



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Lessons from the Life of David

2 Samuel 16:1-23

“David Learning Galatians 6:7”

TRANSCRIPT

Returning to 2 Samuel chapter 16 and reading the entire chapter for our Scripture reading this morning, 2 Samuel chapter 16 in verse 1. The author writes.

“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!’”

Those are interesting words, because in the Hebrew text it is really something like a “son of bloods” and “a son of Belial.” So they were rather strong words with which to describe King David now going into exile.

“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 Zeruiah?’”

They have been a constant problem, source of trouble for David, as you remember, Azahiel first, whom Abner killed, then Abishai and Joab, who is now David’s commander in chief.

“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.’”

I’d like for you to notice that because we’ll make a comment concerning it in the message.

“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?’ [He refers, of course, to David.] 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.’”

You’ll notice that Ahithophel may be very wise, but Hushai is too because his words while obviously may mean that he is going to serve Absalom, nevertheless, may actually mean that he’s not. So there is a double meaning and Absalom fails to see it.

“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.”

May the Lord bless this reading of his word and let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Our Heavenly Father, we give Thee thanks for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has loved us and given himself for us, a sacrifice for our sins. And we thank Thee for the eternal life that is freely promised to those who believe in him. We are, indeed, grateful; we express our thanks to Thee, Lord, and we express our thanks to Thee for all of the other blessings that have been conveyed to us through the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for a great High Priest and advocate. We thank Thee for the Holy Spirit who has come to indwell our hearts and give us guidance and direction, illumination as we read the word of God and comfort and consolation in the experiences of life. And we thank Thee for the material provisions that Thou hast made for us. We give Thee thanks and express to Thee, Lord, the gratitude that we have the One True God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as our God. And today on the Lord's Day we worship Thee.

And, Father, we ask Thy blessing upon this country, upon our President and others who are associated with him in government, in the trials of the presidency, we ask that Thou wilt encourage our President and give him wisdom beyond his own natural wisdom to deal with the critical issues that face him.

We pray for the whole Church of Jesus Christ, wherever the word of God is proclaimed in truth. Bless those who open the Scriptures and seek to preach Christ from them. And we pray for our fellow believers scattered over the face of this globe. May today be a day of spiritual development and edification and growth.

And for Believers Chapel and its ministries, we ask, Lord, Thy blessing upon the radio ministry, upon the tape ministry and the publications. We commit these ministries to Thee for Thy blessing. We pray for our elders and our deacons, give them wisdom

and guidance as they minister to us. And may our meetings of this day exalt and glorify him who gave himself for us.

We pray for the sick, especially, we ask, Lord, Thy blessing upon them and for those who have requested our prayers, whose petitions are listed in our bulletin and others as well, O God, minister to them out of the strength and consolation and power that Thou alone has. Minister to them and if it please Thee, give affirmative answers to their petitions and give healing as it should please Thee as well. We pray for those who minister to them. We pray for family and friends who also minister to them. We ask, Lord, that Thou wilt have them upon Thy heart in the days of their illnesses. We commit them each to Thee.

And we pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.

[Message] The subject for today as we continue our series of studies in the Life of David, as set forth in the books of Samuel and Kings, is “David Learning Galatians 6:7.” Now, it's possible, of course, that some of you may not know Galatians 6:7, but there, you'll remember, the apostle writes something like this, “Do not be deceived. God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap.” A common conviction of wise men is that men's actions have their inevitable consequences. The results are certain to follow, not so reasonable so [Inaudible]. He does not say, “Nothing is more certain” or “It is reasonably certain that” because if we say “certain” adverbs do not fit. There are no degrees to certainty. If it's certain, it's certain. And when we say “reasonably certain” we've destroyed the certainty of certainty. So what we are saying is that this law, “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,” is not a law that is reasonably certain of fulfillment, it is always to be fulfilled.

It's very interesting that this statement of the word of God implied in other places of the word of God, even in the Old Testament in the Book of Job and then in a number of places in the new Testament as well, is a principle that Plato, Democritus, Aristotle,

Plutarch, Cicero, and others repeat as a law of human conduct. The Bible simply puts it, “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.”

Now, the Scripture also warns us that there is no evasion of this particular law. To think that someone might evade God, when he has said, “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap,” is striking in itself, in fact, shocking. The idea that God can be deceived, that this law of God cannot be carried out is an impossibility. And one might ask, reasonably, I think, do we need to be warned about this? “Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” Don’t be mocked? Why should we have to be exhorted about something like that? Well, obviously, the nature of man is such that he needs to be warned about certain things and the word of God is careful to do that. And this is one of those laws.

And we learn in Scripture over and over again that whatever a man sows, that he shall reap. When Haman was constructing his gallows in order that the children of Israel might lose their lives, what he sowed he reaped. And he himself died upon the gallows that he had so beautifully constructed for others.

The Greeks thought of the god, Nemesis, incidentally a female goddess, as one who followed an individual who had done something wrong. And, consequently, Nemesis always managed, ultimately, to catch the individual who had done that which was wrong. All Greek tragedy is a sermon on the text, “The doer shall suffer.” So “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” And if a man sins against his loved ones, sooner or later, he will suffer for that as well.

John Goff, the great temperance orator, who had lived a reckless early life, used to declare in warning, “The scars remain!” That is, that even if God should forgive the things that we have done wrong, the effects of our sins follow. “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.”

Now, what application does this have to the life of David? Well, those of you who have been with us through our studies know that David’s life was remarkable for its

fellowship with God, for the blessing of God upon it. But the time came when David's heart was lifted up. He was idle when he should have been with his fighting men. He looked out and saw Bathsheba, lusted after her, committed adultery, and then compounded his adultery by murdering Bathsheba's husband. Since that time, David has learned in the experiences of life that “Whatever a man sows, that will he also reap.” And that's what this chapter is about. It's about the things that happen to David in order that he may learn Galatians 6:7, and never forget it. That, “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” And I'd suggest to you that the three individuals who make up this section are designed by the Lord God in David's life to instruct him in that great truth.

And first of all, he's instructed in Galatians 6:7, “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap,” by the deception of avaricious Ziba, who longed for the property of Mephibosheth, his lame master, to whom David, you may remember in our studies, had conveyed the property of Jonathan and Saul.

Now, in the last chapter, and I wasn't here last week so you may have forgotten it, but in the last chapter, Ittai, Zadok, and Abiathar and Hushai are mentioned as faithful to King David in his exile, now that Absalom has sought to take the throne. Well, this trio of individuals are not faithful. And David once wrote, if he is the author of Psalm verse 116, verse 11, “I said in my haste all men are liars.” Well, perhaps that's excessive. All men may not be liars, but the chances are that all men have at one point or another lied. And when David said, in his haste, “All men are liars,” he probably was closer to the truth, perhaps, than even he realized. And this was a time when he might have found it very useful what he's just said, that “all men are liars.” For we have some liars before us.

You know, it is certainly true that beast of prey and creeping things come forth in the night. And so in this dark and sad time for David, the foul creatures come forth and manifest their full strength. Good men are always encompassed by evils; but they are kept in check by the very force of their relationship to the Lord God and to the goodness that he has given to them.

But now, the time has come for the appearance of the creeping things and Ziba and Ahithophel and the other, Shimei, are examples of that. And David, now, must face the avarice of Ziba, as the first of the men who is to teach him the truth that, “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.”

When you think of Ziba and realize that he had been the servant of Saul. He now is the servant of Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, a lame man, a cripple. And see what he seeks to do in these verses by deceiving David and having conveyed to himself the property of Mephibosheth, you see the sin of avarice in its baldest expression.

Here is an individual, taking advantage of a situation. His master is a cripple, cannot defend himself as other men. And so now, David meets him and he asks Ziba, who has brought him a lavish gift, in order to gain his favor. He’s asked Ziba, “Where is your master’s son?” And Ziba has said, “He’s staying in Jerusalem, for he said, ‘Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.’”

While there is some difference of opinion over this, most of the students of the word of God believe that he was lying. He was slandering Mephibosheth. And later on Mephibosheth will contend that he never wanted to have the kingdom restored to him. So I’m taking it that way that Ziba is lusting for the property of Saul and Mephibosheth and David, forgetting his truth that he wrote, “I said in my haste all men are liars,” says to him in the 4th verse, “I humbly bow,” says to him, “Here, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours.” And Ziba says, “I humbly bow before you, that I may find favor in your sight, my Lord, O king!”

Avarice. Avarice is a careful student of human nature. And Ziba is a careful student of human nature. Greed. Piggishness. Acquisitiveness. This is the sin that Ziba represents. And, you’ll notice, if you think about it a moment, the greedy man, the avaricious man, the piggish man, the hoggish man, for that matter, the acquisitive man, who seeks to acquire illegally, is a man who, generally, has a great deal of prevision. I wouldn’t want to call it foreknowledge, but, prevision. Fiendish opportunism seems to be

that which characterizes him. And a sagacity to note the ways in which he may allow his piggishness and acquisitiveness to express itself. And Ziba has expressed itself in this elaborate present that he has provided for David. He has two hundred loaves of bread. He has a hundred clusters of raisins. He has a hundred summer fruits and a skin of wine. And so, consequently, on the grounds of this he seeks to gain the favor of David and gain the property of Mephibosheth. So what, I think, we see is avarice in its most hideous form.

Now, you know, I don't often speak about politicians. But what I see here is something that a great deal of men in our public life could learn. For example, we're afflicted today by those who, under the guise of constituent service, have lined their own pockets with considerable sums of money. In fact, our Congress is so unable to deal with such men that the Ethics Committee, Ethics Committee mind you, is totally unable to act. And last week or so, the Senate leaders appointed a task force in order to deal with the question of constituent service. One of our leading magazines entitles a description of it and editorial of it as Constituent Disservice. What it really is, as everyone knows, is avarice, acquisitiveness, piggishness, acquisitiveness on the part of our public leaders. And here we have in Ziba an illustration of it.

And so this is the first step in avarice; to be a careful student of human nature. And we have individuals who are careful students of human nature who are taking advantage of other humans. Avarice is also heedless of the infliction of pain and injury that takes place. David is a man who is deeply hurt in his heart. He realizes he's sinned and it's evident. And so the avaricious Ziba further wounds the heart of the good man, and David was a good man who had fallen. And he, furthermore, blasts the innocent cripple's reputation and has stolen his property.

One of the nicest things about the word of God is the fact that Scripture tells us that the scores are, ultimately, to be settled. They may not be settled in this life, but they often are in this life. But if they are not settled in this life, they will be settled in the life

that is to come. As the apostle reminds us, who are believers, that there is a judgment seat of Jesus Christ and we shall all stand before that judgment seat, and we shall all receive the things that we have done in the body, whether they are good or worthless. And even believers, who have the assurance of eternal life, must stand before the Lord God and be rewarded or lose rewards based upon the actions of their lives.

So avarice is heedless often of the infliction of pain and injury. And it, often, assumes the form of noblest virtues. I imagine that when the senator or the congressman invented the term, constituent service, in order to explain why he liked to take money from his constituents, and called it constituent service, he thought, “I have really hit upon something. I’ve hit upon something that sounds good.” And so constituent service is the means, by which we all know this, by which many of our lawmen have been involved in, for example, the savings and loan crises. Constituent service! Lining their pockets and using a nice term to express it.

Now, I want you to notice how Ziba does this. He first of all gives David the gift. And then, in verse 4, after David has said, “All that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours.” He says, “I humbly bow before you, that I may find favor in your sight, my Lord, O king!” Ziba appears as a generous, understanding, faithful man; but remember, wolves come in sheep’s clothing. And there is something about the Lord God that sees through all of the cover that we seek to put between ourselves and the Lord God. There are individuals, so the Lord Jesus said, in the Book of Matthew chapter 23 in verse 27, who forget this important fact. I’ll turn to this verse and just read it because you’re familiar with it. The Lord Jesus said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.” So in the case of the Lord God, there is no kind of cover that will shade anything from the eyes of the Lord God.

Now, the second way in which David learns, “Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap,” is by the curses of murderous Shimei. This is, perhaps, the most graphic

insult account in the whole of the Bible. And he shouts out these curses toward David and, in effect, calls him a murderer.

Someone has said, “A murderer is one who is presumed to be innocent until proven insane.” Well, in the case of David, he’s thinking about a real murderer. And so in verse through verse , David learns, “Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap,” by having an individual like Shimei following him along shouting curses at him, throwing rocks at him, expressing, expressive of the attitude of this descendant of Saul toward what God has done through him.

Now, I’d like to read these verses in verse 5 through verse 8 again. We read.

“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.’”

Now, notice the way he attacks David. He attacks him, first of all, as a murderer and then as a usurper. In other words, he really shouldn’t be on the throne at all. He’s responsible for the death of Saul, and he is the one who has stolen the kingdom from Saul.

Now, if you’ll just look back in the story of the life of King David, you’ll see how false this was. Shimei is a man who does not respond to the word of God and he, undoubtedly, has forgotten, if he ever paid close attention to it, that it was the Lord God who, through his prophet Samuel, anointed David. And, furthermore, it was the Lord

God through his servant Samuel who also took the throne from King Saul. It was God's mind that Saul should lose his kingdom. It was God's mind that David should succeed him.

And so while it might look to those who do not know the truth of God that David has been responsible for the removal of Saul and has taken the throne that belonged to Saul, the facts are just the opposite. It was God who gave the kingdom to Saul and it is God who took it away. And it's God who has made David the king and anointed him, both by the prophet and by the events of his life, so David further learns “Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” And by the curses of this murderous man, Shimei, the spiritual rebellion of this individual is their intermediate source of his difficulties.

David is like our Lord. He was better than his haters liked him to be. And so, consequently, he suffers because of exactly what he is. But the interesting thing about David is that he recognized that he deserved a lot of the things that are happening to him. And so in the remainder of this section, in verse 9 through verse 14, David by his response to the curses of Shimei, makes it plain that he understands that lying back of what Shimei is doing is the discipline of the Lord God upon him because of his sin. Only Nathan, perhaps, and he understood these curses that Shimei was shouting at him as the echo of his own conscience. And so we read it in the verses that follow. And I'll read these verses again, as well, and I want you to notice how David is resigned to what has happened as being the hand of God through this wicked 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!’”

Abishai was one of the sons of Zeruiah, and they like to settle questions in that way. But there was some justice in what he is saying, because Moses had said that you were not to curse your king, your leader. And so that's what Shimei was doing and according

to the Law of Moses, he could have been put to death without any guilt attaching to what Abishai would like to do.

“But the king said, ‘What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David.’ Who then shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’”

In other words, David said, “This has come because the Lord has spoken to him and I’m suffering the curses of the Lord in discipline for what I’ve done. And, furthermore, David gives another reason. He says to Abishai and all his servants, “See how my son, Absalom, who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite?” In other words, if Absalom is seeking my life, how much more justice is there for Shimei, this son of Benjamin, to do it as well. “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.”

Now, I must say, I admire David. No curses of the wicked at this moment were too bad for him. He’s writhing under the fact that he has sinned in the case of Bathsheba, has committed adultery and then compounded it with murder, and he recognizes the divine discipline upon him. No rebellion of any cherished son was too severe a chastisement for him.

As the Psalmist would put it, “The waves and billows of divine judgment are rolling over him.” And they are fitly framed by God to swallow up any kind of self condemnation, any kind of self pity that might be there. Here lies the meaning in the preceding chapter, when David is forced out of the city of Jerusalem, with those bared feet, that bowed head, that silence under the curse, that moral inability to raise a finger to stay the swelling flood of trouble.

If I may say something to you, my Christian friend, particularly my Christian friend, when a Christian man sins and recognizes that he has sinned, he feels very much like David, he feels the sense of divine chastisement upon him. And he feels that any of the experiences of life are not too hard for the man who has displeased the Lord who loved him and gave himself for him. We shouldn't wonder that David is acting as he's acting. He's a forgiven soul, as we have read back in chapter 12, but at the same time, the feeling of demerit is upon him so deeply that Shimei may shout his curses. But David does not hear them from Shimei, he hears them from the Lord God as part of the discipline upon him.

And if you like I have sinned, as believing men, and recognize this great truth, you'll understand why David feels like he feels. He recognizes that he has displeased the Lord who loved him, gave himself for him, ultimately, his Great God who's given him all the promises of life. And now, having displeased him, he cannot help but feel so low, so deeply about what he has done. “The Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David.’” Yes, it was the Lord. The words of the prophet were true. Back in chapter 12, verse 10 through verse 14, Nathan had warned him, remember?

“Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’ Thus says the Lord, ‘I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and 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. [And that will happen in a moment.] For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.’ So David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, [However, this great however of chapter, however.] by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.’”

And so David has been suffering. This is the discipline of the Lord God. This is the discipline for those sins that we commit. And so those bared feet, that bowed head, those tears and the weeping; they are the recognition of the will of God. If you look back at the example of our Lord and the example of the apostles, and you will find something of the same thing.

Now then, we turn, oh incidentally, I think it's interesting to note here that David traces all of this back to the Lord. In other words, it's not Shimei, it's the Lord. Second causes are lost for him in the efficient cause. The efficient cause is the Lord God. Shimei is just a tool in the hand of the Lord God.

And now, David, finally, in the last section, learns again, “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,” by the counsel of traitorous Ahithophel, who had been his counselor. And so we read as the scene returns to Jerusalem, “Meanwhile Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him.” And then Hushai comes and, this little piece of conversation, this little account, between Absalom and Hushai is very interesting because of the fact that his words are ambiguous words.

And the Bible does not praise Hushai, incidentally, for being deceptive. He was back in Jerusalem because he really served David, and he was deceptive in that. The Bible doesn't praise him for that. But, nevertheless, it is a fact. Faith in God casts out expediencies. It wasn't necessary for him to do this, for God to restore David to the throne. God had told David he would rule and reign. He had not told him that the kingdom was taken away from him. But David is conniving a bit, himself, and Hushai goes back, together with the two priests and another in order to keep tabs on what's happening in Jerusalem.

Faith in God casts out such expediencies, but the men of the Bible are not perfect men. And so David in the midst of his mourning over his sin is also acting expediently.

And Hushai is back. But Absalom doesn't notice the two ways in which Hushai's words may be taken. In other words, he's kind of blinded by his egoism. He listens to the words and instead of interpreting them as Hushai is still a servant of David, he takes Hushai's words in their best possible way, as being he's decided that he will serve Absalom. And his own egotism, his own arrogance has blinded him.

Fred Allan once said, “The last time I saw him,” describing a friend, “He was walking down Lovers Lane holding his own hand.” And Absalom is that kind of individual, he's an individual so filled with himself that he cannot realize that words may mean something else either than praise for him.

But the final part of the chapter is the point that is most significant. There is an eternal blot on Ahithophel's name. I don't know whether you know this from your reading in the Bible or not, but you may remember that in the upper room, when our Lord was with his disciples before he was crucified, he spoke about Judas as an individual who had at his own table lifted up his hand to betray him. He was talking about Ahithophel, and he cites the passage from Psalm 41 that has to do with Ahithophel, and says, “That Ahithophel is a type of Judas.” That's our Lord's reading of history. In other words, the enemies of our Lord are the enemies of God. The enemies of our Lord's type, in the Old Testament, David, are the enemies of the Lord, like Judas. In other words, just as David had his enemies, so our Lord has his enemies. Our Lord had Judas as his enemy. David had Ahithophel, his counselor.

And when one thinks of Ahithophel, he always thinks of the fact that Ahithophel is the Old Testament illustration of Judas. And you may remember how he died, we haven't come to it yet, but he died by hanging himself, which is the way that Judas died, also. Well, we read here, in the end.

“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.”

It’s a very wicked scene. It was regarded as legitimate in those days when a king conquered someone else or when an individual conquered someone else, that his harem belonged to the conqueror. And so Ahithophel, realizing that if this were done publicly on the top of the porch upon which David had looked down and seen Bathsheba, they erected some tents in order to shield the eyes of the people from the acts, themselves. And then the harem was brought out and as we read in chapter 16, “Absalom went in to his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel.” And Ahithophel knew that once that happened that would be the final break between David and Absalom. They could never come together again as father and son. There might have been some opportunity before. Absalom might have repented and returned the kingdom to his father in repentance. But now, it was impossible for David to, even if there had been a repentance, to forget this particular thing. And so Ahithophel knew that and he gave that ruthless advice to do this.

Sin is madness as well as vileness. Never forget that. And serpent who is Ahithophel, his advice becomes the unconscious fulfillment of prophecy as Nathan had said. “I will raise up adversity against you from your own house. I will take your wives before your eyes given them to your neighbor. He shall lie with your wives in the sight of the sun.” The gulf is irreconcilable between Absalom and David. “Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.”

Incidentally, this was a perfectly free action on the part of Absalom. But it was something that had already been divinely decreed by the prophetic word. And so the harmonization of the free actions of individuals, with the divine sovereignty, is set forth before us here on the pages of Holy Scripture.

This last text, incidentally, is very interesting. 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. Who was running the country? Well, if Absalom took the advice of Ahithophel as if it were the advice of the oracle of God, and if David took the advice of Ahithophel as if it were the advice of the oracle of God, who's running the country? Ahithophel is running the country. That's who is running the country. Ahithophel.

So David has to learn and experience the truth that you and I may avoid learning in experience. “Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” And so we come again, finally, to our theme expressed by Paul, in Galatians, David didn't know the text, but he knows the truth. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” That Greek verb, *outayritso* is a term that means to lift up the snout. You know, the kind of individual who is proud and arrogant and has his nose high in the sky. That's that verb. “Do not be deceived.” Why should we have to be exhorted? Do not be deceived? We know better. We know that God cannot be fooled. We are the ones who can be deceived. “Do not be deceived; God is not mocked.” You cannot lift up your snout at God and expect to get by. This is a law. This is a scriptural law. “Whatever a man sows, that shall he reap.” It's a theme of the inexorable consequences of our actions. It's a natural act, for God has implanted it in our natural world about us; but it's a spiritual law as well.

No farmer who plants his seed would fail to know this text in his own business. No businessman, no professional man would dispute this fact. He sees too many illustrations of it. “Whatsoever a man sows, ultimately he will reap.” Oh, he might get by in this life, in a few cases, most of the time he doesn't, our sin finds us out. But it will surely find us out in the future. In the moral sphere, it's often only learned in the despair and anguish and bitterness of life. Therefore, let us who are fathers, who are mothers, and the relationships in our families, us who are children, us who are businessmen and

churchmen; let’s hear it again, “Do not be deceived; God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.”

I’ve always liked that text. And you know what word I like in it? I like the word “that.” “Whatever a man sows, ‘that’ he shall reap.” We reap what we sow, not what we meant to sow. We sometimes interpret it that way. The text doesn’t say that. Not what we meant to sow! Not what we thought we sowed! Not what we tried to sow! But that which we “did” sow! “Don’t be deceived; God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that will he reap.” It’s an awesome text, isn’t it? May God help us to learn it.

If you are here today and you have never believed in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we remind you that the apostle talks to believers. For those who are unbelievers, your sin is that which hinders your relationship with God. Sin for which a redeemer has come and has died; Christ died for sinners. And for those who recognize their sin, and have come to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and have received him as their own personal savior, they have the eternal life that is promised in the word of God.

And if you are here today and you have not believed in him, we invite you, as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus, to recognize your sin, to recognize the Savior who loved us and gave himself for us, and to flee to him. Come to him! Acknowledge your sin! And by God’s grace, receive as a free gift eternal life. Don’t leave the auditorium without the settling of that decision. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. May God enable you to make that decision.

Let’s stand for the Benediction.

[Prayer] Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for these marvelous lessons from the word of God that Thou hast in wonderful grace given to us. We have, like David, so often displeased Thee. Lord, give us something of the same attitude of sorrow over our sin that the great king had. Help us also to realize that the experiences of life, ultimately, are from Thee, the efficient cause of all of the experiences of us. And, Lord, if there

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should be some here who have never believed in Christ, may they at this moment,
reflecting upon their condition as sinners, lost, and condemned, for eternity as their own.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.