

# *Significant Lessons From The Seemingly Insignificant*

## #3 Hushai: God's Answer to David's Prayer

David heard the news of Absalom's rebellion; he prepares to leave Jerusalem for the wilderness.

II Sam. 15:23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.

II Sam. 15:30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

He is barefoot and weeping, hurt that his son would fight against him, but David refuses to attack.

1. David leaves barefoot! This seems to convey the idea: As King David wept and passed over the Kidron, it represented that he would not fight for the right to be their king. He won't draw a sword and go to battle against Absalom as evidenced by his barefoot trek into the wilderness.
2. If an insurrection arises that challenges the throne of Israel, David seems to be leaving the decision of the kingship up to them. If the people wanted David as their king, they must choose.
3. The responsibility seems to be thrust fully into their court. Who will be the king of Israel?

Consider: David's response was remarkable!

1. What kind of king responds to a threat by leaving his palace and the walls of a guarded and well-fortified city and heads to the vulnerable spot of the wilderness?
2. What king allows the people to decide and refuses to lord his rulership over them?
3. What sort of king gives the people the choice to choose a rebellious and sinful king?
4. David, a man after God's own heart, was never more like Jesus Christ than when he performed this peculiar act of humility at the brook Kidron!

Fast forward several hundred years: The Root of David has come to earth.

He is Emmanuel, God with us, God robed in flesh for the purpose of bringing salvation to His people and to reveal His great glory to humanity! He speaks of His Kingdom.

Surely there is nobody that will dispute Jesus Christ's qualifications to sit on the throne of all Israel. Yet there is an enemy - a spirit of Absalom that rises up against His reign:

A spirit of vanity and rebellion; a spirit that wants fleshly interests and sinfulness to reign. It is a spirit of murder. Men with seared consciences and hardened hearts, blind to the truth and with stopped ears unable to hear the voice of God. They plot together to kill the Son of God, this Messiah. They gather in the night and plan their treachery!

Jesus Christ, the Son of David, does not fight. He rebukes Peter and heals the man's ear. He humbles Himself by entering into Jerusalem on a donkey. He makes of Himself no reputation. He who has had the right to have all bow before Him in obeisance will not make anyone do it.

He refuses to set Himself up as King. He will not respond to rebellion with the same spirit. He humbles Himself, and He surrenders to the plan.

John 18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.

Jesus chooses the same path as King David of old and passes from the city and crosses the Brook Kidron. The King will not fight for the right to rule. Now it is up to the people to decide. Do they want the King of rebellion and the imposter to reign over them? Do they want fake religion with little demands? Do they want sin and their own will to rule their lives? Or do they want the Son of David whom God says belongs there? He will not force them either way - He crosses the brook Kidron and now they must decide. It's now up to the people!

II Sam. 15:30-31 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

<sup>31</sup> And one told David, saying, Ahithophel [David's counselor] is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

I Sam. 25:26 Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. [foolishness]

Ps. 55:12-14, 21 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: <sup>13</sup> But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

<sup>14</sup> We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

<sup>21</sup>The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

II Sam. 15:31b And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

II Sam. 15:32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head:

1. Hushai, deeply grieved and wearing the traditional rent garments and ashes, sought to join David's company.
2. Hushai is called "David's friend." [I Chron. 27:33 = special counselor to the king]
3. Hushai is a key, prominent figure in the account of Absalom's rebellion.

II Sam. 15:34 But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

1. Hushai is the answer to David's prayer request. He asks Hushai to return and offer his allegiance to Absalom, so he might "defeat the counsels of Ahithophel, David's advisor.

2. King David asked Hushai to place his life in jeopardy to thwart the conspiracy to kill him.
3. Hushai was willing to risk his life for the sake of the king and his kingdom.

It is an honor to serve his king and help restore him to the throne.

Question: What has God asked me to do for His sake and the furtherance of His kingdom?

4. David tells him that Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, are back in Jerusalem.
5. They have their two sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, with them.
6. David tells Hushai: Whatever you hear out of the king's house, you are to tell Zadok and Abiathar. Their 2 sons will come and tell me everything you hear.

II Sam. 15:37 So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

II Sam. 16:15-19 And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. <sup>16</sup> And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king. <sup>17</sup> And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why didn't you go with thy friend? <sup>18</sup> And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.

<sup>19</sup> And again, whom should I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.

1. Hushai is speaking of David. The LORD had never chosen Absalom to be Israel's king.
2. He will be in Absalom's presence but he will serve the LORD and David.
3. Absalom's pride interpreted Hushai's words to apply to himself.

Mission Accomplished: Hushai was accepted as a defector and established as a counselor.

Ahithophel's Plan: II Sam. 16:20 -17:4

1. Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house, and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." <sup>22</sup> 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.

II Sam. 3:6-7 When someone slept with their father's concubine they were making a claim to the throne and committing treason.

Recall Nathan's Prophecy: II Sam. 12:11-12 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

<sup>12</sup> For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

II Sam. 16:23 Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the oracle of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.

2. II Sam. 17:1-4: Ahithophel would choose 12,000 men. [Notice me & I]

- He and the men would pursue after David that night while he is weary, tired and weak.
- I will make him afraid. All the people with him will flee. I will kill him only.
- I will bring back all the people with me to you and all will be peaceful.

- Absalom and the elders liked this plan.

Hushai's Plan: II Sam. 17:5-13 Absalom calls for Hushai to hear his counsel.

- Hushai will appeal to Absalom's ego. He sets a trap and Absalom falls right in.

1. Ahithophel's advice is not good at this time.
2. King David's men are mighty warriors. They will not be surprised by nor fear the enemy.
3. They have been driven from their homes and were like a bear robbed of her cubs.
4. David is a man of war and would not sleep with his people. He will hide in a pit or cave.
5. King David is a fighter. If some of Absalom's soldiers were initially killed, the others in Absalom's camp would defect to David's side of the fight out of fear. Military disaster!
6. Recruit men from ALL tribes of Israel to go to battle with Absalom leading the army.

- Continues to describe a glorious victory

Hushai's grand plan with its vivid mental images gripped the hearts and minds of Absalom and his leaders.

7. 17:14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said,

The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.

He doesn't realize it will take TIME to gather his forces from Dan to Beersheba.

This TIME will give David a change to cross the Jordan River and "get lost." That's the point!

17:14b For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel,

to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.

Ps. 33:10-11 The LORD frustrates the plans of the nations and thwarts all their schemes.

<sup>11</sup> But the LORD's plans stand firm forever; His intentions can never be shaken.

Hushai's next step: II Sam. 17:15-16

Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled.

<sup>16</sup> Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him.

1. David and his people were camped at the fords of the Jordan; ~20 miles from Jerusalem.
2. His 2 runners were waiting at En Rogel in the Kidron Valley; less than 1 mile from Jerusalem.
3. Zadok and Abiathar told Hushai's message to an anonymous maidservant who took the message to Jonathan and Ahimaaz at En Rogel.

Problem: A young lad sees the meeting and goes to tell Absalom.

4. The 2 runners go to a house in Bahurim [~1 mi.] which has a well. They went down in it to hide from Absalom's soldiers.

5. The woman took a cloth over the well's mouth and put grains of corn on top of the cloth pretending she was drying corn. She was hiding the 2 runners from Absalom's guards.

6. She told the guards the 2 men went over the brook of water.

They looked in vain and returned to Jerusalem.

7. The 2 runners quickly get out of the well and went to warn King David!

Warning: Cross The Jordan Quickly! By the morning light, ALL had crossed over.

Sidenote: II Sam. 17:23 When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he... went home to his house,...and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died.  
Consider: He realized Hushai's plan gave David time to consolidate his fighting force. He knew David would regain the throne and kill him for his part in Absalom's conspiracy.  
II Sam. 17:24, 26 Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.

Thoughts & Questions For You To Consider:

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

Am I willing to suffer hardships, to encourage others, offer comfort? [II Tim. 3:12; Gal. 6:2]

Am I willing to sacrifice my time, resources, energy, or even put my life on the line for the name of Jesus Christ?

I Pet. 4:14, 16 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

Am I using my gifts and abilities to further the gospel?

I Pet. 4:8-11 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Use hospitality one to another without grudging. <sup>10</sup> As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. <sup>11</sup> If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Psalm 3 was written by David after he fled Jerusalem when Absalom took over the throne. David and his people had crossed the Jordan River and were camped at Mahanaim. This was David's most traumatic, humiliating experience in his life. His life suddenly unraveled. David's enemies were increasing and many of his previous friends and associates forsook him and joined the ranks of those who troubled him.

The most painful wound was the treachery and betrayal of Absalom.

Remember: God permitted this dangerous and disgraceful uprising as part of David's chastening because of his sins of adultery and murder.

1. God in His grace forgave David when he confessed his sins.
2. God in His justice allowed David to reap the bitter consequences of those sins.

Ps. 3:1-2 David Admits His Troubles: Reveals His Peril

<sup>1</sup>Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me.

<sup>2</sup> Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

- Many are saying to my soul...Their words were hitting David in his heart..no deliverance

Spurgeon: "If all the trials which come from heaven, all the temptations which ascend from hell, and all the crosses which arise from the earth, could be mixed and pressed together, they would not make a trial so terrible as that which is contained in this verse. It is the most bitter of all afflictions to be led to fear that there is no help for us in God."

### David Affirms His Trust In The Lord - His Initial Prayer

<sup>3</sup> But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

<sup>4</sup> I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

- But You...David shifts his focus from his frightening circumstances to the Lord.
- God you are my shield. I am in disgrace but you are the source of my glory.
- Absalom turned his father's glory into shame.  
God will lift up his head and restore him to his throne.
- His faith was in the PROMISES God had made to him in the covenant [II Sam. 7].
- He KNEW God would not forsake him.

Ps. 34:6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

### David Anticipates The Victory: Peace that Results From Prayer

<sup>5</sup> I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

<sup>6</sup> I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about.

This real-life drama illustrates Phil. 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

### Believing Prayer Depends Completely on God For Deliverance

<sup>7</sup> Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

<sup>8</sup> Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

- 1<sup>st</sup> thought: The Lord protected us. He will see us through the crisis.
- If I trust Him and seek Him with my whole heart, God will work on my behalf even while I am asleep.
- When we cast ourselves on God alone for deliverance, He gets all the praise and glory when He answers our prayers.

God can use our worst trials to deepen our trust in Him and to produce praises that will encourage His people. When life falls apart, you can experience God's peace by laying hold of Him in believing prayer. When He answers, He gets the glory, you get the joy and God' people get the blessing! What A Savior!