

## 2 Samuel Chapter 16 Commentary

**2Sa 16:1 ¶** "And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. **2** And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink. **3** And the king said, And where is thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, Today shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. **4** Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king."

Ziba meets King David with two asses, bread, raisins, summer fruits, and wine. King David inquires what Ziba is doing. Ziba tells King David that he has brought these gifts for the king and those with him. King David asks Ziba: where is Mephibosheth? Ziba tells King David that Mephibosheth has declared that Israel shall restore to me my father's kingdom. King David gives to Ziba all that pertained to Mephibosheth. Ziba says he only desires to find grace in the king's sight. We see the events happening here in Proverbs: **Pr 18:16 ¶** "*A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.*" Ziba's gift certainly gets him before the king to whom he tells a lie, which is believed by David in his distress, which demonstrates the Proverb in: **Pr 17:8 ¶** "*A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.*" Ziba certainly prospered by his gift of deceit, although it was temporarily.

We shall find that Ziba was falsely accusing Mephibosheth, in: **2Sa 19:27; 24 ¶** "*And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace. 25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? 26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king, because thy servant is lame. 27 And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes.*"

From this text we understand that Ziba was covetous, and though he tended all the property of the family of Saul, he desired to be the owner. He comes laden with false humility and gifts to procure King David's favor to get what he wants. Therefore, he brings a generous gift, in his own name, to King David, and he tells a scandalous lie about Mephibosheth. King David, in all the distress of the moment, falls into Ziba's trap, and gives him the property.

A warning to the Christian: Always, and especially in times of distress, take time to seek out the truth, hear both sides of the story, before making a decision, of which you may be sorry of later. People are most likely to try and take advantage of you, when your mind is in distress, or on other things. If they can catch you off your guard, they will likely attain their goal, as did Ziba.

**5 ¶** "And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. **6** And he cast 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** And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: **8** The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man."

Shimei, of the house of Saul, comes forth and begins to curse King David and to throw stones at him and his people.

- In the accusation of King David being a man of Belial, the accusation is false, for scripture testifies that David is a man after God's own heart.
- In the proclamation of the blood of the house of Saul being upon King David, again the accusation is false. Why? Because King David was not guilty of killing any of the house of Saul, nor was he responsible

for any blood that Saul shed. Contrarily, he had sworn to Jonathan, Saul's son, to never lift his hand against any of the house of Jonathan, and he has fed Mephibosheth at his table and treated him as one of his own sons. King David never lifted a hand against Saul because the Lord anointed him.

- In the accusation of the kingdom being given to Absalom, Shimei is wrong. Thought Absalom is presently a self-proclaimed king, God has not given him the kingdom. God is just using Absalom to providentially bring to pass his proclaimed judicial judgment against King David.
- In the accusation of a bloody man, and one taken in mischief, Shimei is correct.

We shall see later on that Shimei will reap the reward of his actions. Why? Because he has done what King David would not do, which is to stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, as seen in: ***1Sa 26:11 "The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed."***

The warning to us is that we should not be railing against God's people, and especially against God's anointed servants, who serve as shepherds to God's flocks, as we see in: ***1Ti 5:19 "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."***

**9 "Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. 10 And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? 11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. 12 It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day. 13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. 14 And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there."**

Abishai requests, of King David, to be allowed to take Shimei's head off for cursing the Lord's anointed. David says to let him curse, for it may be that God will hear his cursing and have mercy upon me. He adds: my own son seeketh to take my life, which is a very great grief to my heart and soul. This man's cursing is nothing compared to what is happening in the insurrection of my son.

Shimei shall get his due reward in time, seen in 1 Kings chapter 2.

**15 ¶ "And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. 16 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. 17 And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend? 18 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. 19 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."**

Absalom and his followers come to Jerusalem. Hushai, David's friend, comes to meet Absalom, who asks him why he did not go with King David, his friend. Now, we see the wisdom of Hushai come forth. Hushai tells Absalom, whoever the Lord, and Israel chooses to be king, that man's servant will I be. After all, I was of great service to your father, and I can be of great service to you also.

Notice what Hushai actually said: ***"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."*** We notice that Hushai includes the Lord, as if God has chosen Absalom to be king, which is not true. God is providentially using Absalom, to bring to pass God's pronounced judicial judgment against King David. However, Hushai is not lying, nor giving his allegiance to Absalom, his allegiance is to King David whom God has chosen. However, Absalom accepts it at face value and takes Hushai into his confidence. It is amazing what a little flattery will do to a vain man. Absalom is not a man after God's own heart, and his reign as king, which was gained with subtlety, is going to be very short lived. God is only allowing this to fulfill his pronounced judgment against King David.

**20 "Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do. 21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall**

hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong. 22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. 23 And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom."

Absalom asked the council of Ahithophel, as to what he should do first. Ahithophel counsels him to go in and lie with his father's concubines. Absalom does this in the sight of all Israel, fulfilling that part of God's pronounced judicial judgment against King David for his secret adulterous affair with Bathsheba, seen in: **2Sa 12:11-12; 11** *"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 neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."*

Why would Ahithophel give such ungodly council? It would show that Absalom had no intention of making a peace treaty with his father. It would show that Absalom abhorred King David, and thus strengthen the hearts and minds of those who were unsure who was the real king now. It would be an action to sway those who were unsure of where they stood to turn to Absalom, believing that he had sure victory over King David coming, or he would never commit such acts of vileness.

Surely, Ahithophel would know God's commandments, being a man of such great acuity, but he gives council against the commandment of God, seen in: **Le 20:11** *"And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."* Matthew Henry points out: Ahithophel may have been motivated, by vengeance, to give this council, because of the way David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then slew her husband so he could have her to wife and try to hide his adulterous action, because Bathsheba was the granddaughter of Ahithophel.

Ahithophel may also know the judicial judgment against King David, and he is simply using that to fulfill God's purpose. Even though historians say, in the age of this event, that it was common practice for a king, who took another's throne, to take the former kings' wives to be his own. Whatever the case: this council and action shows the true godless character of both Absalom, and Ahithophel. This is a blatant abuse of God's commandment. However, God allows this to happen to fulfill his proclaimed judicial judgment against King David.

We are also told in the New Testament that this is still an abomination to God, seen in: **1Co 5:1 ¶** *"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife."*

We remember that Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, lost his firstborn birthright because of this sin, seen in: **Ge 49:3-4; 3** *"Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: 4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch."*

This is a warning to every Christian: God means what he says, in his word of truth, and he will do everything that he says he will do. God will not leave anything undone that he has purposed or proclaimed, whether it be some judicial judgment he has proclaimed, as in King David's case: or whether it be his judicial judgment for disobedience to his commandments. We certainly want to be like King David and bear the consequences of our sinful actions here in time, not in eternal damnation in the lake of fire.

We are told that in these days the council of Ahithophel is *"as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom."* Ahithophel means *brother of foolishness*. We have no biblical record of Ahithophel being a priest or prophet, which leaves him the position of a worldly councilor. Therefore, we understand that he was simply a person of great political acumen. He was also a very proud man as we shall see later.

We see in Psalms that King David accuses Ahithophel of being a Judas traitor, seen in: **Ps 41:9** *"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."* This tells us enough to be sure that Ahithophel was only a worldly councilor, and he was not a God called councilor, which we had already discerned when he gave Absalom such ungodly council. This is further supported by the fact that his council was good with both David and Absalom, the revolting son, which demonstrated that he was willing to serve two masters.

Adam Clarke says of Absalom: "Every part of the conduct of Absalom shows him to have been a most profligate young man; he was proud, vindictive, adulterous, incestuous, a parricide, and, in fine, reprobate to every good word and work."

This is such a sad situation, which Absalom brought upon himself because he sought his own vengeance and did not follow God. In his godlessness, God gave him over to a reprobate mind and his actions are displaying what happens when people ignore God. We even have New Testament scripture that parallels with Absalom's reprobate mind, seen in: ***2Ti 3:8-9; 1 ¶ "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unhol, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. 9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.***" We also find this principle of rebellion in: ***Tit 1:15-16; 15 "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."***

Wherefore, God's people stand duly warned against seeking council from the world. Rather, they are to pray and seek after the wisdom and council of God. God has given us the King James bible, and it is a true councilor if we follow "***thus saith the Lord.***"

May God help us to be wise to godliness in all our actions and reactions. Thank you, Lord, for writing down your truths, and inscribing them in our hearts and minds. Thank you, King Jesus, for sending the Holy Spirit to be our guide and counselor to us here in time. We pray and give thanks in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen!