

Sermon Series: A Study Of The Life Of David As King

Today's Title: "The Lord Had Ordained"

(Selected passages in 2 Samuel 16:20-17:29 ESV)

20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What shall we do?" **21** 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 have made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." **22** 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. **23** Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.

17:1 Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "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 discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down only the king, **3** and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace." **4** And the advice seemed right in the eyes of Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

5 Then Absalom said, "Call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he has to say." **6** And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "Thus has Ahithophel spoken; shall we do as he says? If not, you speak." **7** Then Hushai said to Absalom, "This time the counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good."

11 But my counsel is that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as the sand by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person.

14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring harm upon Absalom.

15 Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so have I counseled. **16** Now therefore send quickly and tell David, 'Do not stay tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.'" **17** Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel. A female servant was to go and tell them, and they were to go and tell King David, for they were not to be seen entering the city. **18** But a young man saw them and told Absalom. So both of them went away quickly and came to the house of a man at Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard. And they went down into it. **19** And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth and scattered grain on it, and nothing was known of it. **20** When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" And the woman said to them, "They have gone over the brook of water." And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

21 After they had gone, the men came up out of the well, and went and told King David. They said to David, "Arise, and go quickly over the water, for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you." **22** Then David

arose, and all the people who were with him, and they crossed the Jordan. By daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan. **23** When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and went off home to his own city. He set his house in order and hanged himself, and he died and was buried in the tomb of his father. **27** When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, **28** brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans and lentils, **29** honey and curds and sheep and cheese from the herd, for David and the people with him to eat, for they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness."

I. The Sovereign Providence Of God. 16:20-17:14

II. The Suspenseful Providence Of God. Vv.15-23

III. The Sustaining Providence Of God. Vv.27-29

Questions for discussion and meditation:

I. What is God's providence? How was Ahithophel's counsel to Absalom both a fulfillment of prophecy and an answer to David's prayer to foil Ahithophel's counsel? What does v. 14 say about why Absalom sought Hushai's counsel? How did God use Hushai's counsel to change Absalom's mind?

II. God's providence often includes using people who take risks. Who were the courageous characters in delivering the news of Absalom's plans to David? How does Ahithophel's end show the futility of going against God's anointed and God's plans? In what way did God use the evil plans of people to accomplish salvation through Christ?

III. The end of chapter 17 tells the story of God's sustaining providence. How does it show that God is also concerned about basic needs of our lives? How are these three characters an illustration of God's ministry through the body of Christ? What is the basis of your assurance that God's sovereign, suspenseful, and sustaining providence will be at work in your life for your good? What concerns do you have now that you need to entrust to God's gracious providence?