

At the start of this chapter Ahithophel is recommending a quick strike at David as he flees. He promises to target only the king. "I will strike down only the king, and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace." Simply put, if David dies his people can live.

This proposal finds an eerie echo in the mouth of Caiaphas the high priest in John 11:50: "It is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." Caiaphas's intended victim, of course, is not David but his descendant and heir to his eternal throne, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Caiaphas wants to keep Jesus from causing any further unrest which would bring down Roman wrath on Palestine. But he unwittingly prophesies the truth, that

Jesus would indeed die for the nation, and all those who would be called children of God (John 11:51-52).

As we read on we will see that Absalom's rejection of Ahithophel's plan will spare David but lead in the end to twenty thousand deaths (2 Samuel 18:7). God tenderly preserves the life of His earthly anointed, even though in some ways David does not deserve it. But God did not spare His only beloved Son, the only sinless one, but gave Him as a sacrifice for many.

### Notes

**17:25** David will graciously appoint Amasa over his army in Chapter 19, leading to his murder by Joab. Both are David's nephews.

**17:27** Shobi's father Nahash was the king of the Ammonites, Israel's enemy. Chapter 10 tells how they became reconciled.

### Questions for study and discussion:

1. What is the difference between Ahithophel's advice and Hushai's? From what we know of David's condition, which is more likely to succeed?
2. Hushai deliberately give bad advice at David's direction. Does God ever deceive men as Hushai deceives Absalom? Does He allow deception? For what purpose?
3. Ahithophel's plan is more cautious and sparing of lives while Hushai's calls for mass slaughter and razing of towns. Why do you suppose Hushai goes so far?

4. How many people are involved in carrying the warning from Jerusalem to David's camp? What type of people? What does this say about Christian service?
5. Why does Ahithophel hang himself? Who does this remind us of?
6. The list of those helping David in verses 27-29 includes former enemies (Shobi) and the wealthy and powerful (Barzillai), but no prominent Israelites. How is David a type of Christ here?