

**I. Introduction.**

**II. The battle of the advisors (which precedes the battle of the armies). 16:15-17**

- A. Hushai infiltrates Absalom's inner circle. 16:15-19**
1. Absalom occupies Jerusalem without a fight. v. 15
  2. Hushai has been sent by David to sabotage the counsel of Ahithophel. v. 16 15:34
  3. Absalom questions Hushai's *loyalty* to his *friend*. v. 17 15:37
  4. Hushai cleverly answers Absalom (with guile). v. 18-19
  5. Absalom shows fatal flaws of pride and gullibility.
- B. Absalom tightens his grip on the kingdom by following the shrewd counsel of Ahithophel. 16:20-23**
1. By lying with David's concubines, Absalom asserts his royal power while also showing that his breach with his father is beyond repair. 3:7ff 12:8 I Ki. 2:19ff
  2. This outrage is in fulfillment of Nathan's judgment upon David. 15:16 12:10-12 Job 31:9-10 Lev. 18:7-8 20:11 Gen. 35:22 49:3ff
  3. Ahithophel is extraordinarily shrewd, though ungodly. v. 23
- C. Ahithophel advises Absalom to complete the coup by striking David quickly. 17:1-4**
1. Ahithophel offers to immediately take a medium-sized force of 12,000 men whose sole objective would be the death of David. v. 1-2
  2. Ahithophel, as David's close confidant, knows both his location and his condition. David's followers will then have no choice but to turn to Absalom. v. 3
  3. There is one factor which brilliant Ahithophel leaves out. Prov. 16:9 19:21
- D. Hushai undermines Ahithophel's counsel. 17:5-14**
1. Why does Absalom even seek another opinion? v. 5-6,14b Prov. 21:1
  2. Hushai boldly and cleverly undermines Ahithophel's plan, playing on Absalom's fears and David's reputation. v. 7-10 Prov. 28:15
  3. Hushai appeals to Absalom's vanity by proposing that Absalom himself lead a giant army against David and his followers. v. 11-13
  4. Absalom chooses to follow Hushai's advice because the LORD willed it. v. 14 Prov. 21:1,30-31
  5. Absalom never bothers to seek a word from the LORD. 5:19,23 I Sam. 23:1-6
- E. Hushai activates the spy network to get word to David. 17:15-22 15:35-36,27-28**
1. The spies are spotted and have to hide. v. 18
  2. The LORD protects the messengers. v. 19-20 Josh. 2 I Sam. 19:17
  3. David gets word and moves to safety. v. 21-22
- F. Ahithophel commits suicide. v. 23**
1. In his brilliance he foresees David's victory and Absalom's downfall.
  2. Ahithophel, the traitor, realizes he is as good as dead.
  3. Oh, how the mighty have fallen (rapidly). 16:23 Ps. 2
  4. An answer to prayer? 15:31 Ps. 55:22-23
- G. David has time to prepare for battle. v. 24-29**
1. He moves to Mahanaim. v. 24-26
  2. He receives help from his friends and is refreshed. 9:4 19:31ff Ps. 23:5 78:19
  3. The two armies face each other ready for battle. v. 26

### **III. How does this passage point to Christ?**

- A. Jesus was the victim of a conspiracy by powerful men. John 11:50-52 Mt. 21:38  
Acts 4:24-28 Ps. 2:1ff
- B. Jesus was betrayed by his close companion. Ahithophel is David's Judas. 15:31 16:23  
Ps. 41:5-9 55:12-14 Jo. 13:18 18:2ff Mt. 26:14ff
- C. The betrayer takes his own life. 16:23 Mt. 27:1-5 Ps. 69:25 109:8 Acts 1:18-20,25
- D. God accomplishes His purpose in spite of the opposition of the betrayer. Ps. 41:10-13  
Acts 2:22-28 Psalm 2

### **IV. How does this passage apply to us?**

- A. What are we to think of all of the lying and deceit which goes on in this passage?  
15:34-35 16:16-19 17:5-14 17:19-20 Ex. 1:18ff Josh. 2
  - 1. Is lying allowed in warfare?
  - 2. Either way, when someone lies to you he is at war with you.
  - 3. Hushai, like Rahab and the midwives, is commendable because of his covenant loyalty to the LORD and His anointed. 16:17
  - 4. The LORD could have rescued David in another way. Esther 4:14
- B. God's invisible hand of providence sovereignly governs history. 14:23 Pr. 16:1,9
  - 1. God sometimes allows the wicked to prosper for a season. Ps. 73:1ff 37:1ff 2:1-3
  - 2. He ultimately will bring judgment to those who oppose Him and His people.  
Ps. 73:16ff 2:4-6
  - 3. We should not fear those who appear to have great power in the world. Pr. 29:25
  - 4. God's purposes will be accomplished, regardless of those who oppose Him.
  - 5. God is actively involved in our lives, accomplishing His purposes and doing us good. Rom. 8:28 Eph. 1:11
- C. While it is appropriate for us to take wise action, our ultimate hope is in the Lord.  
Pr. 21:1,30-31 Ps. 20:7
- D. God answers the prayers of His people. 15:31 Mt. 7:7ff I Tim. 2:1ff Js. 4:2b  
Wait patiently on the LORD. Ps. 41:1-3 40:1-5,11-17
- E. Seek wisdom and counsel from the godly. Psalm 1 Pr. 12:15

### **V. Concluding application: Learn from Ahithophel.**

- A. Many of those who excel in worldly wisdom are fools because they leave the LORD out of their equation. 16:23 Js. 4:13-17 Pr. 21:30 1:7
- B. Many have their earthly affairs in order, but they are utterly unprepared for eternity. 17:23
- C. Those who resist the LORD and His Anointed One will meet the same end as Judas and Ahithophel. Pr. 13:15 Esther 7:10 Heb. 9:27
- D. Turn to the LORD before it is too late. Ps. 2:10-12 Isa. 1:18-20

### **Discussion questions**

- 1. Is Hushai's deception (and that of the spies and those who hid them) justified?  
If so, then when is lying allowed?
- 2. Where in this passage do we see God's hand of providence at work in answer to David's prayer? 15:31
- 3. How is Ahithophel like Judas?
- 4. How can we apply this passage to our present day worries about powerful evil people?
- 5. In what ways are many people today like Ahithophel? 16:23 17:23
- 6. Is suicide ever an escape from trouble?