

2 Samuel Chapter 17:15-29

15 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 counselled. 16 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.

Hushai tells the two priests the two plans presented to Absalom. He feels it is important to tell David the details of each plan.

- When David eventually hears this, while the plan proposed by Ahithophel would be troubling, hearing what Hushai proposed would provide some comfort and greater confidence that God is working it out for him.
- Remember David prayed to God that the counsel of Ahithophel be defeated. By hearing both plans, David will see that his prayer is being answered.
- Application for Today: After we have prayed, God will often allow us to receive evidence through the word that He has heard our prayers.

Hushai's instructions are to quickly tell David to immediately arise and move from his current location. This is important and still relevant today.

- God's plan for us today is still to deliver us through the preaching of the word. Delivering His word to people remains the plan. God's plan is to get the word and instructions to David so that he can pass over from where he is now to safety.
- Application for Today: God's plan is for people to hear and receive the good news of the Gospel through His word. After receiving the word, we will have the instructions needed for that situation/season and our responsibility is to obey and apply these instructions.
 - God's word provides instructions for each believer to pass over from where they are now to a better location. The word is intended for us to obey and pass over from death to life.
 - Like David in the story, if the believer doesn't act on the word received, they risk being swallowed up and defeated by the enemy.
- It is important that David obey and move. His actions will impact others so if he doesn't move, others with him will be defeated too.
- Application for Today: What you are going through and facing is never just about you. How you deal with your challenges can impact others. Your receipt and obedience to the word of God can help others pass over from death to life.

17 Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and they went and told king David.

18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down. 19 And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known. 20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, they be gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

The plan is for the sons of the priests to get the word to David. A woman was to be the messenger between the priests and their sons. However, a lad saw the two sons (Jonathan and Ahimaaz) and tells Absalom the activity taking place.

Application for Today: There is nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9), the enemy is still working today to prevent people from receiving the word of God. Why?

- Absalom knows that it would be a serious threat to his plans if David receives any good news. Satan knows it is a serious threat to his plans if you receive and obey God's word and instructions. So he works hard to try and keep us from receiving the good news and prevent us from moving, repenting, changing positions. The devil doesn't want you to pass over into a new life and hope since his plan is to seek to kill and destroy:
 - *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 1 Peter 5:8*

Verses 18-20 -- Our focus now shifts to the two young priests and the woman. The priests had to go down in the well before they could arise again and come out. While they are down the woman comes to assist by covering them up to hide them from the enemy.

When the servants of David's enemy arrive, they ask about the whereabouts of the priests. She doesn't tell them where they physically are. This presents a problem when you read several commentaries since they don't condone lying. I get that and understand. I have been considering if there is a spiritual perspective which might support her actions since this is not the first instance in the Old Testament of a woman lying to protect God's people.

- Truly if I were these priests or if I were a Jew in the 1940s in Nazi Germany, I would certainly praise God and appreciate anyone coming to my aid to hide me and lie about my position.

- While we should not encourage lying, what she didn't do was tell a lie about not knowing where the priests are. She doesn't say she doesn't know where they are. Instead, she tells them they are not where you think they are and that they have gone over.
- Application: The enemy doesn't need to know where we are. We don't owe him. While the enemy may come looking for me in my current situation, while physically I may be there, spiritually I am not by my faith in God where he expects me to be.
 - The enemy may expect us to be down, but when I know the end of the story and can be found standing on the promise of God, I won't spiritually be where he expects me to be. When I can praise God in advance, spiritually I'm not where I may be physically.
 - I don't try and lie, but I have no problem declaring to the enemy that I am not where he expected me to be. While I may be in a circumstance or situation, I want to be spiritually found standing on the promises.

Observation: the problem in Verse 18, presents a ministry opportunity for the woman. Her contribution is critical because without her assistance, the word doesn't get to David. We don't know her name, but the role she plays is very significant.

Application for Today: Don't discount the ministry and service of people behind the scenes. While they may not be delivering the word from the pulpit, their assistance to the pastors and priests and ministers in delivering the word to God's people can be significant in defeating the enemy.

- What ministry have you been called to which may help others deliver the word to those in need? It may not be glamorous to some, but whatever you do to promote the preaching of the Gospel will be a benefit to the Kingdom. The word may not get presented without you.
- What the woman does sends the enemy in another direction. Likewise, the work of others in support ministries can send the enemy away, can keep the devil from preventing the word from being delivered and send him in another direction. Again, your support ministry can help to defeat the enemy.

21 And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, Arise, and pass quickly over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

22 Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

Because of the support ministry of the woman, the priests are able to rise up and continue their mission of delivering the word. Again, the support ministry of your church or fellowship should be able to effectively support ministers in delivering the word.

The priests deliver a word of instruction to David and inform him of the plan proposed by the enemy. This should give David hope because, he knows that God is helping him since his prayer against

Ahithophel is being answered. This encouraged David to obey the instructions and quickly move and pass over to safety.

Key observations:

- If the word from the priests had not reached David, he would not have known when to move or how to pass over to safety.
- If David had not immediately obeyed and applied the word, he would not have passed over to safety.
- If David had not obeyed the word by faith, then the people with him would not have passed over to safety.

Application for Today: God' plan is to deliver the word to us. We in turn have to act by faith in trusting and following the plan by obeying the word. God will always and has given us instructions for how to proceed. We need only to follow the steps by faith.

- *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17*
- So hearing the word preached is key in developing the faith to move forward.
- The process and plan of God is there is a season and a time where we are to be still and wait on the word for instructions for how to come out or pass over. Then there is a time in the process where we obey the instructions and pass over from death to life. There is a time to sit still and a time to move.
 - Israel when they passed over from Egypt followed these steps (Exodus 12, 14).
 - David describes the same steps in Psalm 23.
- If we don't hear and receive and obey the word of God, we may be swallowed up by the enemy. The enemy will show up. Your victory and defeat of the devil's designs against you will be dependent on you obeying God.
- Your situation is not just about you. Your decision to obey the word of God directly impacts others. Others can be saved by how you handle and obey the word through your difficult wilderness experience.

²³ And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

We can certainly speculate as to why Ahithophel commits suicide. With the suicide rate extremely high in our society today, perhaps this part of the story deserves further analysis. Why would he feel the need to do this?

- He didn't consider suicide until he saw his counsel was not followed. His claim to fame was the power of his counsel. The Bible says his counsel was as if you had received it from God (2

Samuel 16:23). That was his profession. His life and pride must have been centered on his work as an advisor. Failure in your job or when it no longer provides satisfaction can lead some people to suicide.

- If Absalom had agreed to follow his plan, he probably would not have committed suicide. He expected his advice to be celebrated and followed. Sometimes when people don't respond to you as you expected, when people let you down or don't celebrate your work, when you feel rejected by others, it can lead to suicide.
- Ahithophel probably knew that his plan would work but now since it wasn't being followed, he must have known that this would provide David the opportunity to recover and defeat Absalom. If Absalom is defeated, surely Ahithophel would face judgment as a traitor. Sometimes people commit suicide when they don't see any way out of a bad situation.
- He goes home and sets his home in order. This shows that his focus was on the things of the world and the natural and not the spiritual. When your focus is on the affairs of the world, it can lead some people to commit suicide.
- He overlooked the possibility that if he repented, he may have found forgiveness and mercy from David. Because David, the King had experienced forgiveness and mercy, he knew what it was like to face judgment resulting from bad decisions. When you think you no longer can receive mercy or recovery from your sins, sometimes people will turn to suicide. Like Judas in the New Testament, he may have felt he could never have recovered.

Application for Today: None of the reasons Ahithophel may have had justified his decision to take his own life. Follow the Spirit and not your logic or hurt feelings.....suicide is not a viable or spiritual option. I have faced this temptation before, it would have been a huge mistake!

24 Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

David sets up at Mahanaim, which means 'two camps'. There is history at this place. Jacob in Genesis 32:1-2 encounters angels there before he had to face his brother Esau. Jacob received encouragement there and comfort that God was with him as he was fearful over the possible outcome with a close relative. Here we see David in a similar situation against a relative.

As a result of obeying the word he received, David and everyone with him passed over. What are we waiting for? When we receive the word, move and apply it to your life and decisions by faith.

25 And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son, whose name was Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah Joab's mother.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.

Absalom makes Amasa the captain of his army. Amasa is his cousin and David's nephew. We will see more about him in Chapter 19.

Verse 26 – Absalom and all Israel camp in Gilead. They now pursue after David and also cross the Jordan River, but their crossing is for the wrong reason and will cost them since God is against them and not with them. How often have we pursued the wrong things, the wrong way with much effort and not realized God is working against us and we are working against the Kingdom.

27 And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

28 Brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse, 29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

Verses 27-28 – David when he camps, gets a visit from friends and supplies/relief. Here we see David and his people are refreshed. Others who will not be involved in the battle are arriving to give him and the people support.

Observations: Just like the woman earlier, you don't have to have a frontline ministry in order to play a major role in support of the King and his servants. Notice they are still in the wilderness but being refreshed. Application: God is able and His plan includes providing His people relief and revival in wilderness situations as a result of their move by faith. In following the key steps in the spiritual plan of God, refreshing always follows pass over.

Application for Today: Before you enter into battle against the enemy, make sure you follow the steps in order and reach level 4, and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Wait for the promise of the Spirit and be refreshed or you will not have the strength and power to overcome and achieve victory.