like God interjecting truth, because deep in his heart, *even Ahithophel knew that David was the real king.*

Now Ahithophel’s counsel pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel: In truth, Ahithophel’s plan was smart. It was bold and had a very a high probability of success and it would spare Israel a long drawn out civil war between David’s mighty men and the supporters of Absalom.

Remember in chapter 15, when David prayed that Ahithophel would give bad advise to Absalom and then sent Hushai as a double agent to make sure, Ahithophel’s advice would be rejected.

Well, after hearing Ahithophel’s excellent strategy, we see the remarkable evidence of the hand of God as He answers David’s prayer in [2 Samuel 15:31](#). In the fact, as we will see in the next verse, Absalom actually asked for another opinion, *from Hushai, **the double agent***, after Ahithophel’s very wise, well-received counsel.

This shows us that God is in control.

Now comes the Advice of Hushai

5 Then Absalom said, “Now call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he says too.” **6** And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, “Ahithophel has spoken in this manner. Shall we do as he says? If not, speak up.” **7** So Hushai said to Absalom: “The advice that Ahithophel has given *is* not good at this time. **8** For,” said Hushai, “you know your father and his men, that they *are* mighty men, and they *are* enraged in their minds, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field; and your father *is* a man of war, and will not camp with the people. **9** Surely by now he is hidden in some pit, or in some *other* place. And it will be, when some of them are overthrown at the first, that whoever hears *it* will say, ‘There is a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.’ **10** And even he *who is* valiant, whose heart *is* like the heart of a lion, will melt completely. For all Israel knows that your father *is* a mighty man, and *those who are* with him *are* valiant men.

I’m thinking, that Hushai is thinking, oh no! We can only imagine how his heart sank when he heard the brilliant plan that Ahithophel put forward and he needed to quickly think of a counter-plan that could defeat it, just as David had asked him to do.

So he starts out by saying, *Yeah, about* advice that Ahithophel has given you, *it’s just not good*, especially under these present circumstances.

In reality, Hushai knows that David is in a bad place right now and his men are tired and weak and *that* Ahithophel is right, this is the best time for Absalom to attack, so *he begins by reflecting on King David’s mighty past*. He says, You know your father and his men, these are mighty men, *not to be taken lightly*. He’s hoping that this would trigger Absalom’s memory and he would begin to *vividly* remember his father the King, ***the mighty warrior***.

And he goes on to describe him like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field, which is a great reminder of just how dangerous David could be and that *your father is* a man of war and he's certainly not going to camp with his men. He won't be easy to find because by now he's hiding in some pit or found some other area way too difficult for you to find.

Again, Hushai says this knowing David could barely keep himself together, *but he effectively painted the picture*, that David and his men were as dangerous as ever and should not be attacked quickly.

So in Hushai's assessment, a quick attack will only cause a slaughter among the men who follow Absalom, stressing that it was just too risky to attack David immediately.

We can only imagine that he said all this, *praying that God would indeed answer David's prayer* and defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

11 Therefore I advise that all Israel be fully gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, like the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. **12** So we will come upon him in some place where he may be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground. And of him and all the men who *are* with him there shall not be left so much as one. **13** Moreover, if he has withdrawn into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city; and we will pull it into the river, until there is not one small stone found there."

So Hushai explains that Ahithophel's advice won't work and has the risk of failing big time. *So he now begins to share his plan.*

He says, *I advise that all Israel be fully gathered*, now this would smart because it would take time and it was a good way to buy David more time. So Hushai's plan is two fold, he not only needed to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, which was of the utmost importance! But he also needed to do whatever he could to buy David more time, before the inevitable attack came.

Next, Hushai very cunningly involves Absalom in the plan, *by suggesting that he go to battle in person instead of Ahithophel*: This strong suggestion spoke to Absalom's vanity, which would give him the opportunity to prove that he was just as mighty a soldier as his father David was. In Ahithophel's plan, Ahithophel led the battle; in Hushai's plan, Absalom would lead the battle, and that would lead to Absalom having a really bad hair day, as we'll learn about next time we're together.

14 So Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Archite *is* better than the advice of Ahithophel." For the Lord had purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring disaster on Absalom.

For me *and I hope for you also*, this is the part of tonight's message, ***that we really need to grab hold of.***

Church, **GOD IS IN CONTROL** *and nothing can change that and you know, that brings me great peace.*

And here is just one example of how God works. Ahithophel gave brilliant advice to Absalom in regards to defeating King David and *Absalom and the men of Israel agreed* that it was a great plan.

But it's interesting, that even after hearing Ahithophel's advice, something or maybe better said, **(Someone) Yahweh**, stirred Absalom's interest and caused him to want to hear what Hushai thought of it.

And then something happened that had never happened before, it was agreed that the advice of Hushai the Archite is better than the advice of Ahithophel: This was the first time anyone ever said this – people always favoured the advice of Ahithophel.

Church, the LORD had purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel: God was in control. The throne of Israel belonged to Him and He could grant it or deny at His will.

Morgan had this to say, “This is one of the great principles of life which every page of the Bible emphasizes and illustrates. Men cannot escape God. They go their own way, but that way never sets them free from the authority and the invincible power of God.”
(Morgan)

From these verses we see that the LORD purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel, **because David prayed**.

Church, *prayer moves the hand of God* and remember what David prayed. O Lord, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness! (2 Samuel 15:31)

Remember... David prayed that Ahithophel would give Absalom foolish council. *Ahithophel's counsel, however, was brilliant.*

Church, It's pretty clear that God does not need our advice. *David prayed how best he knew how, and God heard him*, but God didn't do it the way David prayed.

I can't tell you how many times I've prayed about a problem and after, thought of all the different ways God could answer my prayer, but almost every single time, *God answers in a way, I never could have imagined.*

God doesn't need us to figure out the situation.

We need to remember that Jesus Christ ever lives to make intercession for the Saints. (Hebrews 7:25). This means that right now, at the right hand of the Father, our Lord Jesus intercedes and says, "Father... what Randy means is..."

I've heard it said, The older we get in the Lord, the more we understand the foolishness of presumption - of dictating to the Lord what He must do or how he must work - and the wisdom of saying, *"Father, you know what's right in this situation. Here's what I think, but only you know what's right. Therefore, Thy kingdom come, Lord. Thy will be done."*

Hushai Warns David to Escape

15 Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so I have advised. **16** Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, 'Do not spend this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily cross over, lest the king and all the people who *are* with him be swallowed up.' "

Hushai was sending a message to David, saying, "I've bought you some time, David. Now split and cross over the Jordan River, and use the time to regroup before Absalom's attack.

17 Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed at En Rogel, for they dared not be seen coming into the city; so a female servant would come and tell them, and they would go and tell King David.

18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom. But both of them went away quickly and came to a man's house in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; and they went down into it. **19** Then the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground grain on it; and the thing was not known. **20** And when Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, "Where *are* Ahimaaz and Jonathan?"

So the woman said to them, "They have gone over the water brook."

And when they had searched and could not find *them*, they returned to Jerusalem. **21** Now it came to pass, after they had departed, that they came up out of the well and went and told King David, and said to David, "Arise and cross over the water quickly. For thus has Ahithophel advised against you." **22** So David and all the people who *were* with him arose and crossed over the Jordan. By morning light not one of them was left who had not gone over the Jordan.

Does this story remind you of any other story in the Bible?

Rahab - She was another brave woman who hid two spies, and saved her own life in the process.

Again, we see God in control in every situation and using people in all walks of life to accomplish His will and purpose.

Now it's clear that not all of the nation of Israel had turned to Absalom as their king, *especially after Absalom had publicly disgraced David's concubines*, which was a disgusting attempt by a son to try and humiliate his father and which obviously backfired with the, *God fearing people of the nation, just as it should be.*

Because of this successful intelligence operation, David, his men and all the people who were with him, arose and crossed over the Jordan and David was able to escape the immediate danger from his son Absalom.

23 Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to his house, to his city. Then he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb.

Ahithophel turned on David. Why?

Probably because of years of bitterness relating to David's treatment of his granddaughter Bathsheba and her husband.

Was Ahithophel's anger and bitterness justified? Yes, many would say it was, but look what it cost him, it cost him his life.

Ahithophel didn't kill himself over hurt feelings because his counsel was rejected, he knew, *that under Hushai's plan*, Absalom would fail to defeat his father David and he would be implicated in the conspiracy to kill David.

He knew that David would soon be back on the throne as king and he would be disgraced, humiliated and rightly hung as a traitor.

Church, if you're carrying around bitterness and anger, please listen to *and obey* Ephesians 4:31-32 which says, **Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behaviour. 32** Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Church we know that suicide is a sin because it is self-murder and God commanded, you shall not murder (Exodus 20:13). Yet, also remember, suicide is not an unforgivable sin.

In reality, anyone who commits suicide has given in to the lies and deceptions of Satan, whose purpose is to kill and destroy (John 10:10).

“Suicide is always the ultimate action of cowardice. In the case of Saul, and in many similar cases, it is perfectly natural; but let it never be glorified as heroic. It is the last resort of the man who dare not stand up to life.” (Morgan)

“I desire to call your attention to the text on account of its very remarkable character. ‘He put his house in order, and hanged himself.’ To put his house in order, showed that he was a prudent man; to hang himself, proved that he was a fool. Herein is a strange mixture of discretion and desperation, mind and madness. Shall a man have wisdom enough to arrange his worldly affairs with care, and yet shall he be so hapless as to take his own life afterwards?” (Spurgeon)

24 Then David went to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. **25** And Absalom made Amasa captain of the army instead of Joab. This Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Jithra, an Israelite, who had gone in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab’s mother. **26** So Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

Absalom crossed over the Jordan in pursuit of David and all the men of Israel with him, but remember, instead of Ahithophel leading, Absalom was tricked by Hushai to lead Israel’s army. This was great for Absalom’s vanity and pumped up his ego, but he was not the warrior his father was and that was detrimental to success on the battlefield.

“Absalom’s vanity ensured his ruin.” (Morgan)

27 Now it happened, when David had come to Mahanaim, that **Shobi** the **son of Nahash** from Rabbah of the people of Ammon, **Machir** the **son of Ammiel** from Lo Debar, and **Barzillai** the Gileadite from Rogelim, **28** brought beds and basins, earthen vessels and wheat, barley and flour, parched *grain* and beans, lentils and parched seeds, **29** honey and curds, sheep and cheese of the herd, for David and the people who *were* with him to eat. For they said, “The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness.”

So, just who were these three men. Shobi, Machir and Barzillai?

Shobi was the son Nahash (King of the Ammonites) His brother was Hanun and he was the guy that shaved half the beard and cut the garments of David servants in (2 Samuel 10). Not a smart thing to do because King David, *then Waged War against him*.

So Shobi could've easily said, I’m not helping king David, he killed my family, **but he didn’t**. Shobi was an Ammonite, yet he cared more for Israel's king than most of the Jews did.

Machir was the man who hid and cared for a Mephibosheth for many years, he could easily have said, “*Me, help David. I've been taking care of a crippled guy for years, now it’s someone else’s turn to help.*” **But he didn’t**. He was a man who ministered to those in need, whether a lame prince or a dethroned king.

And then there’s Barzillai, a very old but wealthy man... closing in on 80 years old. He could've said, Me, haul beds and earthen vessels, grain and honey, sheep and cheese. I'm way too old. **But he didn’t**.

Church, Shobi was a gentile, who cared for Israel's king and we still see that in our day, when gentile's receive Jesus as their Saviour, *yet He still is rejected by His own.*

People in our day like Machir who give of themselves in the area of hospitality and caring for those in need will have their kindness returned a hundred fold when Christ returns in glory.

And the Barzillai's of the world Christ won't forget those who have ministered to him and they will be given positions of honour in His kingdom.

Here are some important lessons from these two chapters:

2 Samuel Chapter 16

- **Letting Critics Curse:** When we face unfair attacks, our immediate reaction is often defense. David's example teaches believers to let go of the need to self-vindicate and instead trust God with their reputation.
- **The Root of Bitterness:** Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather. It's important that Ahithophel's betrayal was fueled by deep-seated bitterness over David's past sin against his family—showing how unresolved bitterness can drive a wise man to give destructive counsel.
- **Prayer Over Intelligence:** Absalom had the smartest counselor in Israel, yet David prayed that God would turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness (2 Samuel 15:31). God's providence is always mightier than human brilliance.

2 Samuel Chapter 17

- **God's Sovereignty Overrides Human Strategy:** Ahithophel gave a tactically brilliant and swift military plan to destroy King David. However, God intervened and influenced Absalom to choose Hushai's flawed advice instead, fulfilling His purpose to protect David and judge Absalom.
- **The Danger of Listening to Flattery:** Absalom rejected Ahithophel's sound counsel because Hushai's plan stroked his ego—recommending that Absalom personally lead a massive, grand army of all Israel. Pride and vanity blind people to foolish decisions.
- **The Value of Faithful Loyalty and Courage:** David's loyal allies—including Hushai the spy, the priests Zadok and Abiathar, quick-thinking messengers, and supporters who provided food in the wilderness—risked their lives to preserve God's anointed king.
- **The Consequences of Betrayal and Despair:** Ahithophel realized his counsel was rejected and that Absalom's rebellion was doomed to fail, leading him to take his own life. This highlights the tragic end of turning against God's established path.
- **God Works Through Ordinary People:** The chapter shows that divine deliverance often arrives through everyday actions—such as a woman hiding messengers in a well or subjects bringing supplies to a weary camp.

