



## **Adult Sunday School**

**Lesson-17:** Hushai  
overcomes  
Ahitophel's strategy

**Date:**  
6 Nov 2022  
(Sunday)

**Time:** 9.40am

**Venue:** Sanctuary

(1) Background:

- Absalom usurped the kingdom of Israel and David fled away.
- Ahitophel was a close confidante and adviser to David but turned traitor and he pledged loyalty to Absalom.
- Hushai was accepted as an adviser to Absalom by was actually a spy of David.

(2) Absalom asked for counsel from Ahitophel as to the next course of action.

(3) There was an exchange of advice between Ahitophel and Hushai as follows:

"Turn, please,  
the advice of Ahithophel  
into foolishness,  
O Jehovah!"

2 Samuel 15:31 NKJV



Ahitophel and  
Hushai giving  
advice to Absalom

<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQwmJPcgO44H4w0F5Bnq1kocgBAC-cGjHTF6Q&usqp=CAU>

BIBLICAL THOUGHT

	<b>Ahitophel's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(a)	Ahitophel would choose 12,000 men to pursue David immediately 'tonight'. (2 Sam 17:1)	To pursue David immediately was a smart move: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No time for David and men to rest.</li><li>• No time to establish their defence.</li></ul>

	<b>Ahitophel's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Catch up with David and men when they were still weary and weak from fleeing.</li><li>• David's men would be afraid and flee.</li><li>• Ahitophel would kill David only.</li></ul> <p>(2 Sam 17:2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• David and men would be in panic and in confusion when overtaken by Ahitophel and men.</li><li>• David's men would flee.</li><li>• Kill David only. Killing the leader David would demoralise the men and cause them to surrender. There was no need to fight against David's men.</li></ul>

	<b>Ahitophel's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ahitophel would bring back all David's men to Absalom.</li> <li>• Only David would be killed.</li> <li>• The rest of the men would be unharmed and remained peaceful. (2 Sam 17:3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ahitophel's strategy was smart:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Minimal loss of lives (only David would be killed).</li> <li>(ii) The killing of David would subdue his men into surrendering. There would be no leader to lead them.</li> <li>(iii) The surrendered men would return to Absalom and there would be no further opposition to Absalom.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Ahitophel was a smart strategist. However, he applied his intelligence for wickedness.</p>

	<b>Hushai's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(d)	<p>Ahitophel advice was not good because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• David and men were mighty warriors.</li><li>• They were enraged like a mother bear who had lost her cubs.</li><li>• They were probably hidden in a pit or cave.</li></ul> <p>(2 Sam 17:7-8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hushai was David's supporter.</li><li>• He had to give reasons to Absalom not to adopt Ahitophel's advice.</li><li>• Hushai knew that Ahitophel's advice was a good strategy and if carried out would defeat David.</li><li>• Hushai planted fear of defeat if Ahitophel's advice was carried out.</li></ul>

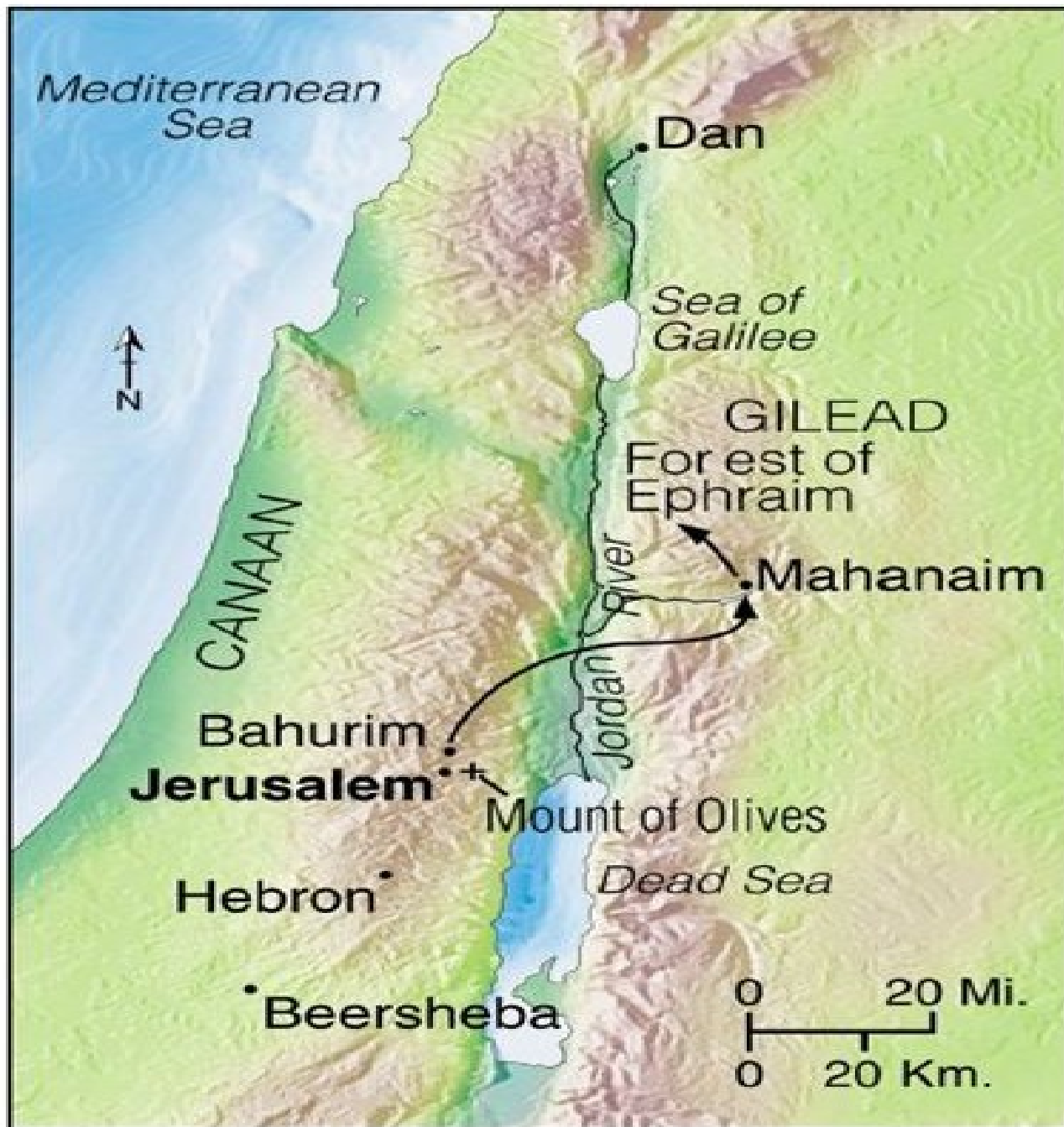
	<b>Hushai's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When they come out to attack causing Absalom's men to fall, there would be panic among Absalom's men. Then people would be saying that Absalom's men have been slaughtered. (2 Sam 17:8-9)</li><li>• The bravest of Absalom's men would be paralysed with fear because of the mighty David and his courageous warriors. (2 Sam 17:10)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hushai planted fear of defeat in Ahitophel's advice.</li></ul>



	<b>Hushai's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(e)	<p><u>Hushai's proposal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To mobilise the entire Israel army bringing them from as far as Dan and Beersheba.</li><li>• Absalom to personally lead the troops.</li></ul> <p>(2 Sam 17:11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hushai played up to Absalom's pride for him to personally lead a big army to destroy David and men.</li></ul>

	<b>Hushai's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(e)	<p><u>Hushai's proposal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When David and men are found, they would be completely destroyed by Absalom and army.</li><li>• If David escaped to a city, the entire army would be at Absalom's command to destroy the city.</li></ul> <p>(2 Sam 17: 12-13)</p>	<p>Hushai played up to Absalom's pride for him to personally lead a big army to destroy David and men.</p>

	<b>Hushai's advice</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(e)	<p><u>Hushai's proposal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absalom and his leaders preferred Hushai's advice to Ahitophel's.</li> <li>It was the Lord's appointment to defeat Ahitophel's advice to bring punishment upon Ahitophel for his wickedness.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">(2 Sam 17: 14)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absalom was convinced that Hushai's advice was better than Ahitophel's.</li> <li>It brought out his pride for power and self importance.</li> <li>However, the decision for Absalom to accept Hushai's advice was of the Lord.</li> <li>It was the Lord's appointment to defeat Ahitophel's advice to punish him for his wickedness.</li> </ul>



(4) Due to the acceptance of Hushai's advice, he was able to send word to David and men to cross the Jordan River immediately to the safety of the wilderness beyond.

(2 Sam 17:16, 22)

(5) After some time in gathering a big army, Absalom with his army pursued David and pitched tents in Gilead.


(2 Sam 17:26)

(6) David and men took refuge in Mahanaim. (2 Sam 17: 27)

(7) When Ahitophel saw that his advice was not followed, he went to his home town and hanged himself. ( 2 Sam 17: 23).

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

(2 Sam 16:23)



**Pride goes before  
destruction,  
a haughty spirit  
before a fall**

PROVERBS 16:18

(8) Pride of Ahitophel- Every word that Ahitophel spoke seemed as wise as though it had come directly from the mouth of God.

- David and Absalom both followed Ahitophel's advise.
- Ahitophel was proud of his advice.
- When he saw that his advice was not followed, he could not take the setback and committed suicide.

This is a lesson for us to be humble. We may be intelligent and smart. And be proud. God sees our heart and would punish us for our pride.  
(Proverbs 16:18)

## (9) Back-lash of events due to over-confidence and pride

	<b>Event</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(a)	Iraq War	<p>The war was US and UK's invasion of Iraq on the basis that there were weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Leaders of the invading force told the world that the purpose of the invasion was to deprive Iraq of the use of WMD. After the successful invasion, there was no WMD to be found in Iraq.</p> <p>The leaders were over-confident and their pride in prosecuting a war led to a backlash. The primary reason for the war did not exist.</p>

	<b>Event</b>	<b>Comment</b>
(b)	Brexit	<p>The PM at that time was overly confident that the referendum in UK would return a result of being together in the EU. The vote results went the other way for UK's independence of EU.</p> <p>The over-confidence of the then PM resulted in Brexit.</p>



## (10) What is the **spiritual lesson**?

(a) Do not be over-confident and proud.

- When we are in a position of authority eg. Elder in the family or senior, there is a tendency to be presumptuous that we are right and others are wrong, when others differ.
- There is a tendency to write-off the views of the junior and the young, for being less experienced than us.
- Pride and over-confidence creeps in unaware.
- Listen humbly and seek wisdom from God.

(b) Do not rely on worldly and human wisdom alone.

- Where worldly and human wisdom conflicts with God's Word, God's Word prevails.
- Brazen shoplifting video in San Francisco

*“Why is shoplifting so rampant? Because state law holds that stealing merchandise worth \$950 or less is just a misdemeanor, which means that law enforcement probably won't bother to investigate, and if they do, prosecutors will let it go.”*

(Source: <https://www.hoover.org/research/why-shoplifting-now-de-facto-legal-california> )

- Proverbs 6:30-31:

*“Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.”*

The Bible has stronger and more effective punishment for those who steal.

(c) Seek God’s will and do righteously.

Questions from the class.