

Day 312 - WEDNESDAY: December 13th

2 Samuel 16 & Psalm 3

2 Samuel 16:1-23 NKJV

When David was a little past the top of the mountain, there was Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth, who met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred summer fruits, and a skin of wine. And the king said to Ziba, "What do you mean to do with these?" So Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who are faint in the wilderness to drink." Then the king said, "And where is your master's son?" And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.' " So the king said to Ziba, "Here, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." And Ziba said, "I humbly bow before you, that I may find favor in your sight, my lord, O king!" Now when King David came to Bahurim, there was a man from the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei the son of Gera, coming from there. He came out, cursing continuously as he came. And he threw 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. Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you rogue! The LORD has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!" Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!" But the king said, "What

have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruah? So let him curse, because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' " And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him. It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day." And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and kicked up dust. Now the king and all the people who were with him became weary; so they refreshed themselves there. Meanwhile Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him. And so it was, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" So Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, but whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his I will be, and with him I will remain. "Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, so will I be in your presence." Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give advice as to what we should do." And 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 are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong." So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

Psalms 3:1-8 NKJV

A Psalm of David When He Fled from Absalom His Son. LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God." Selah But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around. Arise, O LORD; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to the LORD. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "Moving on, just past the summit of the Mount of Olives, David's entourage runs into Ziba, the steward of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth. Surprisingly, he tells the king that Mephibosheth is now expecting the kingdom to be given back to the family of Saul by virtue of what is happening in Israel. But this may actually be a lie, as we are later given a completely different report by Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 19:24-30). Nevertheless, David is unaware of this "other side of the story." Moreover, Ziba is clearly bearing gifts for the king and his household, putting himself in mortal danger from Absalom by helping them. So the king, without inquiry, accepts Ziba at his word and grants to him all that belongs to Mephibosheth. Continuing on a little further east, David's company arrives at Bahurim, where Shimei, a man from the same clan as Saul's family, begins following David and cursing him along the way—implying that David is a usurper guilty of overthrowing Saul and his dynasty. Though David is totally innocent of this charge, he realizes Absalom's rebellion is due to actual sin on his part. And for this reason, he accepts Shimei's railing as

part of God's judgment upon him even though the man is breaking the law by cursing the king (compare Exodus 22:28).

It is evidently the next day when David composes Psalm 3, after a night's sleep (compare superscription, verse 5). It might be surprising to learn that he is able to sleep at all under such stressful conditions. Yet he recalls the previous day when he prayed to God from the Mount of Olives, looking across to His "holy hill," and how God answered him (verse 4). Reassured and trusting in God, he is able to rest secure even in this troubling time.

David's decision to leave 10 concubines, i.e., unofficial wives, at the palace will now be taken advantage of by his enemies. Ahithophel advises Absalom to lie with these women. *The Nelson Study Bible* notes: "In ancient times, taking over a king's harem was a recognized means of claiming the throne. When Ahithophel advised Absalom to have sexual relations with David's concubines, he knew that this would finalize the breach between Absalom and David. It was an irrevocable action. Up to this point, Absalom would have been able to back away from all that he had done and still be reconciled to his father. But once he violated the harem of David, he was set on a course of sure and final alienation from his father" (note on 2 Samuel 16:22). But there is more going on here. It is clear that these events are bringing to pass the final punishment God had decreed on David through Nathan after David's sin of taking his neighbor Uriah's wife and murdering him. God had said, "I will take *your* wives before your eyes and give them to *your* neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun" (2 Samuel 12:11-12). Thus the manner in which Ahithophel counseled Absalom to go about his deed: "The tent that Absalom pitched in the sight of all Israel was probably a bridal tent. Absalom made the people of Israel fully aware that he was engaging in sexual relations with his father's

concubines. Putting the tent on the roof of the palace was an insolent act that was guaranteed to stir the populace one way or another" (note on 2 Samuel 16:22)." [END]

Verse 23 – John Gill's commentary states: "Ahithophel was a crafty man, a time server, that temporized with princes, and knew how to suit his counsels with their tempers and interests: to David he gave good counsel, what was acceptable with him, and to Absalom bad counsel, which was pleasing to him." [END]

Psalm 3 – The UCG reading program states "begins a thematic grouping of 12 of David's psalms (3-14), as we will later see in conjunction with Psalm 8 and Psalm 14.

Psalm 3 is the lament David composed when he fled from his son Absalom. Driven by ambition to become king himself, Absalom turned the hearts of the people away from David. David despairs that so many have turned against him (verse 1). They no longer believe God is with him to help him (verse 2).

The phrase "lifts up my head" (verse 3) expresses David's belief that God will raise him up from the humiliation he suffers. In 2 Samuel 15:30 we read of the sad occasion of David being driven out of Jerusalem: "So David went up by the Ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up and he had his head covered and went barefoot. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went up."

In spite of intense enemy opposition, David is able to sleep without fear, "for the Lord sustained me" (verses 5-6). The KJV and NKJV translation of verse 7 says that God has come to David's defense before. However, the NIV translates verse 7 as a present request for God to "strike all my enemies on the jaw; break the teeth of the wicked." Even if the latter is correct, God has indeed intervened for David before and will certainly

do so again—just as He will for all of us who place our trust in Him.”
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