

APRIL 7

Read 2 Samuel 16–18

CHAPTER 16

AND when David was a little past the top of *the hill*, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred *loaves* of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.

2 And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses *be* for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.

3 And the king said, And where *is* thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.

4 Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine *are* all that *pertained* unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee *that* I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

5 ¶ And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name *was* Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came.

6 And he cast 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.

7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial:

8 The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man.

9 ¶ Then said Abishai the son of Zeruah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.

10 And the king said, What

have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now *may this* Benjamite *do it*? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him.

12 It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.

13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.

14 And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there.

15 ¶ And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him.

16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king.

17 And Absalom said to Hushai, *Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?*

18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.

19 And again, whom should I serve? *should I not serve* in the presence of his son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.

20 ¶ Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do.

21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that *are* with thee be strong.

22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

23 And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, *was* as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so *was* all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

CHAPTER 17

MOREOVER Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night:

2 And I will come upon him while he *is* weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that *are* with him shall flee; and I will smite the king only:

3 And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seekest *is* as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace.

4 And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.

5 Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.

6 And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do *after* his saying? if not; speak thou.

7 And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given *is* not good at this time.

8 For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they *be* mighty men, and they *be* chafed in their minds, as a bear

robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father *is* a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.

9 Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some *other* place: and it will come to pass, when some of them be overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.

10 And he also *that is* valiant, whose heart *is* as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father *is* a mighty man, and *they* which *be* with him *are* valiant men.

11 Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person.

12 So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that *are* with him there shall not be left so much as one.

13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there.

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 appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.

15 ¶ Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled.

16 Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that *are* with him.

17 Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and they went and told king David.

18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down.

19 And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn

thereon; and the thing was not known.

20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where *is* Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, They be gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find *them*, they returned to Jerusalem.

21 And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, Arise, and pass quickly over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

22. Then David arose, and all the people that *were* with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

23 ¶ And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled *his* ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

24 Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

25 ¶ And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa *was* a man's son, whose name *was* Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruah Joab's mother.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

28 Brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched *corn*, and beans, and lentiles, and parched *pulse*,

29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that *were* with him, to eat: for they said, The people *is* hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

CHAPTER 18

AND David numbered the people that *were* with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

2 And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand

of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also.

3 But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now *thou art* worth ten thousand of us: therefore now *it is* better that thou succour us out of the city.

4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.

5 And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, *Deal* gently for my sake with the young man, *even* with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

6 ¶ So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim;

7 Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand *men*.

8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

9 ¶ And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away.

10 And a certain man saw *it*, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.

11 And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest *him*, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten *shekels* of silver, and a girdle.

12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand *shekels* of silver in mine hand, *yet* would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none *touch* the young man Absalom.

13 Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine

own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against *me*.

14 Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he *was* yet alive in the midst of the oak.

15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.

16 And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

18 ¶ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which *is* in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place.

19 ¶ Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies.

20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead.

21 Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?

23 But howsoever, *said he*, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush.

24 And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone, *there is* tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter,

and said, Behold *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He *is* a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*.

30 And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, *and* stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, Cush came; and Cush said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cush, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cush answered, The

enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man is.

33 ¶ And the king was much moved, and went up to the cham-

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

In previous chapters we have seen the rebellion of son against father, but today we see the reckoning of the Lord. God will use all the previous happenings to purge David's kingdom and separate the loyal from the disloyal. We see that when God's judgments fall, they fall swiftly and accurately.

Chapter 17 records the death of Ahithophel. There is no question that Ahithophel's plan was the better of the two, but God saw to it that Absalom rejected it. Note Hushai's psychological approach in suggesting that Absalom lead the army himself (chapter 17:11). This appealed to Absalom's vanity, but vanity only led to his death. When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was rejected, he took his own life.

Chapter 18 records the death of Absalom. The vain prince followed Hushai's advice and led his army into the wood of Ephraim. He was certainly not prepared to wage war, and again we see that "pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). Absalom caught his head and long hair in a branch and could not get down. Joab disobeyed David's command and killed the rebel; then he sent the news to the king. David wept bitterly when he heard the news that his son Absalom was dead.

Although Absalom had conspired viciously against King David, David still loved him. Absalom was still his son. David had never become bitter at him. In fact, his abnormal grief at Absalom's death almost cost him the kingdom!

We need to continually pray that we will never become bitter in our old age. There is nothing more pitiful than an old, bitter Christian. If the Lord carries, and we are allowed to live, we will all become old. If we live in the Word and walk in the Spirit, we can grow sweeter as the years go by. David was, indeed, "a man after God's own heart." I believe this attribute of "sweetness" was one of his greatest marks of distinction.

PROVERB FOR TODAY

"Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman" (Proverbs 7:4).

ber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

Spend this month reviewing the previous 13 lessons. For today, review Memory Verse Assignment 5 (found on page 11).

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

RODENA PRESTON WILLIAMS

HYMN FOR TODAY

BLESSED REDEEMER

by Avis B. Christiansen, 1895-1985

It is thought by some that the day Catholics call "Good Friday" originated from the term "God's Friday"—the day that Christ was led to the hill of Golgotha and crucified, assuring an eternal reconciliation for lost man. The Roman cross, intended to be an instrument of cruel death, instead became an instrument of new life and hope for the human race. God loved and valued each of us so highly that He was willing to pay the greatest price imaginable for our salvation.

The composer of this hymn, Harry Dixon Loes, was a popular music teacher at the Moody Bible Institute from 1939 until his death in 1965. One day while listening to a sermon on the subject of Christ's atonement entitled "Blessed Redeemer," Mr. Loes was inspired to compose this tune. He then sent the melody with the suggested title to Mrs. Christiansen, a friend for many years, asking her to write the text. The completed hymn first appeared in the hymnal *Songs of Redemption* in 1920.

Mrs. Avis Christiansen is to be ranked as one of the important gospel hymn writers of the 20th century. She has written hundreds of gospel hymn texts as well as several volumes of published poems. Throughout her long lifetime of 90 years, Mrs. Christiansen collaborated with many well-known gospel musicians to contribute several other choice hymns to our hymnals, including "Blessed Calvary" and "I Know I'll See Jesus Some Day."

*Up Calv'ry's mountain, one dreadful morn,
walked Christ my Saviour, weary and worn;
facing for sinners death on the cross,
that He might save them from endless loss.*

*"Father, forgive them!" thus did He pray,
e'en while His life-blood flowed fast away;
praying for sinners while in such woe—
no one but Jesus ever loved so.*

*O how I love Him, Saviour and Friend!
How can my praises ever find end!
Thru years unnumbered on heaven's shore,
my tongue shall praise Him forevermore.*

Chorus:

*Blessed Redeemer, precious Redeemer!
Seems now I see Him on Calvary's tree,
wounded and bleeding, for sinners pleading—
blind and unheeding—dying for me!*

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1897

WALTER WINCHELL WAS BORN.

1933

BEER AND WINE BECAME LEGAL IN THE UNITED STATES.

Beer and wine became legal in the United States after thirteen "dry years." God forbid. What a tragedy that poison should be turned loose across America and made legal. Let us pledge to fight the liquor traffic as long as we have breath. In these days, when major denominations are accepting the social drink, may we, as fundamental believers, stand against this menace—a menace to our safety on the highways, a

menace to family security, a menace to the health of our children, a menace to our relationship with God Almighty. Take a few moments today to teach your children the evils of liquor. Don't just tell them it's bad; beat your fists, stomp your foot, and let them know how awful it is!

1947

HENRY FORD DIED.

His net worth was said to have been from five hundred million to seven hundred million dollars.

1954

THE BIRTHDAY OF DAVID JACK HYLES, SON OF JACK HYLES.

As a boy, Jack Hyles dreamed of the day he would be a father. Because his own father had little time for him as a boy, he dreamed of having a son some day. God gave him one. What pals they have been! They have worked together and played together. They have fought together and wrestled together. Pray for your son today.

ON THIS DATE IN

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

1712

SLAVE REVOLT, NEW YORK CITY. Nine whites were killed and twenty-one slaves were executed.

1934

DEATH OF WILLIAM MONROE TROTTER IN BOSTON, sixty-two years after his birth on April 7, 1872.

1915

BILLIE HOLIDAY, BLUES SINGER, BORN in E. Baltimore, Md.

A Christian Life:

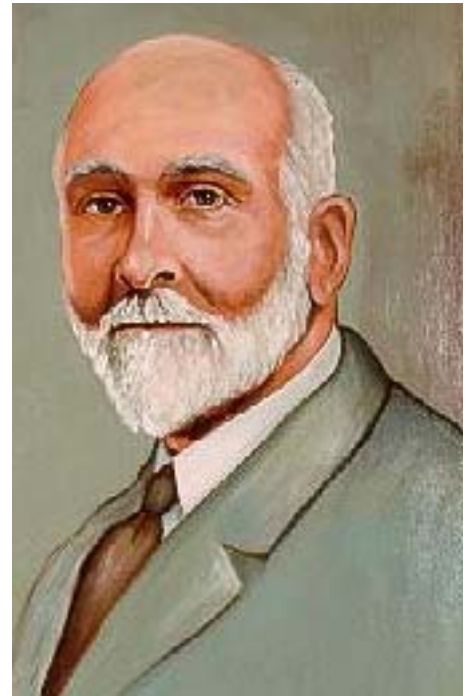
JONATHAN GOFORTH

1859-1936

Missionary to China. Jonathan Goforth was converted to Christ at the age of 18. While attending college, he did rescue mission work. He read Hudson Taylor's book about missionary work in China, and it so moved him that he dedicated his life to the Lord as a missionary. He and his wife labored in Honan, China, training hundreds of Chinese pastors and evangelists. During the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, the Goforths barely escaped with their lives, though suffering severe wounds.

They returned to the Orient and helped start a revival in Korea in 1907. This revival seemed to follow them as they went back to China. In 1925 they went to Manchuria and served there for eight years before ill health forced them to return to Canada.

Although Goforth was blind the last years of his life, he and his wife promoted missions until they went home to be with the Lord.



MEMORY VERSE ASSIGNMENT 5 (for review):

Please spend time reviewing these memory verses. If you have been completing the assignments in the TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING, then you already have spent a week memorizing the Scriptures below. Now it's time to review!

ASSURANCE BASED ON THE FACT OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Empty Tomb.

() Matthew 28:6

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Resurrected according to Old Testament Scripture.

() 1 Corinthians 15:4

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Seen of Peter and then with the twelve apostles.

() 1 Corinthians 15:5

And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.

Five hundred eye-witnesses in one gathering.

() 1 Corinthians 15:6

After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

Many witnessed His ascension.

() Acts 1:9 (see Acts 1:10,11)

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight.