

MONDAY

Absalom ordered Hushai to come before him. Absalom told Hushai all that Ahithophel had suggested, and then asked him what he thought about the plan. Hushai told him that he thought it was a bad plan. He reminded Absalom that his father was a fierce man of war, and that at the moment, because of events, he would really be ticked off. He'd be like an angry mother bear robbed of her cubs, he suggested.

READ: II Samuel 17:5-8

God works in hearts. He put it into Absalom's heart, even though he really liked what he had heard from Ahithophel, to ask Hushai his opinion about the matter. Then God put it into Hushai's heart to give contrary advice which made sense to Absalom. The part about the angry bear must have struck fear into his heart. Absalom probably knew that side in his father. And he wanted nothing to do with it! By working in the hearts of man, God accomplishes His great and mighty purposes. By whispering to the inner man through His Spirit, God speaks to us. What's He saying to your today?

TUESDAY

Hushai continued to give Absalom false advice. He told him that David has set a trap, and that when Absalom's forces chase him into the desert, he will catch them in it. Then word will spread quickly that David and his men defeated Absalom's forces. Hearing that, Absalom's so-called supporters will switch their allegiance. Therefore, Absalom should not pursue David now, but should wait until more forces can be called up from the other Tribes of Israel. That's Hushai's advice.

READ: II Samuel 17:9-11

Hushai knows that any delay works to David's advantage. Given time, David can invite others to join his side and organize his forces. His advice is directed towards getting David the time he needs. Delay is effective here, but it is a two sided sword. It can be fatal. "Almost," King Agrippa said to Paul, "almost, you have persuaded me to become a Christian, but not quite." And delaying, Agrippa went on with his life without the Lord. Delay can also be good. We read that God delays the Lord's Return so that people may have yet more time and another chance to receive the things of God and believe. What an awesome God we have! Let's not delay in proclaiming Him!

WEDNESDAY

Hushai, a secret agent for David, continued advising Absalom, telling him that after he is able to gather additional troops, Absalom will be able to hunt David and his men down in the desert and utterly defeat them all in one swoop. And even if David is able somehow to get to a city, Absalom's forces will be able to completely destroy the city as well. Absalom and his closest advisors heard Hushai's advice and liked it. An easy and complete one-sided victory sounded good to them! This was all the Lord's plan for bringing down Absalom.

READ: II Samuel 17:12-14

Hushai was great! He bravely faced the rebel-king and lied remarkably well. He convinced him and his other advisors of his plan. Yet we are reminded that it was God who turned their hearts to hear and receive Hushai's plan. I love the wording in the King James: *the Lord had appointed...* We live and breathe at the appointment of the

Lord! The events of life (and of today!) are at His appointment! Dear friend, today, the Lord has appointed your steps!

THURSDAY

Hushai contacted Zadok and Abiathar the priest, and told them all that had taken place and exactly what was decided. He instructed them to get word to David that he should not camp in the desert too close to the border, but should keep pushing on, and put more distance between himself and Absalom.

READ: II Samuel 17:15-16

Is not Hushai's message to David surprising? Instead of. "Relax, King, I duped 'em all! You can relax," he tells the king, "You better keep going, David, they may still come after you." Even though Hushai hoped for the best, he prepared for the worst. Expecting the best, yet ready for the worst. Doesn't that pretty much describe our situation much of the time? Lord, keep us expecting - expecting today to see Your mighty hand! Expecting to see you work a wonder! Expecting victory! And at the same time: Lord, keep us ready - ready for the sea billows to roll; ready for the enemies of my soul to invade; ready to face whatever comes. Expecting, yet ready.

FRIDAY

Passing information to King David, two priests and a woman were seen by a lad who quickly reported it to the authorities. The two men moved on to a house in Bahurim where they were pursued by Absalom's men. There, the owner's wife hid the priests in the well by covering the top and spreading out corn as if to dry it out, effectively concealing the priests hiding down below.

READ: II Samuel 17:17-19

On a mission on behalf of God's anointed king, King David, doing the right thing for the right reasons, one might think that his way might be miraculously freed of danger by the Lord. But that was not the case. A lad, a supporter of Absalom, brought great danger down upon David's loyalists. Their very lives were at stake. God's plan is not that we live danger-free, trial-free, and trouble-free lives. It is that we trust Him in the midst of trouble. And that the dangers and trials of today would produce within us greater trust! And in the danger, in on-looked for ways, God will yet be our God.

SATURDAY

Absalom's men followed the trail of the two priests to the house in Bahurim where they confronted the woman. She told them that the two had left. After Absalom's men searched for them for a while (unsuccessfully) they went back to Jerusalem. The priests climbed out of the well and hurried on to David to give their report.

READ: II Samuel 17:20-21

Can you not imagine how the two priests felt? Hidden in a shallow well beneath just a cloth of some sort, they could, of course, hear what was being said, and hear the search being carried out all around them! I'm sure they expected any second to be discovered. With what joy they must have been released out of that well! What a story they had to tell! What a story you have to tell! On the edge of the pit. On the brink of eternal separation. A breath away from a Christ-less eternity. And God saved you and lifted you up! "We've a story to tell to the nations!" (and to my friends and co-workers and family and neighbors!)