

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading for May 31:

2 Samuel 17:1-29:

In this chapter we see David's plan to have Hushai close to Absalom works. Ahithophel counseled Absalom to attack David right away, tonight, while he and his men are weary and discouraged (see 16:14). It is most likely that had Absalom followed this counsel he may have defeated David. Yet, Absalom asks for Hushai's input. Hushai counsels him to take more time to muster more men from around Israel for the fight in light of David's ability as a warrior. Hushai was buying time for David and his men. Absalom took the advise of Hushai "for the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel so that the LORD might bring harm upon Absalom" (14). The word translated "ordained" is the word often translated "command" (*tsavah*). When God commands that something happen, even when He is a far cause as here, the command is obeyed. Whether it takes angels obeying, the creation, or His creatures, the event(s) happens. In this case, it had to do with ordering things such that Absalom was more disposed to listen to Hushai than Ahithophel. God, in His providence ("His most holy, wise, and powerful, preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions" Westminster Shorter Catechism, #11) was showing Himself faithful to David and was taking care of him. Since Ahithophel knew Hushai's advice would lead to Absalom's defeat and his own ruin, he hanged himself (23).

This chapter teaches us a very important principle. As it unfolds the saga of Absalom and David and as David's plan works, what is really behind the plan working is God's providence. This chapter, then, becomes an example of what we recently read in the Proverbs: "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.... The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps" (Proverbs 16:1, 9). Christian, we do well to look to God and His providence as our ultimate hope, rather than merely our plans and actions!

John 19:23-42:

Today's text records events which took place once Jesus was upon the cross. John highlights several important themes. First, many of the details which took place fulfilled Scripture: the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' tunic (v. 24, see Psalm 22:18); Jesus' thirst and request for drink (v. 28, see Psalm 69:21); the reality that Jesus voluntarily gave up His spirit (v. 30, see Isaiah 53:12); the fact that his legs were not broken, as was the custom for most crucified persons (vv. 33, 36, see Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20); the fact that He was pierced with a spear (vv. 34, 37, see Zechariah 12:10); and the fact that He was buried in the tomb of a wealthy man, Joseph of Arimathea (v. 38, see Isaiah 53:9). All these things together show that God had told His people before hand what they could expect to happen to their coming Savior. This all shows that Jesus is truly the Savior and that His death was not merely the unjust death of a victim upon a cross, but a divinely-ordered event to save mankind!

Next, in verses 25-27 we learn of the righteousness and love of the only perfect man who ever walked on the earth. While on the cross He made sure that His mother (most likely widowed and in her late forties by this time with little means of income) was taken care

of by one of His disciples—the unnamed disciple whom He loved (most likely John). In this Jesus was fulfilling the fifth commandment (Honor your father and mother, Exodus 20:12) even in the midst of His death and bearing the wrath of the Father upon sin. This demonstrates He truly is the perfect sacrifice and the perfect Adam and Israel. As such, He rightfully has upon Him the blessings of the covenant and when we are united to Him by grace through faith we have those blessings as well.

Additionally, John makes it clear that Jesus accomplished fully and perfectly all that needed to be done in order to pay sin's penalty for those whom the Father had given to the Son. The text says that Jesus knew everything had been finished (v. 28) and so just before He gave up his spirit He said, "It has been finished" (v. 30). John, who likes double meanings most likely is referencing two concepts in this clause. To begin with, he is making the point that Jesus has accomplished all that needs to be completed for salvation—He lived a perfectly righteous life (see verse 25-27) and He has completely born the wrath of the Father for sin in the place of His people. Literally, the term communicates that it has all been finished and continues to be finished. But also, the word translated in the ESV "it is finished" (*tetelestai*) has been found on bills of sale out of the time period meaning "paid in full". This gives another picture, one out of the market place and redemption terminology, that Jesus has redeemed His people by paying in full their sin debt. Because of this, the person who is in Christ Jesus by grace through faith has the full assurance we have no debt left to pay, we have no more condemnation (Romans 8:1) and no one can bring a charge against us (Romans 8:33).

Also, John emphasizes that Jesus was crucified and buried on the day of preparation for the Sabbath (v. 31), that is, the day of preparation for the Sabbath during the Passover (see 19:14) which agrees with the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus was crucified and buried on Friday.

Finally, John emphasizes several points crucial to our understanding that Jesus truly died on the cross and He truly was resurrected: (1) the blood mixed with water (34) suggests His pericardium around the heart was pierced which would necessitate death, even if He had not been previously dead. This renders impossible any thought that Jesus didn't die, but was merely revived in the cold tomb, got up and walked out. (2) Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, so Joseph knew where the tomb was. The absence of the body in the tomb later on cannot be explained by the disciples going to the wrong tomb. Joseph could have easily rectified that mistake. (3) Another factor against Jesus merely being revived in the tomb, getting up and walking out is the fact that He was wrapped in seventy-five pounds of spices and wrappings (39-40 [note the part Nicodemus played in this. Most likely He had believed unto Jesus—see John 3]). To think that a man who had been through scourging and crucifixion could free Himself from those wrappings and then move the large stone at the entrance (see 20:1) is unthinkable apart from a miracle in its own right.

Psalm 119:129-152:

Many previous themes in this psalm are reemphasized. Take special note, however, of the very first exclamation: “Your testimonies are wonderful...” One thing we dare not miss from this psalm is how much we should prize and treasure the Scriptures.

Proverbs 16:12-13:

In verse 12 we learn how important it is for kings to act righteously. The only way a dynasty will truly last is for righteousness to be present. In verse 13 we also learn how important it is to speak with righteousness and truth around kings. We must keep in mind these are biblical proverbs which address how things operate and should operate among God’s people. This is what is true around a truly wise and godly king or leader. These verses, then, comprise not only wisdom for rulers and those around them, but also guidance in how we ought to pray for our leaders. Pray they would live righteously and that they would prize righteousness.