

Close Companions  
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Hushai the Archite, was one of King David's astute counsel. But no one was fit to hold the candle to Ahithophel who was far and away the ablest and most famous politician of Israel in King David's day, and counsel to King David. Who was Ahithophel and what are the facts?

David and Ahithophel were close companions. When David's time came to be lifted up of Jehovah into the throne of Israel, Ahithophel was proud to lay counsel at David's feet. He continued to do that for all the best and most shining years of David's kingdom. David never made law, gave judgment, proclaimed war, negotiated truce, signed peace, till Ahithophel had been heard, and till his advice had been taken.

The father's splendid talents for counsel came out in the soldierly service in his son. All that Ahithophel was to David in the council chamber, Eliam, Ahithophel's only son, was in the army. The son was as devoted to David in the field, as his father in the chamber.

Now, Eliam had a daughter at home, a beautiful woman child, who was the ewe-lamb of her father and her grandfather. It so happened Eliam had a very trusty under officer among the captains of mighty men, named Uriah. Not an Israelite, Uriah was a Hittite. But, he was as brave and as loyal to David as if he had been a Hebrew of the Hebrews. His talents and his service carried him to the very top of the six hundred, where he stood clothed with worth and with honor beside Eliam. With his whole soul, Uriah loved Eliam's daughter. Both Eliam and Ahithophel gave to young Uriah the desire of his heart. David's devoted bodyguard had their quarters built for them in the City of David, just under the walls of the palace. When Uriah came home on furlough he was the happiest man in all of Jerusalem with such a wife and with Eliam and Ahithophel.

As time went on, and as Ahithophel counselled for David, and as Eliam and Uriah fought for David, his power increased until the King of Israel denied himself nothing on which he had set his heart. And in an evil hour he set his heart on Uriah's wife, who was Ahithophel's granddaughter.

How would you take ruin of your granddaughter and the murder of her husband? You would have had to be Jesus Christ to have continued after all that to take counsel with King David and walk unto the house of Jehovah in his company. Is it a wonder Ahithophel and Eliam failed to remain in David's service? Had they still eaten David's bread with Bathsheba in his bed and with her husband in his grave they would have winked at David's adultery and blood guiltiness. All Ahithophel could do was to shake the dust off his feet and return home to Giloh.

No sooner had Ahithophel departed David than Jehovah sent Nathan to David. Nathan said to David, thus says the Lord God of Israel, I anointed you king over Israel, I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. Wherefore have you despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in His sight? You have smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and taken his wife to be your wife, and slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. The sword shall never depart from your house, because you despised Me, and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. Jehovah said, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them unto your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly: I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun (II Samuel 12: 9-12 ASV portioned).

The vengeance of God came down upon David's head. It travelled, as it always does, on stepping stones which David laid with his own hands. Landslides of misfortune thundered over him. David never lost faith... My foot slippeth; Thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, held me up. In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul. (Psalm 94: 18 - 19 ASV). Jehovah was David's comfort.

Ammon, David's first born, loved Absalom's sister... Absalom fled to Geshur, and was there three years. David let him return to Jerusalem, but would not let him see his face... Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. Absalom had no head of his own, but rankled against David like hell. He sent for Ahithophel, from Giloh. Conspiracy was strong and Ahithophel counselled with Absalom as it had been with David. And one told David, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Jehovah, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. (II Samuel 15: 31 ASV). David took Hushai, his next astutest counsellor, to deceive Absalom and counteract all the counsels of Ahithophel. Which he did.

Of all deaths, that of a child is most unnatural and hardest to bear. We expect the old to die. While that kind of separation is always difficult, it comes as no surprise. The death of a child is a different matter. When we lose a child, the effect is widespread, touching parents, siblings, grandparents, and friends. David and Bathsheba's little boy lived only seven days. The illness and death of David's child teaches us grief shared is a burden divided. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep (Romans 12: 15). David made a statement in his grief that has brought comfort to people for generations: he is dead... Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me (II Samuel 12: 23). David recognized the child would not come back, but he would go to the child. Scripture tell us David went to the house of the Lord and worshiped, comforted his wife, and returned to the business of life (II Samuel 12: 20, 24 & 29). David felt assured of his child's presence in heaven and also that he would be there as well. David had sinned. He was accountable. Why did he have hope? Psalm 51 is the expression of David's confession of sin and guilt. He sought God's forgiveness, and received it. David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son. And Jehovah loved him; and he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, for Jehovah's sake (II Samuel 12: 24-25 ASV). You know him as Solomon.

Those who have eyes can see aright the kingdom and know as the beautiful rose blossoms forth out of the dirt and dung, in accordance with God's law, so, likewise in accordance with God's law, out of evil deeds greater good and blessing must in time spring forth for later generations. Men may mean it for evil, but God means it for good. God has not merely created the world and set it going, and since then sits back in passive idleness; God is still in the world, guiding the destinies of men and nations aright in accordance with His wise and beneficent laws, changing evil to good, and bringing mankind steadily forward upon the path of truth and progress, which leads to the goal of human existence which He has appointed.

Text: Galatians 1: 3-6 ASV portioned

Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father. Amen. Apostle Paul marveled the Galatians were so quickly removing from him that called them in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel. I marvel things are not changed almost two thousand years later.

I exhort you to understand the power of death and life are in the tongue (Proverbs 18: 21). We declare by our mouth what we believe in our heart (Romans 10: 10). Now, faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear (Hebrews 11: 1 & 3). Given life, any word needs to be truth and/or blessing, whether written or spoken.

Choice of words is of high priority. The words disease and addiction remove personal responsibility for habitual bad choices. Labeling the bad choices as an opiod crisis further removes the responsibility from the individual. Unless the person making the habitual bad choice to worship the Greek god of dreams, Morpheus, changes direction, that

is repents; all the prevention and intentions of others will not and can not be successful. I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Exodus 20: 2-3 ASV).

David was a man of tremendous dimension; scholar, general, songwriter, builder, jurist, and theologian. He never attended school. He was indebted to Jehovah for his instruction.

I exhort everyone to worship on the Lord's Day. A Psalm of David the servant of Jehovah, who spake unto Jehovah the words of this song in the day that Jehovah delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: and he said, I love thee, O Jehovah, my strength. Jehovah is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; My God, my rock, in whom I will take refuge; My shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower. I will call upon Jehovah, who is worthy to be praised: So shall I be saved from mine enemies (Psalm 18: 1-4 ASV).

A child of obedience, not fashioning myself according to former lusts in time of ignorance; like He who called me is holy, I am to be holy in all manner of living (I Peter i: 14-15 ASV). On the Lord's Day I choose not to eat out or make purchases, loving my neighbor as myself. Some will choose not to keep the day holy, that is their liberty, I respect their decision. It is my liberty not to tempt them to miss worship, the Lord's Supper, fellowship, and prayers. I'd rather it be by their liberty and of no cause by me.

A Psalm of David. Jehovah is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27: 1 ASV). Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father. Words of truth and blessing, whether written or spoken.