

2SAMUEL 17

2Samuel 17:1–29 The Function of Counterinsurgency in the Absalom Revolution

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

These exegetical studies are *not* designed for you to read each and every word. For instance, the Hebrew exegesis is put into greyish tables, so that if you want to skip over them, that is fine. If you question a translation, you can always refer back to the appropriate Hebrew tables to sort it all out.

The intent is to make this particular study the most complete and most accurate examination of 2Samuel 17 which is available in writing. The idea is to make every phrase, verse and passage understandable; and to make application of all that is studied.

Besides teaching you the doctrinal principles related to this chapter, this commentary is also to help bring this narrative to life, so that you can understand the various characters, their motivations, and the choices that they make. Ideally, you will be able to visualize the peoples and armies as they move across the landscape of the Land of Promise.

One made this known to David, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators who have thrown in with Absalom.” Therefore, David prayed to God, “Frustrate, O Jehovah, the counsel and advice of Ahithophel.” And David has gone as far as the summit, where he bowed down to Elohim, and, suddenly [lit., *behold*], Hushai the Archite [has come] to meet him. His tunic [was] torn and [there was] dirt upon his head. (2Sam. 15:31–32). Hushai is the answer to David’s prayer.

“Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear.” (Isa. 65:24; ESV).

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 ordained to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel in order that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom (2Sam. 17:14; JPCT).

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: “Insurgency is revolution; counterinsurgency is counter-revolution. Insurgency is anti-God; counter-insurgency is serving God.”¹

¹ From the 1972 David series, Lesson #631_0438. Probably not an exact quote.

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: "There is a scale of values for life and a different one for counterinsurgency."²

Revolutionary movements often go after the youth—even to the point of brainwashing them—because of their enthusiasm, dedication and lack of historical perspective. It is easy to sell a young person on a utopian vision of the world, to be brought in by this revolution. (Kukis)

Outline of Chapter 17:

Introduction

vv.	1–4	Ahithophel's Counsel to Absalom
vv.	5–14	Absalom Calls in Hushai to Hear his Advice; Absalom Prefers Hushai's Plan
vv.	15–17	David's Intelligence Network
vv.	18–20	Jonathan and Ahimaaz, David's Intelligence Couriers, Avoid Capture
vv.	21–22	David Crosses over the Jordan
v.	23	Ahithophel Hangs Himself
vv.	24–26	The Troop Movements of David and Absalom's Armies
vv.	27–29	The Supply Lines for David's Troops

Addendum

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines:

Introduction	Matthew Henry's Outline	
Introduction	The Principals of 2Samuel 17	
Introduction	The Prequel of 2Samuel 17	
Introduction	The Abbreviated Davidic Timeline	
Introduction	A Synopsis of 2Samuel 17	
Introduction	Gill Summarizes 2Samuel 17	
Introduction	God and Revolution	
v.	1	Evidence that this is Jerusalem Day One
v.	2	The Doctrine of "I will strike the king by himself"
v.	3	Various Translations of 2Samuel 17:3
v.	3	2Samuel 17:3 Text from the Greek Septuagint
v.	3	The Selling of Ahithophel's Battle-Plan
v.	4	Why There is Only One Plan
v.	5	The Four Men
v.	5	Why Absalom calls for Hushai
v.	7	Warfare and Revolution Require a New Set of Values for the Believer
v.	7	Advantage Hushai
v.	9	Absalom and Public Opinion
v.	11	Why Absalom was willing to go to war against David and Joab
v.	14	Comparing the Plans
v.	14	Links to the Doctrine of a Personal Sense of Destiny
v.	15	Hushai the Archite
v.	17	The Serenity Prayer
v.	20	Legitimate Lies in Scripture
v.	23	Why Ahithophel Killed Himself
v.	23	Ahithophel's Betrayal of David is a Type of Judas's Betrayal of Jesus

² From the 1972 David series, lesson #631_0440; probably not an exact quote.

- v. 24 [Map of Mahanaim](#)
- v. 24 [Nave's Topical Bible Summarizes the City of Mahanaim](#)
- v. 25 [David's Line, Including Abigail \(genealogy chart\)](#)
- v. 27 [The Nahash's of Scripture](#)
- v. 27 [Map of the Rebellion of Absalom](#)
- v. 29 [The Sharing of Our Material Goods with the Servants of God](#)

- Addendum [What We Learn from 2Samuel 17](#)
- Addendum [Josephus' History of this Time Period](#)
- Addendum [Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 17](#)
- Addendum [A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 17](#)
- Addendum [Word Cloud for 2Samuel 17 Exegesis](#)
- Addendum [Word Cloud for 2Samuel 17 \(Voice of the Wilderness text\)](#)

Chapter Outline		Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines
Forward	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms
Introduction	Text	Addendum
www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Samuel

Pre-Introduction Links

Doctrines Covered and Alluded To	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To or Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms
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Doctrines Covered	Doctrines Alluded To		
		Laws of Divine Establishment	The City of Mahanaim
	Personal Sense of Destiny	Revolution	Suicide

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To			
2Sam. 10	2Sam. 11		2Samuel 16

Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			

Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			

Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. In addition to this, I will use a number of other more traditional technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Definition of Terms

Compartmental-ization arrogance	<i>To compartmentalize means to put or divide into (compartments, categories, etc.), especially to an excessive degree. Compartmentalization arrogance takes this concept to the nth degree.</i>
Counterinsur-gency	Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to counter the activities of rebels, guerrillas, etc.
Iconoclastic Arrogance	Iconoclastic arrogance is idolizing a person, which person is then mentally destroyed by the admirer's own disillusionment because a flaw in that person is discovered.
Logistics, military	Logistics is the science of the movement, supplying, and maintenance of military forces in the field.
Personal Sense of Destiny	Every believer, as a member of the body of Christ and the Royal family of God, has a destiny. This starts at the moment of belief, at the moment of salvation.

Some of these definitions are taken from
http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556
<http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml>
<http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf>
<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d>
<http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm>
<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html>
<http://www.theopedia.com/>

An Introduction to 2Samuel 17

Introduction: 2Sam. 17 is, again, one of the fascinating chapters of the Bible, nearly ignored by most pastors, yet teaches great principles of doctrine and establishment. We get to see how Absalom, the criminal revolutionary thinks; and we get to see how those correctly related to King David and establishment function.

We again, as in the previous chapter, see David as the true king of Israel, the king put into place by God, the establishment king. Absalom is portrayed as an upstart who suddenly has run out of ideas, but his ego will not allow him to appear to not be in charge.

The concept of **counterinsurgency warfare** was begun in the previous chapter. It is continued in this chapter, and is the basis for this entire chapter. We will find counterinsurgents and patriots who lie and deceive in order to bring about David's eventual victory over Absalom, all of which is clearly in God's will.

This chapter allows us to see the concept of counterinsurgency play out, something which every believer in the United States needs to know and understand. This is extremely important information for those in the armed forces, particularly those in elite teams and intelligence agencies. This is also similarly applicable to law-enforcement types who operate underground, whether it be to foil drug traffickers or mafia types.

At the very end of this chapter, we see the importance of **logistics** in warfare.

Speaking of logistics, it ought to be well-noted that the Bible often spends a great deal of time on warfare, which includes the basic concepts of mass, strategy and tactics, logistics, surprise, troops and troop movement, and many other aspects of military action. This is not by mistake and the Bible nearly always presents those in the military as serving selflessly and honorably. Whereas, on one occasion, and one occasion only, Jesus tells one rich man to sell everything he has and give the proceeds to the poor, He never tells a military man to forsake his profession and pursue a path to world peace through disarmament (see Matt. 8:5–13, for instance). My point is, and this was difficult for me as a one-time hippie from the 60's to grasp, the Word of God treats the military as an honorable institution, and actually provides a great deal of insight for the military man. In fact, one of the final chapters of 2Samuel will be a list of military heroes who served under David.

It is always helpful to see how someone else views a chapter.

Matthew Henry's Outline

1. Absalom calls a council of war, in which Ahithophel urges despatch (2Sam. 17:1–4), but Hushai recommends deliberation (2Sam. 17:5–13); and Hushai's counsel is agreed to (2Sam. 17:14), for vexation at which Ahithophel hangs himself (2Sam. 17:23).
2. Secret intelligence is sent to David (but with much difficulty) of their proceedings (2Sam. 17:15–21).
3. David marches to the other side Jordan (2Sam. 17:22–24), and there his camp is given rations and supplies by some of his friends in that country (2Sam. 17:27–29).
4. Absalom and his forces march after him into the land of Gilead on the other side Jordan (2Sam. 17:25–26). There we shall, in the next chapter, find the cause decided by a battle: hitherto, every thing has looked black upon poor David, but now the day of his deliverance begins to dawn.

You will note that Henry changes up the order of the chapter.

From Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17 (chapter summary) (slightly edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of 2Samuel 17

Characters	Biographical Material
Absalom	Absalom is leading a rebellion against his father, King David. He has gone into Jerusalem and taken charge, while his father has left Jerusalem with a small army.
Ahithophel	Ahithophel is Absalom's chief advisor, and he believed that he would be the man behind the man; that he would be the brains of the Absalom administration. In the previous chapter, he came to the sudden realization of just how lost Absalom was. It appears as though Ahithophel not only wants the power of his influence, but that he desires to take his revenge against David, to the point of giving the order to have him killed.
David	King David is the establishment king of Israel, but he left Jerusalem when men in cities all over Israel stood up and proclaimed that Absalom, his son, was king in Hebron. David did not want to go to war against Absalom in the beautiful city of Jerusalem.

The Principals of 2Samuel 17

Characters	Biographical Material
Husahi	Hushai is David's mole, who, in this chapter, will find himself in the upper echelon of Absalom's advisors. He will give advice that Absalom will choose over Ahithophel's better advice; and this advice would slow Absalom's revolt down.
Zadok and Abiathar	These are the two high priests of Israel who are a part of a great spy network within Jerusalem. Hushai would pass intelligence to them that they would then pass along to their sons.
Jonathan and Ahimaaz	These are the two sons of Zadok and Abiathar, who would receive intel from their fathers, and relay that information to David.
The slave girl	The link between Zadok and Abiathar and their sons would be this lone slave girl who would bring information to Jonathan and Ahimaaz. She is a supporter of David.
The young man	A young man, probably in his 20's, spots Jonathan and Ahimaaz and reports this sighting to Absalom. He is a supporter of the revolution.
The man and woman of Bahurim	These provided a safe house for Jonathan and Ahimaaz. The women hid the young men in a well and lied to the servants of Absalom to get them off the track.
Amasa	Absalom made Amasa the general over his army; this seems to be more of a symbolic appointment, rather than one made on merit.
Shobi ben Nahash of Rabbah, and Machir ben Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim	These are men who would bring supplies to David and his army while he is in Mahanaim. They appear to be acting independently of one another.

Obviously, there are a great many players in this chapter, and this scorecard will help you to keep them all straight in your mind.

We learn from this that there are some very important people involved in this revolution, and the outcome of this revolution will depend upon quite a number of people that you have never heard of; the same is true of any war.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of 2Samuel 17

2Sam. 17 continues the Absalom rebellion, and gives us a view into the psyches of the participants of this revolution.

Absalom began as a tender, thoughtful brother who wanted to protect and later to avenge his sister, who was raped by his half-brother, Amnon. Absalom was unable to pass the injustice test. In this world, we all face injustices. Absalom's sister Tamar was raped by his half-brother Amnon, and their common father, David, did not administer justice as he should have.

The Prequel of 2Samuel 17

Absalom took vengeance into his own hands and had Amnon killed, and then fled the country. After being out of the country for a couple of years, Joab arranged for him to come back. However, his father David would not see him, and the problem was not a half-forgiveness, but the problem was not dealing with what Amnon and Absalom had done in a court of law. There was no justice applied by David.

Absalom, by setting fire to Joab's field, finally got David's attention and David made up with his son; but, by that time, Absalom was lost. He had become a scheming criminal, capable of revolution against his own father.

Absalom set a plot into motion to become king. He won over many of the people at the courthouse and he had an entourage who went along with him wherever he went, which made him seem like a king. He became the new celebrity in Jerusalem and all of Israel.

Then Absalom lied about a trip to Hebron, claiming that he was going there to pay his vows. However, he went there to organize his revolt against David, and what he did was quite clever. He took 200 key people from David's administration with him so that, when he made the claim to kingship, these men appeared to David to be in Absalom's corner.

David left Jerusalem, and that is what the previous chapter or so was about. It appears as though David left Jerusalem in order to assess the situation properly and to avoid great bloodshed taking place within Jerusalem. At the time that David left, he did not know for certain just how powerful that Absalom was.

Along the same lines, David did not know the extent of his punishment from God. Technically speaking, David was no longer being punished; however, Absalom is the natural result of David's polygamous life. He did not take the time to raise all of his children properly, which meant that most of them would turn out poorly. Among these, Absalom and the late Amnon were chief.

However, not knowing the extent of his difficulties, David did not give up; he did not lose faith in God; he did not reject the Word of God. He simply did the most prudent thing, which was to leave Jerusalem.

David traveled east, meaning he would go down in a valley and then come up the ascent of the Mount of Olives. David met many people on his way out of Jerusalem and as he crossed over the Mount of Olives, and three of these men became a part of David's intelligence network. He met Zadok and Abiathar, the dual priests, and told them to return to Jerusalem, but to act as his eyes and ears in Jerusalem.

David also found out that Ahithophel had joined up with Absalom, and Ahithophel was a brilliant strategist, so David prayed for his advice to be neutralized—a quick, 5 second prayer—and God answered this prayer immediately when David ran into Hushai, also a brilliant strategist. David sent Hushai back to Jerusalem, where he was to infiltrate the Absalom inner circle.

At the end of the previous chapter, Absalom runs into Hushai on the street, in the midst of a crowd crying out, "Long live the king;" and Absalom briefly questions Hushai, and determines that, despite his previous association with David, that he is alright. In this chapter, it will be Absalom who calls upon Hushai for his advice.

In the previous chapter, Ahithophel suddenly realized that, not only was he the man behind the man, but he was the one who devised the strategy, and, to some extent, the policy. Absalom walks into Jerusalem, takes control, and suddenly, turns to Ahithophel and says, "What should I do next?" This was very telling, because one would have thought that Absalom, desiring all of this power, walking into Jerusalem, must have several things on his agenda of what he ought to do next, but he did not.

Ahithophel then suggests a brilliant and brutal move: he tells Absalom to rape the 10 mistresses that David has left behind, and to do it in nearly full public view. This benefitted Absalom, inasmuch as it hardened him; and it also took him to the point of no return. For Ahithophel, this gave him a day or two to formulate a plan for the

The Prequel of 2Samuel 17

next move.

Although we are not given a specific time frame, this first conversation between Absalom and Ahithophel could have occurred on day one of the rapes. That would have given Ahithophel more than enough time to assess the situation and to plan the next few moves. In no way would this have occurred later than a few hours after the final rape on the 2nd or 3rd day.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This timeline is simply a shortened version of the **David Timeline** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)), with a few principle events of David's life recorded, along with the events of this chapter. Bracketed dates are derived from the Scripture, based upon author's original premises.

The Abbreviated David Timeline

Fenton-Farrar (F. L. Smith)	Bible Truth 4U	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Narrative
[1085 B.C.]	1040 B.C.	[1055 B.C.]	Ruth 4:22	David is born.
1062 B.C.		1029 B.C.	1Sam. 17	David defeats Goliath.
1055 B.C. (c. 1010 B.C.)	1010 B.C.	1025 B.C.	2Sam. 2:1–4	David becomes king over Judah (the southern kingdom). David is 30. 2Sam. 5:4 <i>David was 30 years old when he began to reign. He reigned 40 years.</i>
1048 B.C. (c. 1004 B.C.)	1003 B.C.	1018 B.C.	2Sam. 5:1–3 1Chron. 11:1–3	David becomes king over all Israel. He is still ruling from Hebron. David is approximately 37 years old, according to Bible Truth 4U.
1035 B.C.		1005 B.C. c. 1016 B.C. (Klassen)	2Sam. 11:2–25	David's sin with Bathsheba. He has her husband, Uriah the Hittite, killed in battle.

The Abbreviated David Timeline

Fenton-Farrar (F. L. Smith)	Bible Truth 4U	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Narrative
1024 B.C.	979–961 B.C. (?)	994–993 B.C.	2Sam. 15	Absalom rebels against David and David goes into exile. 2Sam. 15:6–10 <i>And in this way Absalom did to all Israel that came to the king for judgment. And Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. And it happened at the end of 40 (4?) years, Absalom said to the king, Please let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed to Jehovah in Hebron. For your servant vowed a vow while I lived at Geshur in Syria, saying, If Jehovah will indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve Jehovah. And the king said to him, Go in peace. And he arose and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you shall say, Absalom reigns in Hebron!</i> Many have said that this reading is corrupt and ought to be 4 years. ³
			2Sam. 16:1–14	David's relationship with the two factions of Israel.
1023 B.C.			2Sam. 16:15–17:23	David gains the upper hand over Absalom by means of intrigue and deception.
1023 B.C.		992 B.C.	2Sam. 17:24–18:18	David defeats Absalom's army in battle and Absalom is subsequently killed. He is approximately 30 years old (Reese).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It was difficult to find an overall chapter title, as there are so many things going on. Originally, I gave this chapter 3 headings:

Advice from Ahithophel and Hushai

David's Intelligence Network

Troop Movement

However, all of this seems to follow under the heading of: **The Function of Counterinsurgency in the Absalom Revolution.**

A Synopsis of 2Samuel 17

You may recall that Ahithophel was looked to for Absalom's first move in Jerusalem, and he was told to rape all of David's mistresses. This gave Ahithophel time to plot the next step, and to gather as much intel as possible in order to offer good advice. So Ahithophel tells Absalom to let him lead an army against David right now, and Ahithophel would focus on finding and killing David. Vv. 1–4

Surprisingly, even though Absalom appeared to like Ahithophel's approach, he suddenly calls for Hushai, who he believed changed allegiances from David to him. Hushai gives a rather lengthy presentation of his plan, along with a contingency plan, which Absalom likes even more than Ahithophel's counsel. Vv. 5–14a.

³ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 15:7. Barnes and Clarke concur.

A Synopsis of 2Samuel 17

The writer editorializes at this point, and tells us that God ordained that Ahithophel's good advice be overturned so that God can bring evil upon Absalom. V. 14b

Hushai reports what he knows to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and they relay this information to their sons via an innocuous slave-girl. Vv. 15–17

However, the two sons of the priests are spotted, Absalom is told, and a search party is sent to find them. They find a place to hide, and then continue on to David once that search party gives up. They recommend to David to immediately cross over the Jordan. Vv. 18–21

David follows their advice (v. 22) while a dejected Ahithophel returns to his home to kill himself (v. 23).

David arrives in Mahanaim about the time that Absalom crosses over the Jordan. V. 24

Absalom has made a symbolic appointment over his army, and they encamp on the east side of the Jordan. Vv. 25–26

Meanwhile, David and his army are given logistical support from some true patriots east of the Jordan. Vv. 27–29

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

It is always good to see another summary proposed.

Gill Summarizes 2Samuel 17

This chapter relates the advice Ahithophel gave to march out speedily with a number of men in pursuit of David, which at first seemed agreeable (2Sam. 17:1); but Hushai's opinion being asked, and he giving counsel to raise a larger army, which required time, and was taken to, hereby the counsel of Ahithophel was defeated (2Sam. 17:5); upon which he hanged himself (2Sam. 17:23). These different counsels being communicated by Hushai to the priests, they found means to transmit them to David, with an instruction to him to pass over Jordan immediately; which he did, and pitched in Gilead, and whither he was followed by Absalom (2Sam. 17:15); and where he met with a supply of provisions for his army from some eminent persons in and near that place (2Sam. 17:27).

Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17 (chapter summary) (slightly edited).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Although we have covered similar material to this in previous chapters, let's look at a few points to get us started.

God and Revolution

1. Revolution is anti-God.
2. Even though David has done great wrong, and God is still dealing with David to get him out of sexual arrogance, Absalom is wrong to revolt against David.
3. Therefore, God will be on David's side. [Y^ehowah had ordained that Ahithophel's good advice be defeated in order to ruin Absalom](#) (2Sam. 17:14b).
4. David has certainly sinned against God and he did a lousy job of raising his children, who were essentially

God and Revolution

- wards of the state, not unlike welfare babies today.
5. David was also unable to treat his children justly under the law; so he ignored the rape committed by Amnon.
 6. However, apart from the, David was a great king, and God not only approved his kingship, but protected David during this revolution.
 7. A revolution involves the breakdown of law and order, which can make evangelization and Bible teaching more difficult. Law and order must be restored for evangelization and Bible teaching to resume normal teaching patterns.
 8. Revolution means that a portion of the country will engage in unlawful acts to depose their king.
 9. We mistakenly teach that revolution in a country which overthrows some despot is a good thing, and many liberals were quietly hoping that the revolutions throughout the Middle East would result in more enlightened governments. That will not be the case. The result will eventually be a more despotic ruler, albeit younger, and probably one, in the example given, who leans toward radical Islam.
 10. We have a similar problem here with Absalom. He has not said or done anything to suggest that he believes in the Revealed God. So, there is no reason to think that his government is going to be more favorable to Y^ehowah worship.
 11. David has always been favorable to Y^ehowah worship, and greatly celebrated bringing the Ark of God to Jerusalem.
 12. People came to Israel many times to be evangelized (although they may not have realized that); under Absalom, there would be less evangelism because he was not well-disposed toward the God of his father.
 13. Therefore, specifically in this case, revolution is wrong and anti-God; and in general, revolution is wrong and anti-God.

The complete **Doctrine of Revolution** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

As an aside, I began to add a new translation to the mix known as the **Knox Bible**. By v. 5, I discovered (yes, sometimes I am slow) that this is the translation used by the **New Advent Bible**.

On a personal note, you have no idea what a privilege it is to be able to lay all of this out carefully, word-by-word and verse-by-verse. Given the political unrest and insanity which seems to be a part of the United States at this time, it is wonderful to be able to present God's approach at a time of even greater unrest in Israel.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Ahithophel's Counsel to Absalom

We need a lead-in for this first verse, which is given to us from 2Sam. 16:20–23 **Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What shall we do?" Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house, and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof. And Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.** (ESV) Absalom had effected a great revolution in Jerusalem without firing a shot (in that day, without shooting an arrow). He and his supporters come into Jerusalem, and David and his supporters are gone. There is no fighting, there is no resistance. Absalom can walk right into the palace and set up shot as the new king.

This somewhat throws Absalom out of kilter, and he does not know what to do next, so he asks Ahithophel, and Ahithophel tells him to rape David's mistresses, which he does. This gives Ahithophel time to plan out the next move, as Ahithophel has figured out that Absalom does not have many plans at this point. This is fine with Ahithophel, who uses the time while Absalom is raping David's mistresses to fully assess the situation and to develop a plan. When Ahithophel gives Absalom the plan for Absalom's next move, let me suggest that Absalom has spent a day raping this mistresses and has probably raped 4 of them, maybe 5. He doesn't know it, but this gets Absalom out of the way while Ahithophel can do the real work of gathering intel and putting together a plan.

Slavishly literal:

Moderately literal:

And so says Ahithophel unto Absalom, "Let me choose, please, two-ten a thousand a man and I will rise up and I will pursue after David the night.

2Samuel
17:1

Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose [right] now 12,000 men that I may rise up and chase after David tonight.

Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose right now 12,000 men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation⁴; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation). I

⁴ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

sometimes update this text, which essentially means getting rid of the *thee's* and *thou's*.

I have begun to include the **Knox Bible**, which was translated by Ronald Knox from the Latin Vulgate and compared with the Greek and Hebrew texts by himself over a period of nine years. I have done some updating on this version. However, I do find that it varies enough from the Latin Vulgate so that I felt it better located in the nearly literal translations (with moderate paraphrasing).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Achitophel said to Absalom: I will choose me twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Ahithophel unto Absalom, "Let me choose, please, two-ten a thousand a man and I will rise up and I will pursue after David the night.
Peshitta (Syriac)	MOREOVER Ahithophel said to Absalom, Let me now choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David this night.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Ahithophel said to Absalom, Let me now choose out for myself twelve thousand men, and I will arise and follow after David this night.
Significant differences:	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Ahithophel said to Absalom: Let me choose twelve thousand men and attack David tonight,...
Easy English	Ahithophel and Hushai advise Absalom Then Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose 12 000 men. I will go and chase David tonight.
Easy-to-Read Version	Ahithophel also said to Absalom, "Let me now choose 12,000 men. Then I will chase David tonight.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Not long after that, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and tonight I will set out after David.
<i>The Message</i>	Next Ahithophel advised Absalom, "Let me handpick twelve thousand men and go after David tonight.
New Berkeley Version	Ahithophel next recommended to Absalom, "Let me now select twelve thousand troops that I may set out and pursue David this very night.
New Life Bible	Then Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose 12,000 men, and I will leave and go after David tonight.
New Living Translation	Now Ahithophel urged Absalom, "Let me choose 12,000 men to start out after David tonight.
The Voice	<i>Ahithophel had a strategy for victory over David and advised Absalom.</i> Ahithophel: Let me choose 12,000 men, and tonight we will pursue David.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, AhiThophel said to AbSalom: 'I'll choose twelve thousand men and go after David tonight;...
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New American Bible (R.E.)	Ahithophel went on to say to Absalom: "Let me choose twelve thousand men and be off in pursuit of David tonight.
NIRV	One day Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Here's what I suggest. Choose 12,000 men. Start out tonight and go after David.
New Jerusalem Bible	Ahithophel said to Absalom, 'Let me choose twelve thousand men and set off this very night in pursuit of David.
New Simplified Bible	Later Ahithophel said to Absalom: »Let me choose twelve thousand men. Tonight I will set out after David.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Then Ahithophel said to Absalom, Let me take out twelve thousand men and this very night I will go after David:...
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Akhitophel advices to Capture and Murder David (B.C. 1023) Then Akhitophel said to Absalom, "Select at once twelve thousand men, and I will start and pursue David to-night,...
The Knox Bible	Now, said Achitophel to Absalom, let me pick twelve thousand men, and set out in pursuit of David this very night;...
New Advent Bible	Now, said Achitophel to Absalom, let me pick twelve thousand men, and set out in pursuit of David this very night;...
NET Bible®	<i>The Death of Ahithophel</i> Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me pick out twelve thousand men. Then I will go and pursue David this very night. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.
NIV – UK	Ahithophel said to Absalom, 'I would[a] choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight in pursuit of David.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Achitofel said to Avshalom, "Let me now choose 12,000 men, and I will pursue David tonight.
exeGesés companion Bible	<u>THE COUNSEL OF HUSHAY</u> And Achiy Thophel says to Abi Shalom, I pray you that I may choose twelve thousand men and I rise and pursue after David this night:.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Moreover Achitophel said unto Avshalom, Let me now choose out shneym asar elef ish, and I will arise and pursue after Dovid halailah (this night);...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Hushai Saves David Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight.
NASB	Hushai's Counsel Furthermore, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Please let me choose 12,000 men that I may arise and pursue David tonight.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 1-3: Ahithophel's Proposal} Moreover Ahithophel requested of Absalom, let me now select twelve thousand men, will move out and pursue after David this night. {Note: This is after the rape of the 10 mistresses. Ahithophel knows David is now weak since he left Jerusalem. He has the castle guard and the local police so maybe 2000 men. He wants 12,000

of the best that move out before the rape of the city begins and many will want David back.}

Third Millennium Bible

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

Young's Updated LT

And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, "Let me choose, I pray you, twelve thousand men, and I arise and pursue after David tonight.

The gist of this verse:

Ahithophel suggests that he take 12,000 troops and immediately go after David.

2Samuel 17:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾĂchîythôphel (אֲחִיתוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
ʾel (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

An alternate form of this word is ʾAb^eshâlôwm (אָבִשָׁלוֹם) [pronounced *ahb^e-shaw-LOHM*].

Translation: *Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom,...* This comes later. Ahithophel has looked over the situation while Absalom is raping David's mistresses in the tent. He has had 1–3 days to make an appraisal of what has taken place. He knows how many are in his army; he knows where David has gone to; he knows who has gone with David. So, while Absalom fornicated, Ahithophel did all of the leg work, gathering information and determining what their next step would be. My guess is, Ahithophel formed a plan within the first day, before Absalom has raped the final woman for that day.

You may recall from **2Samuel 16** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) that Ahithophel suddenly realized that Absalom could only take this so far. He plotted out how to become king, but he had no plans after entering into Jerusalem. So Ahithophel had to give Absalom something to keep him busy, and he, Ahithophel, scoped out the situation.

Now that Ahithophel knows what is going on, he is prepared to make a suggestion as to what Absalom's next step is. His idea is simple and the right way to go.

Ahithophel may have come up with this plan in the first day, after determining what David has done and what his own resources are. What Ahithophel needed was information. With Absalom busy, Ahithophel was able to find out when David left, who he took with him, and who remains behind. That information could be found out within a few hours.

2Samuel 17:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bāchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced <i>baw-KHAHR</i>]	<i>to choose</i> ; Gesenius also lists <i>to prove, to try, to examine, to approve, to choose, to select; to love, to delight in [something], to desire</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect; with the voluntative hê	Strong's #977 BDB #103
The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
nâ' (נָא) [pronounced <i>naw</i>]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
Nâ' is used for a submissive and modest request. It is used to express a wish (Job 32:21: “ Oh, that I may not respect any man's person ”); to incite or to urge (Jer. 5:24); it is depreciatory when affixed to the 2 nd person with a particle of negation (do not, I implore you—see Gen. 33:10 19:18); with the it expresses a wish or request (Psalm 124 129:1 SOS 7:9), a challenge (Jer. 17:15), asking leave (Gen. 18:4), and depreciation with a negation (Gen. 18:32). In many of these examples, we would express this with the addition of the word <i>let</i> .			
sh ^e nêym (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>sh^e-NĀM</i>]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	dual numeral (possibly a construct?)	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
‘âsâr (אַשָׁר) [pronounced <i>‘aw-SAWR</i>]	<i>ten; –teen [resulting in numbers 11–19]</i>	masculine/feminine singular noun	Strong's #6240 BDB #797
These two numerals together mean <i>12</i> .			
‘eleph (אֶלֶף) [pronounced <i>EH-lef</i>]	<i>thousand, family, (500?); military unit</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48
‘îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35

Translation:...“**Let me choose [right] now 12,000 men...** Ahithophel knows how many men he has at his disposal, and he realizes that some of them are not going to go along with his proposal. Therefore, he needs to be able to choose the right men to go with him, who would be willing to right against David.

The number 12,000 suggests that Absalom had a fairly large following as well as a fairly wide base of support in Jerusalem and the surrounding area. Ahithophel believed that he could get this many people and leave that very night.

By this time, Ahithophel had determined just how many men went with David, so he knows how many men that he needs to be able to both pursue David and to beat him in battle. The idea would be to kill David. That is Ahithophel's objective, and he will share this objective with Absalom, not knowing that Absalom is able to stomach it, having been hardened by raping these women.

Again, we do not know what day this is, and Absalom might still be in the midst of operation rape. In fact, that seems very likely. Ahithophel knows that Absalom is not half the man that David is, and Ahithophel would prefer to have the pleasure of killing David anyway (or ordering his death).

2Samuel 17:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877

The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word *let, may, might, ought, should*.

Translation: *...that I may rise up...* The imperfect tense is often used for the future; and this particular verb indicates that the subject of the verb is going to do something. He has a purpose and he will go out and accomplish that purpose.

The voluntative hê indicates that Absalom is requesting permission here. He says it out of being polite, but he is certain that his plans will be green-lighted. After all, what has Absalom been doing? He has been raping 10 women, one after another, over a period or a few days. By my estimation, Absalom has raped probably 3 women by this time on the first day; perhaps 4. So Absalom becomes more and more brutalized as he rapes one woman after another; but what he does not do is figure out what his next move is. In fact, very likely, Absalom feels fairly comfortable with the idea that he is the boss and Ahithophel will make a suggestion, and then he, the boss, will decide whether to go along with his plan or not. After all, he is the king with all the power.

2Samuel 17:1d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râdaph (רָדַף) [pronounced <i>raw-DAHf</i>]	<i>to pursue, to follow after; to chase with hostile intent, to persecute</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7291 BDB #922

The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word *let, may, might, ought, should*.

'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i>]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דַּוִּי) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
lay ^e lâh (הַלַּיְלָה) [pronounced <i>LAY-law</i>]	<i>night; that night, this night, the night</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3915 BDB #538

Translation: *...and chase after David tonight.* Ahithophel knows how far David may have gotten. He has collected information. He knows that he and his troops will have to move fast to catch up to David.

Here is why I believe that this is day one in Jerusalem.

Evidence that this is Jerusalem Day One

1. Absalom has walked into Jerusalem, and there is no resistance. He walks right into the palace and takes over.
2. He asks for suggestions, looking specifically to Ahithophel, and Ahithophel says, "Go rape David's mistresses."
3. This gets Absalom out of Ahithophel's way, and Ahithophel can then plan the next move. For Absalom to have asked Ahithophel what to do next at the end of 2Sam. 16, means that we have come to the end of Absalom's chess moves.
4. It would not take Ahithophel more than 4 hours to determine roughly where David was, who was with him, what allies he had in Jerusalem, and what Absalom's resources were by way of support.
5. Also notice that Ahithophel's plans here leave Absalom out. Now, why would Ahithophel take a strike force after David, but leave Absalom behind? The idea is, Absalom still has unfinished business to take care of—5 or 6 more women to rape.
6. Ahithophel says, "I need to take this strike force out tonite; I will choose them and I will lead them out." This is separate from Absalom and time is apparently of the essence. If Absalom is in the middle of something, raping David's mistresses, this all makes sense. If Absalom is done with David's mistresses, then why is he being left out of this equation?
7. Ahithophel says "We have to leave tonite." Absalom would clearly be included if he was not doing something already; and Ahithophel is not going to wait around an extra day or two.
- 8.

Barnes appears to agree with this assessment: *The night of the day on which David fled, and Absalom entered into Jerusalem. Ahithophel's idea was to fall upon David by surprise, and in the first confusion of the surprised army to seize and kill David only.*⁵

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

V. 1 reads: [Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose right now twelve-thousand men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight.](#) So, Absalom is raping David's mistresses, on a break at this time, as Ahithophel suggests the next move. This next move leaves Absalom out of the picture, which makes perfect sense if Absalom is performing the important duty of raping David's mistresses.

Ahithophel correctly suggests that time is of the essence. Without slighting Absalom, Ahithophel cannot sit around and wait 2 or 3 more days for Absalom to completely raping David's mistresses (furthermore, Absalom cannot just quit part way through this process either). He needs to catch up to David and he needs to get David while he is on the run. 12,000 is a large enough force to strike David, but small enough to lead quickly out of Jerusalem.

The general idea of this appears to be found in Prov. 1:16 [Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.](#) We find similar sentiments expressed in Isa. 59:7–9 [Their feet run to evil, and they are swift to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; desolation and destruction are in their highways. The way of peace they do not know, and there is no justice in their paths; they have made their roads crooked; no one who treads on them knows peace. Therefore justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us; we hope for light, and behold, darkness, and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.](#)

*Clarke: Had this counsel been followed, David and his little troop would soon have been destroyed; nothing but the miraculous interposition of God could have saved them. Twelve thousand chosen troops coming against him, in his totally unprepared state, would have soon settled the business of the kingdom. Ahithophel well saw that, this advice neglected, all was lost.*⁶

⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:1.

⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:1.

With each passing hour, David is allowed more and more time to think, and more time to organize his army, and to consider all of the options before him. Ahithophel knows this. The sooner that he attacks David, the better chance that he has for success. However, what Ahithophel did not count on was Absalom's tremendous ego getting in the way.

And I will come upon him and he [is] weary and slack of [two] hands and I have made him frightened and has fled all the people who [are] with him and I have struck down the king to him alone.

2Samuel
17:2

I will come upon him when he [is] weary and discouraged [lit., *slack of hands*], and I will frighten him; and the people with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king by himself.

I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And coming upon him (for he is now weary, and weak handed) I will defeat him: and when all the people is put to flight that is with him, I will kill the king who will be left alone.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And I will come upon him and he [is] weary and slack of [two] hands and I have made him frightened and has fled all the people who [are] with him and I have struck down the king to him alone.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And I will <u>overtake</u> him while he is weary and weak, and I will throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him shall flee, and I will kill the king only.
Septuagint (Greek)	And I will come upon him when he is weary and weak-handed, and I will strike him with terror; and all the people with him shall flee, and I will smite the king alone.

Significant differences: The verb *to overtake* is fairly similar to *come upon*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	I will attack him while he is tired and weak, and I will throw him into a panic. All the troops with him will run off. I promise to kill the king alone, and I will bring all the people back to you like a bride comes back to her husband [LXX; Heb uncertain]. A portion of v. 3 was added for context.
Contemporary English V.	...while he is tired and discouraged. He will panic, and everyone with him will run away. I won't kill anyone except David,...
Easy English	I will attack him when he is tired and weak. I will frighten him. All the people who are with him will run away. I will kill only the king.
Easy-to-Read Version	I will catch him while he is tired and weak. I will scare him. And all his people will run away. But I will kill only King David.
Good News Bible (TEV)	I will attack him while he is tired and discouraged. He will be frightened, and all his men will run away. I will kill only the king...
<i>The Message</i>	I'll come on him when he's bone tired and take him by complete surprise. The whole army will run off and I'll kill only David.
New Berkeley Version	In this way I can overtake him while he is exhausted and still without resources and throw him into a panic, so that all the men with him will run.
New Century Version	I'll catch him while he is tired and weak, and I'll frighten him so all his people will run away. But I'll kill only King David.

New Life Bible	I will come upon him while he is tired and weak. I will fill him with fear so that all the people who are with him will run away. Then I will kill the king alone and return all the people to you. A portion of v. 3 was included for context.
The Voice	Ahithophel: Let me choose 12,000 men, and tonight we will pursue David while he is weak and weary. We'll throw him into a panic; then all of the people will run away from him, come back to you, and be safe. I will strike down the king. If we take only the life of this one man here— <i>your father</i> —then everyone else can return to you. Vv. 1–3 are given for context.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	...because, when I get there he'll be tired and weak. We'll catch him unaware and startle him; then his people will flee, and I can kill the king when he's alone.
NIRV	Attack him while he's tired and weak. Fill him with terror. Then all of the people who are with him will run away. Don't strike down anyone except the king.
New Jerusalem Bible	I shall fall on him while he is tired and dispirited; I shall strike terror into him, and all the people who are with him will run away. I shall kill only the king,...
New Simplified Bible	»I will attack him while he is tired and discouraged. He will be frightened! All his men will run away. I will kill only the king.
Revised English Bible	If I overtake him when he is tired and dispirited I shall cut him off from his people and they will all scatter; I shall kill no one but the king.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	...coming over him as he labors with weak hands to make him tremble. All the people with him will flee, and I also will smite the king.
Bible in Basic English	And I will come up with him when he is tired and feeble, and make him full of fear: and all the people with him will go in flight; and I will make an attack on the king only:...
The Expanded Bible	I'll catch him while he is tired and ·weak [discouraged], and I'll ·frighten [terrorize] him so all his ·people [troops] will run away. But I'll ·kill [strike down] only King David.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and come on him whilst he is weary and weak-handed, when I shall terrify him; and all the force with him will fly, —and I will kill the king alone.
HCSB	I will attack him while he is weak and weary, throw him into a panic, and all the people with him will scatter. I will strike down only the king...
The Knox Bible	...so I shall overtake him and easily defeat him, weary as he is and unnerved; first scatter the company that went with him, and then strike him down, with none to aid him.
New Advent Bible	...so I shall overtake him and easily defeat him, weary as he is and unnerved; first scatter the company that went with him, and then strike him down, with none to aid him.
NET Bible®	When I catch up with [Heb "and I will come upon him."] him he will be exhausted and worn out [Heb "exhausted and slack of hands."]. I will rout him, and the entire army that is with him will flee. I will kill only the king and will bring the entire army back to you. In exchange for the life of the man you are seeking, you will get back everyone [Heb "like the returning of all, the man whom you are seeking." The LXX reads differently: "And I will return all the people to you the way a bride returns to her husband, except for the life of the one man whom you are seeking." The other early versions also struggled with this verse. Modern translations are divided as well: the NAB, NRSV, REB, and NLT follow the LXX, while the NASB and NIV follow the Hebrew text.]. The entire army will return unharmed. Vv. 2–3 are given for context.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	I'll fall on him unexpectedly when he's tired and powerless. I'll frighten him, all the people with him will flee, and I'll attack only the king.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and I come on him - belabored and weak handed; and tremble him: and all the people with him flee; and I smite the sovereign only:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	I will come upon him when he is weary and disheartened, and I will throw him into a panic; and when all the troops with him flee, I will kill the king alone.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak of hands, and will make him tremble with fear; and kol haAm that are with him shall flee; and I will strike HaMelech only;...
The Scriptures 1998	...and come upon him while he is weary and weak. And I shall make him afraid and all the people who are with him shall flee. And I shall smite the sovereign alone,...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down only the king,...
Green's Literal Translation	And I shall come on him, and he shall be weary and feeble handed. And I will make him tremble, and the people with him shall flee. And I shall strike the king by himself.
NASB	I will come upon him while he is weary and exhausted [Lit slack of hands] and terrify him, so that all the people who are with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king alone,...
Syndein/Thieme	{Ahithophel's Plan} Consequently, I will surprise him when he is weary and 'weak and exhausted'/ 'weak of hands' {no more nervous energy}, and will 'terrify him'/'cause him to panic'. {a tired person is irritable and 'weaker than normal'} And all the people who are with him will flee/'run away'. And I will assassinate the king while he is isolated/alone.
World English Bible	...and I will come on him while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid; and all the people who are with him shall flee; and I will strike the king only;...
Young's Updated LT	And I will come upon him, and he [is] weary and feeble-handed, and I have caused him to tremble, and all the people have fled who are with him, and I have struck down the king by himself.

The gist of this verse: Ahithophel explains that, when he catches David's army off-guard, they will flee, and he will go to kill David specifically.

2Samuel 17:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

2Samuel 17:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahʿ</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: *I will come upon him...* Notice the 1st person singular verb; Ahithophel is going to do this himself; there is no 1st person plural verb used here, which would be Absalom and Ahithophel working together. This is not out of the ordinary, as Joab led the armies of Israel for many years while David stayed in Jerusalem and ruled the country from there. David led his own troops by means of intelligence briefings that he received from soldiers (2Sam. 11:18–25 12:27–28), although it is clear that Joab ran the show and called the shots when it came to the military (2Sam. 12:26–31). My point is, what Ahithophel is suggesting is not out of line; it does not suggest any sort of usurping of Absalom's authority.

Ahithophel has determined that David will not be expecting a sudden attack from Absalom. He will expect Absalom to enter into the city and then start being a king. If there is no David, why pursue him? That can be done later. So, when Ahithophel says, "I will come upon him;" this is a surprise attack that David will not see coming. That is the theory.

In reality, David does not know what Absalom will do; and has no idea what he is capable of. It is David's intelligence network, shown in this chapter to be set up and functioning, which will be key to his survival. They will keep Absalom from being able to surprise David, and thus possibly gain the momentum in battle; as surprise is key in military conflict.

2Samuel 17:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (אוּהוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
yâgêa' (עָגַי) [pronounced <i>yaw-GAY-ahg'</i>]	<i>[one who is] weary, tired, exhausted; wearisome</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #3023 BDB #388
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râpneh (רַפְּנֵה) [pronounced <i>raw-FEH</i>]	<i>slack; remiss; infirm, feeble; hanging down?; discouragement, fear</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7504 BDB #952
yâdayim (יָדַיִם) [pronounced <i>yaw-dah-YIHM</i>]	<i>[two] hands; both hands figuratively for strength, power, control of a particular person</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Together, these words mean *weak-handed; both hands hanging down; discouraged, feeble, weak*.

Translation: ...when he [is] weary and discouraged [lit., slack of hands],... Right now, David is tired and despondent. This is one of the worst things that could happen to him. The people have rejected him; they have gone after his son, and David will have very little heart for a war. After all, very few people have left with him.

We know that David and his men are weary; we are told this in 2Sam. 16:14.

The phrase *slack of hands* means that his hands are hanging down; he is despondent and discouraged. He does not have it in him to fight at this point. This would be a low point in his life. Ahithophel has rightly determined the situation as well as David's psyche.

Furthermore, Ahithophel has determined roughly the number of men that have exited Jerusalem with David. It is not a large army by any means. At this point, David should be at his weakest mentally, emotionally and militarily. He does not even have a supply line set up, and an army cannot function without supplies. If Ahithophel strikes quickly, he expects to break through David's small army and get to David directly.

2Samuel 17:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chârad (חָרַד) [pronounced <i>chaw-RAHD</i>]	<i>to make tremble, to cause to be terrified, to make frightened; to drive [away, out]; to rout [an army]</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #2729 BDB #353
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>him; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to him, toward him</i>	affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: ...and I will frighten him;... The idea is to come upon David suddenly, and to make him afraid. David's fear will be transmitted to the rest of his army, who will also become frightened by such a sudden attack.

2Samuel 17:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nûwç (נוּחַ) [pronounced <i>noose</i>]	<i>to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to hasten quickly [away]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5127 BDB #630
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'am (אָמ) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

2Samuel 17:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Together, 'ăsher 'êth literally mean *which [is] with*. I'm not sure if there is a more specialized meaning. Other translations give the meanings *that [was] beside [it]; beside [it]; in [it]; along with [it]*.

Translation: ...and the people with him will flee. What Ahithophel expect is, David is despondent, he responds in fear, then his people look to him, look at him, and they become afraid as well.

This suggests that Ahithophel with 12,000 men would strongly outnumber David. So we do not know how many are with him, but I would estimate between 1000 and 6000.

This is the way that Ahithophel has chosen to pitch his plan. This does not mean that Ahithophel has not anticipated problems nor does it mean that Ahithophel believes that this plan will come off this smoothly. However, he is the only man with a plan, so he knows that he does not need to sell this plan to Absalom. Absalom does not have his own plan.

Therefore, Ahithophel is not going to spend time worrying Absalom about contingency plans, loss of life, or any mistakes in initial estimates. For all we know, Ahithophel may expect that he will have to destroy David's entire army. However, to Absalom, he is painting this as a relatively simple operation. Get to David's army, plow through his line, send his men running, and then take David out.

Remember, Ahithophel is a brilliant man with a great military mind. No doubt he has plan A, plan B and then plan C. His plan is the only plan before Absalom, so he needs to sell this plan, but not oversell it. The details will be worked out in the actual conflict, not in Absalom's war room.

2Samuel 17:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i>	1 st person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

2Samuel 17:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lâmed (ל) [pronounced leh]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בַּד) [pronounced bah]	separation, by itself, alone	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #905 BDB #94

Together, the lâmed preposition and bad (בַּד) mean *in a state of separation, by itself, alone, apart*.

Translation: Then I will strike down the king by himself. Here is the plan: Ahithophel wants to kill David. So Ahithophel is filled with anger and rage, and killing David is something that he has probably fantasized about for some time, and this gives him the perfect excuse to kill David.

The plan is simple: a quick surprise attack while David is still weak. Then separate David from his troops, and then kill David.

This verse reads: I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself. We will concentrate on the final sentence.

The Doctrine of "I will strike the king by himself"

- In the context of this verse, the only true opposition to Absalom is his father, King David. Kill King David and support for his reign will disappear. You cannot support a dead man as king.
- This theme actually occurs elsewhere in Scripture. The king of Syria says to go after the king of Israel in 1Kings 22:31. This was wicked King Ahab, and even though he disguised himself, he was killed in this battle.
- Zechariah, which has several references to the Messiah, reads, in Zech. 13:6–7 *And if one asks Him, 'What are these wounds on your back?' He will say, 'The wounds I received in the house of My friends.'* "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, against the Man who stands next to Me," declares the LORD of hosts. **Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn My hand against the little ones.** The one receiving the wounds is Jesus Christ, which wounds He received in the house of My friends (Israel). When the Shepherd (again, Jesus Christ) is struck (that is put on the cross and judged for our sins), the sheep (His disciples) would scatter. God actually would allow for His disciples to be persecuted, all of them dying martyrs' deaths, except for John.
- Jesus quotes Zechariah in Matt. 26:31 *Then Jesus says to them, "_You*_ will all be caused to stumble [fig, caused to fall away] because of Me on this night, for it has been written, 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'*" (ALT). Jesus said this to His disciples on the night in which He was betrayed; He would be struck, and His sheep would be scattered.
- We have a similar prophecy given by the high priest Caiaphas in John 11:49–51 *But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish."* He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. Caiaphas was speaking of the execution of Jesus as a matter of expediency, not realizing that he was prophesying the death of Jesus Christ on behalf of all mankind.

Passages are from *The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 17:2.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The verse reads: *I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself.* It is quite fascinating that Ahithophel calls David *the king* here. Although this may be shorthand, and this may be how David is spoken of, it is more evidence by God the Holy Spirit that David remains the true king of Israel. This may be a slip of the tongue by which Ahithophel essentially is telling Absalom, "I don't really recognize you as king of Israel."

To some degree, Ahithophel is playing Absalom. He knows that Absalom has taken this revolution just as far as he can take it. Ahithophel is the one who must see it through to the end. However, he is more than willing to do this. This will allow Ahithophel to take revenge against David, and to consolidate his power as the Absalom's chief advisor, as the man behind the man.

Do not be confused here—Ahithophel does not want Absalom's job. Ahithophel does not want to be king. He wants to be able to control the king, which is much more satisfying, and much safer during a time of political instability. Given what happened at the end of the previous chapter, Ahithophel is quite confident that he can guide Absalom in any direction that he wants.

Vv. 1–2: *Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose right now twelve-thousand men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself."* Ahithophel has correctly determined that David is weary and discouraged, and probably without a clear logistical supply of food and other important items. Ahithophel needs to get David as quickly as possible. He cannot allow for David to build up his supplies, to get to a good place, to rest and regroup. He needs to hit David quickly; and he needs to go after the head, who is David.

The Pulpit Commentary: Now, if Ahithophel's advice had been followed, he would have reached the fords as quickly as the young men did; for they lost time at Bahu-rim. Upon this David had not calculated, but supposed that anyhow he should have the interval won by Ahimaaz's fleetness. With twelve thousand picked troops unencumbered with baggage, Ahithophel would thus have found David still on the west of the Jordan, and though Joab and Abishai would have done all that brave men could, yet they would scarcely have been in a position to make a long defence. And the command was to "smite the king only." A panic was inevitable, and confusion among David's followers, who had women and children to defend; and in the midst of it Ahithophel would direct his main attack on the part where David was, and single him out for slaughter. When this was done all would be accomplished; for Absalom would become king by right of succession. Even Joab and the Gibeonites would acknowledge him, and the whole nation be at peace.⁷

What Ahithophel has suggested would work. He would have defeated and killed David. It may not have gone down exactly as he has explained it to Absalom, but it would have worked. God the Holy Spirit calls this good advice in v. 14. The more quickly Ahithophel can be on top of David, the less time David will have to organize his own troops and form a solid defense which could then be turned into a strong offense. But given time, thought and supplies, David will turn his supporters into a formidable army.

The problem for Absalom is, Ahithophel would be making two very big decisions right in a row, and this concerns Absalom. We will see that by the time we get to v. 5.

⁷ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:1.

And let me bring back all of the people unto you as a return of the all; the man whom you are seeking; all of the people will be [at] peace.” 2Samuel 17:3 **Let me bring back all of the people to you when everything is restored—[along with the body of] the man whom you are seeking. All of the people will be [at] peace.”**

Allow me to then bring all of the people back to you, at which point everything will return to normal. Furthermore, I will bring back the body of the man you seek and all of the people will be at peace.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And I will bring back all the people, as if they were but one man: for you seek but one man: and all the people will be in peace.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And let me bring back all of the people unto you as a return of the all; the man whom you are seeking; all of the people will be [at] peace.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And I will bring back all the people to you, just as those whom you sought have come back; so all the people shall be in peace.
Septuagint (Greek)	And I will bring back all the people to you, <u>as a bride returns to her husband</u> : only you seek the life of one man, and all the people shall have peace.

Significant differences: There is the additional phrase of *as a bride returns to her husband* in the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	...and I will bring all the people back to you like a bride comes back to her husband.[a] It's only one man's life you are seeking; everyone else can be at peace."
Contemporary English V.	...since he's the one you want to get rid of. Then I'll bring the whole nation back to you like a bride coming home to her husband. This way there won't be a civil war.
Easy English	Then I will bring all his people back to you. When David is dead, everyone will return to you. Everyone will be safe.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then I will bring all the people back to you. If David is dead, then all the people will come back in peace."
Good News Bible (TEV)	...and then bring back all his men to you, like a bride returning to her husband. You want to kill only one man; the rest of the people will be safe."
<i>The Message</i>	Then I'll bring the army back to you--a bride brought back to her husband! You're only after one man, after all. Then everyone will be together in peace!"
New Berkeley Version	I'll return all the people to you as a bridge returns to her husband. Since you seek the life of only one man [<i>I'll...one man</i> follows the Greek; Hebrew is unintelligible], all the people will have peace."
New Century Version	Then I'll bring everyone back to you. If the man you are looking for is dead, everyone else will return safely."
New Life Bible	...and return all the people to you. All will return if the man you want to kill is dead. Then all the people will be at peace."
New Living Translation	...and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride returns to her husband. After all, it is only one man's life that you seek.[a] Then you will be at peace with all the people."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then I'll bring all his people back to you the way a bride is brought to her husband. And after [we've taken] the life of the man you're searching for, all the people will be at peace.
Beck's American Translation	...and restore the entire nation to you [The Septuagint adds "as a bride returns to her husband."]. The one man you are after means the return of all; thus the whole nation will be at peace [Had this plan been carried out, David's cause would have been utterly lost; but God works in human minds to work out His program.]"
Christian Community Bible	Then I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. Seek the death of only one man and then all the people will be unharmed."
God's Word™	I'll return all the people to you as a bride is returned to her husband. Since you will be seeking the life of only one man, all the people will have peace."
New American Bible (R.E.)	Then I can bring back the rest of the people to you, as a bride returns to her husband. It is the death of only one man you are seeking; then all the people will be at peace."
NIRV	Bring all of the other people back. After the man you want to kill is dead, everyone else will return to you. And none of the people will be harmed."
New Jerusalem Bible	...and I shall then bring all the people back to you, like a bride returning to her husband. You seek the life of one individual only; the people as a whole will have peace.'
New Simplified Bible	»Then I will bring back all his men to you. It will be like a bride returning to her husband. Kill one man and the rest of the people return safely.«
Today's NIV	...and bring all the people back to you. The death of the man you seek will mean the return of all; all the people will be unharmed."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And I will make all the people come back to you as a bride comes back to her husband: it is the life of only one man you are going after; so all the people will be at peace.
The Expanded Bible	Then I'll bring everyone back to you [as a bride returns to her husband] [Some Greek copies read "as a bride returns to her husband." Hebrew copies read "like the return of the whole is the man you seek."]. ·If the man you are looking for is dead [Since you seek the life of only one man], everyone else will ·return safely [be at peace]."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then I shall turn all the people to you, as all the men whom you have sought have turned. The other people will be quiet."
HCSB	...and bring all the people back to you. When everyone returns <i>except</i> the man you're seeking, all the people will be at peace."
The updated Knox Bible	All the people I will bring round to your cause, as easily as I would persuade a single man; you have but one enemy, the rest of the people will be well content.
New Advent Bible	All the people I will bring round to thy cause, as easily as I would persuade a single man; thou hast but one enemy, the rest of the people will be well content.
New Heart English Bible	I will strike the king only; and I will bring back all the people to you. The man whom you seek is as if all returned. All the people shall be in peace." A portion of v. 2 was included for context.
NIV – UK	I would strike down only the king and bring all the people back to you. The death of the man you seek will mean the return of all; all the people will be unharmed.' A portion of v. 2 was included for context.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then I will bring back to you all the people; and when they have all returned, except the one you are seeking, all the people will be at peace."
exeGesés companion Bible	...and I return all the people to you

	— return the man you seek and all: — all the people being in shalom.
Hebrew Names Version	...and I will bring back all the people to you: the man whom you seek is as if all returned: [so] all the people shall be in shalom.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And I will bring back all the people to you; when all have come back [except] the man you are after [to you;...are after: Meaning of Hebrew uncertain. Septuagint reads "to you as a bride comes back to her husband, you seek the life of but one man, and..."], all the people will be at peace."
Orthodox Jewish Bible	When I return kol HaAm to you, all except the ish whom thou seekest, it is as if [kol HaAm] returned; so kol haAm shall be in shalom.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	I will bring back all the people to you. [The removal of] the man whom you seek is the assurance that all will return; and all the people will be at peace.
Context Group Version	...and I will bring back all the people to you: all the people will return [if] the man you are seeking [is struck]: all the people shall be in peace
English Standard Version	...and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband [Septuagint; Hebrew back to you. Like the return of the whole is the man whom you seek]. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace."
The updated Geneva Bible	And I will bring back all the people unto you: the man whom you seek [Meaning David.] [is] as if all returned: [so] all the people will be in peace.
Green's Literal Translation	And I shall bring all the people back to you when all return, except the man whom you are seeking. All the people shall be in peace.
NASB	...and I will bring back all the people to you. The return of everyone depends on the man you seek [Lit Like the return of the whole is the man whom you seek]; then all the people will be at peace."
New RSV	...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 [Gk: Heb like the return of the whole (is) the man whom you seek], and all the people will be at peace.'
Syndein/Thieme	{Objective of Ahithophel's Plan} And I will restore/'cause to return' all the people to you {Absalom}. 'Obviously, the death of the man whom you are seeking to destroy is tantamount to the return of all the people.' {Idiom: literally "which is tantamount to the return of all the people . . . is the man whom you are seeking." - means kill David and the people will recognize Absalom as the rightful leader and return.} Furthermore, {the death of David means} that all the people shall be in peace. {Note: Sounds so good and sincere. Absalom, kill your father David and you will 'save lives' - no civil war! We know Ahithophel's counsel was 'wise' and had to be frustrated. This plan of his was the only one which would have defeated David.}
Updated Bible Version 2.11	...and I will bring back all the people to you: all the people will return [if] the man you are seeking [is struck]: all the people will be in peace.
World English Bible	...and I will bring back all the people to you: the man whom you seek is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace.
Young's Updated LT	And I bring back all the people unto you—as the turning back of the whole is the man whom you are seeking—all the people are peace."

The gist of this verse: Ahithophel says that he will bring all the people back to Absalom in peace.

What appears to be the case in this verse is, there are a lot of *and*'s left out, and possibly because Ahithophel is very enthusiastic about his plan. There is also the possibility that much of the text was dropped out of the manuscripts, as the Greek has an additional phrase. However, this verse does make perfect sense without the addition of the text of the Greek.

2Samuel 17:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	1 st person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the volutative hê	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
The hê at the end is called a volutative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
‘am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
’el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: *Let me bring back all of the people to you...* Ahithophel plans to go after David and kill him alone. Then he will bring back these other people as errant sheep. He will bring them back into the fold, so that they will serve Absalom. Without David, who else could they serve? They have no reason to oppose Absalom, as their leader will be dead.

Ahithophel hates one man, and that is David. Ahithophel wants to take out David. Therefore, he is not concerned about the disposition of the rest of the people. He has nothing against them. He does against David, and then against anyone who stands between him and David.

Ahithophel realizes that it may not turn out this way; that it may not be so clean. However, he has no reason to specify his contingency plans to Absalom, as Ahithophel's plan is the only one before Absalom.

2Samuel 17:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
The kaph preposition, or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e], which means <i>like, as, according to</i> , when this is combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning <i>as, often, when, as soon as</i> . It carries with it a temporal connotation.			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh/]; also kol (כֹּל) [pronounced kol]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
There is an alternate reading to kôl.			
kallâh (כַּלְהָ) [pronounced kahl-LAW]	<i>daughter-in-law, spouse, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3618 BDB #483
Kallâh is rendered <i>daughter-in-law, spouse, wife</i> . We do not have an exact English equivalent as its translation depends upon who is speaking or who this is in reference to. It is an absolute noun which we only have relative nouns to stand in for it.			
The translation would be, <i>As when a wife is returned</i> .			

Translation: ...when everything is restored... There are some concerns with this verse—an alternate reading—which are listed in the exegesis above. It is possible that this is an idiom for, *when all things are brought back to normal; when all things return to normal*. Ahithophel is going to, according to his plan, bring the function of government and the people back to a normal state of affairs, but with Absalom in charge.

Now, this is probably a bit of an overstatement, because a revolution does not bring back a normal state of affairs. A revolution tears down the laws of divine establishment, and the people are left somewhat lawless. So, to bring things back to normal, Absalom is going to have to be a fairly harsh ruler—at least for awhile.

Application: After a revolution, the result is *never* sweetness and light. I don't care what a lousy sob the previous ruler was, when there is a revolution, there are those who support the opposition leader and those who support the existing ruler. The those in revolution are violent enough to turn against their fellow countrymen, then, even if the revolution is successful, these fellow countrymen are not going to necessarily go quiet into the night, even if their leader has been killed. The lawlessness of the revolution is continued on both sides of the revolution after the revolution, whether the revolution is put down or whether it is successful. If a country has sunk into a state of greater lawlessness than it was before the revolution (which is inevitable), then it will take a greater force to calm the people. One side or the other will have to be broken, and that will involve great and vicious force.

Application: There were revolutions all over the Middle East in the past few years (I write this in 2013), and so many people foolishly thought the people were throwing off the yoke of tyranny and moving toward a more progressive and democratic government—perhaps not yet a Jeffersonian democracy, but a government moving

in that direction. That idea is poppycock and the result of our people having their heads filled with false information about revolutions. When power is removed, then that power will be seized. When power is removed, there is a power vacuum, and those who lust after power will be there to take it and to take it by any means necessary. The end result will not be pretty; and the force used to gain and maintain power will not be much different than the force used by the original ruler.

Application: Then what about the American Revolution? “The American Revolution” is a misnomer. There was no attempt to depose or to kill King George III of England. What happened in the United States was a war for independence, which is quite different. This does not mean that everyone on our side acted as if they lacked sin natures and that everyone in Britain was evil; there were clear manifestations of the sin natures of man prevalent on both sides. God decreed the independence of the United States, and so it came to pass; but after a great deal of bloodshed and suffering.

Application: Another thing which you were lied to in school is, that this was all about taxes. *Taxation without representation*, as you and I learned it. There were over **25 specific complaints** made by the colonists, taxation without representation being #17 of that list.

2Samuel 17:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
bâqash (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced baw-KAHSH]	<i>is seeking, is searching, desiring, striving after, attempting to get, is requiring, demanding, asking, seeking with desire and diligence</i>	Piel participle	Strong's #1245 BDB #134

Translation:...—[along with the body of] the man whom you are seeking. The man that Absalom seeks is his father David. Now, if Absalom strikes him down, then Absalom is going to be bringing back *the body of the man whom you are seeking*.

The lack of wâw conjunctions suggests to me that Ahithophel is quite excited about this plan, and he cannot hardly wait to tell Absalom all about it. So, where there ought to be a wâw conjunction, it is missing because he is speaking so quickly. What I think is the case is, Ahithophel does not need to sell his plan to Absalom; it is the only plan on the table. Therefore, he will lay it out—its barest outlines—as Absalom is not going to come up with his own plan.

Here may be the problem; Ahithophel has a good plan, although he would not get all of the results that he is promising. He probably needs to slow down, offer up a more likely scenario for how the people react, and sell this plan a little more. However, given the circumstances as he understands them, there is no reason to do this.

Matthew Henry: *Ahithophel advises that David be pursued immediately, this very night, with a flying army (which he himself undertakes the command of), that the king only be smitten and his forces*

*dispersed, and then the people that were now for him would fall in with Absalom of course, and there would not be such a long war as had been between the house of Saul and David.*⁸

There is also the possibility that the text is corrupt at this point, which will be discussed below.

What is found in the Greek here explains many of the translations above. There does appear to be something missing in the Hebrew text; unless one understands this that Ahithophel is saying that he will return the body of David to Absalom. However, the Greek is quite different, with somewhat of a different emphasis.

Various Translations of 2Samuel 17:3

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Kukis Literal (Hebrew)	And let me bring back all of the people unto you as a return of the all; the man whom you are seeking; all of the people will be [at] peace.”
Kukis nearly Literal (from Hebrew)	Let me bring back all of the people to you when everything is restored—[along with the body of] the man whom you are seeking. All of the people will be [at] peace.”
Complete Apostles Bible (Greek)	And I will bring back all the people to you, <u>as a bride returns to her husband</u> : only you seek the life of one man [lit., <i>moreover, you seek the breath of a man</i>]; so all the people shall be in peace.”
American English Bible (from the Greek)	Then I'll bring all his people back to you the way a bride is brought to her husband. And after [we've taken] the life of the man you're searching for, all the people will be at peace.’

This text is missing from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

I find myself siding with many of the translations, who believe the Greek text to be accurate. It is the Greek which informs us that the key here is isolating and killing David. There is only one man Absalom is really after, and once his father David is killed, there is nothing else that need be done.

However Keil and Delitzsch, who know the original languages much better than I do, write: It is very obvious that ἡ νύμφη πρὸς τὸν ἀνδρα αὐτῆς owes its origin simply to a false reading of לכה שיא as הלכה שיא, and that πλὴν ψυχὴν ἀνδρὸς εἰνός has been interpolated by way of explanation from nothing but conjecture. No other of the ancient versions contains the slightest trace of a different reading from that given in the text.⁹ Further on down, we will completely exegete what is found in the Greek. Even though there is a big difference in this one phrase, there are no new doctrines introduced or contradicted, no matter how we read the text (which is the case 99% of the time with disputed readings).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

You will note that there is a whole other way to understand this portion of the verse, if the Greek text is taken to be accurate (which at first, I believe it to be; and since changed my mind). Ahithophel promises to return all of the people to Absalom as a bride is brought to her husband. Furthermore, there is only one life which is sought here, and that is David's.

⁸ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:1–14 (slightly edited).

⁹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:1–3.

2Samuel 17:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
‘am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) or shâlôm (שְׁלוֹם) [pronounced shaw-LOHM]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: All of the people will be [at] peace. This final statement might be a bit of an oversell. After a revolution, almost immediately, Absalom is promising peace and prosperity.

Barnes: *Ahithophel means to say: "If I can only smite David, there will be no civil war, all the people will peaceably submit."*¹⁰

Gill: *David, of whom Ahithophel speaks of contemptibly, is the sole life that Absalom sought, as well as his crown. Once he is dead, it would be all over at once with the people; they would immediately return to their own habitations, and yield obedience to Absalom as the rightful heir and successor; all depended on his death.*¹¹

There is also another big plus here for both Ahithophel and Absalom: Absalom is not included in this plan. He is not riding out there with Ahithophel. In fact, presumably, he has 1 or 2 days of raping left to do (I estimate that Ahithophel brought this plan to Absalom on the first day—Ahithophel was able to gather the intelligence that he needed that quickly). In war, Absalom has no real experience, insofar as we know. Although David's nephews are great soldiers; none of his own children are known for their service in the military. So Absalom probably has no experience with the military; or, he may have tried it and quit. We do not know (remember, he did not kill Amnon, his rapist half-brother, himself). Furthermore, Absalom is probably just a criminal but not a soldier. So, in war, Ahithophel would have to spend as much time holding Absalom's hand as well as directing the troops; and that could get complicated. Remember, Ahithophel is the man behind the man; but that does not mean that Ahithophel wants the man in front—Absalom—to always be out there in front. Sometimes that is more trouble than it is worth.

Let's take a look at the **Greek text** for this verse:

This section is all in a light orange, so that you can bypass this section if you so choose to. We will simply look at exactly what is found in the Greek, which is quite different from the Hebrew, and there will be a limited amount

¹⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:3.

¹¹ Paraphrase from Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:3.

of discussion. To be frank, there is probably way more information contained in this section than the average person really needs to know.

2Samuel 17:3a Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
ἐπιστρέφω (ἐπιστρέφω) [pronounced <i>ep-ee-STREF-o</i>]	<i>1) transitively; 1a) to turn to; 1a1) to the worship of the true God; 1b) to cause to return, to bring back; 1b1) to the love and obedience of God; 1b2) to the love for the children; 1b3) to love wisdom and righteousness; 2) intransitively; 2a) to turn to one's self; 2b) to turn one's self about, turn back; 2c) to return, turn back, come back</i>	1 st person singular, future active indicative	Strong's #1994
πᾶς (πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν) [pronounced <i>pahs, PAH-sah, pahn</i>]	<i>each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]</i>	masculine singular adjective, accusative case	Strong's #3956
τον (τόν) [pronounced <i>tahn</i>]; also το (το) [pronounced <i>toh</i>]	<i>the</i>	masculine singular definite article in the accusative case	Strong's #3588
λαός (λαός) [pronounced <i>lah-OSS</i>]	<i>people, people group, tribe, nation, all those who are of the same stock and language; of a great part of the population gathered together anywhere</i>	masculine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #2992
πρός (πρός) [pronounced <i>prahç</i>]	<i>facing, face to face with; to, towards; for; about, according to, against, among, at, because of, before, between, by, with</i>	directional preposition with the accusative	Strong's #4314
σε (σέ) [pronounced <i>seh</i>]	<i>you</i>	2 nd person singular pronoun; accusative case	Strong's #4771 (Strong's #4571)

Translation: [And I will turn around all the people toward you...](#)

This comes after vv. 1–2, which read: [Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose \[right\] now 12,000 men that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will come upon him when he \[is\] weary and discouraged \[lit., slack of hands\], and I will frighten him; and the people with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king by himself.](#)

Ahithophel is looking to go after one man, King David, and to see to it that he is killed. Then Ahithophel will be able to turn the people around toward Absalom. There is no explanation as to how this will happen; but, without David to lead them, there is less reason for these followers to adhere to David.

2Samuel 17:3b Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
hon (ὅν) [pronounced hawn]	<i>whom, which, what, that; to whom, to that</i>	masculine singular relative pronoun; accusative case	Strong's #3739
tropos (τρόπος) [pronounced TROP-oss]	1) <i>a manner, way, fashion; 1a) as, even as, like as; 2) manner of life, character, deportment</i>	masculine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #5158
epistrephō (ἐπιστρέφω) [pronounced ep-ee-STREF-o]	1) <i>transitively; 1a) to turn to; 1a1) to the worship of the true God; 1b) to cause to return, to bring back; 1b1) to the love and obedience of God; 1b2) to the love for the children; 1b3) to love wisdom and righteousness; 2) intransitively; 2a) to turn to one's self; 2b) to turn one's self about, turn back; 2c) to return, turn back, come back</i>	3 rd person singular, present active indicative	Strong's #1994
hê (ἡ) [pronounced hey]	<i>the; this, that; these</i>	feminine singular definite article; nominative and vocative cases	Strong's #3588 (article, demonstrative pronoun) and #3739 (pronoun)
numphê (νύμφη) [pronounced noom-FAY]	1) <i>a betrothed woman, a bride; 2) a recently married woman, young wife; 3) a young woman; 4) a daughter-in-law</i>	feminine singular noun; nominative case	Strong's #3565
prós (πρός) [pronounced prahç]	<i>facing, face to face with; to, towards; for; about, according to, against, among, at, because of, before, between, by, with</i>	directional preposition with the accusative	Strong's #4314
ton (τόν) [pronounced tahn]; also to (το) [pronounced toh]	<i>the</i>	masculine singular definite article in the accusative case	Strong's #3588
anêr (ἀνήρ) [pronounced ah-NAIR]	<i>man, male; adult male; husband, betrothed; [a group of] men and women [generic use]</i>	masculine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #435
autês (αὐτῆς) [pronounced ow-TAYC]	<i>her, hers; of her; from her</i>	3 rd person feminine singular personal or demonstrative pronoun; ablative/genitive case	Strong's #846

Translation: ...who, as the bride, is turned around toward her husband. The idea is, the people belong with Absalom, as a bride belongs with her husband. They are confused somewhat about David, but if David is dead, they can be brought around to their true king.

2Samuel 17:3c Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
plên (πλήν) [pronounced <i>plane</i>]	1) <i>moreover, besides, but, nevertheless</i> ; 2) <i>besides, except, but</i>	adverb	Strong's #4133
psuchê (ψυχή) [pronounced <i>psoo-KHAY</i>]	1) <i>breath</i> ; 1a) <i>the breath of life</i> ; 1a1) <i>the vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing</i> ; 1a1a) <i>of animals</i> ; 1a1b) <i>of men</i> ; 1b) <i>life</i> ; 1c) <i>that in which there is life</i> ; 1c1) <i>a living being, a living soul</i> ; 2) <i>the soul</i> ; 2a) <i>the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc</i>	feminine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #5590
eis (εἰς) [pronounced <i>ICE</i>]	<i>to, toward; into; in the vicinity of, near, on; concerning, on, for [with respect to time]; unto, in order to, for, for the purpose of, for the sake of, on what basis; with respect [reference] to; because of, on account of</i>	directional preposition	Strong's #1519
It is spelled ἐνος here.			
anêr (ἄνῆρ) [pronounced <i>ah-NAIR</i>]	<i>man, male; adult male; husband, betrothed; [a group of] men and women [generic use]</i>	masculine singular noun; genitive/ablative case	Strong's #435
su (σύ) [pronounced <i>sue</i>]	<i>you</i>	2 nd person singular personal pronoun; nominative case	Strong's #4771
zêteô (ζητέω) [pronounced <i>zay-TEH-oh</i>]	<i>to seek after [to find]; to seek by thinking [reasoning, inquiring]; to seek for, to aim at, to strive after; to require [demand]; to crave, to desire from someone</i>	2 nd person singular, present active indicative	Strong's #2212

Translation: Moreover, you seek after the life the [one] man;... Ahithophel says that the key to all of this is David; Absalom only needs to seek after the life of one man, and that is his father. Killing David is key to everything.

2Samuel 17:3d Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
panti (παντί) [pronounced <i>pahn-TEE</i>]	<i>each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]</i>	masculine singular adjective, locative, dative or instrumental case	Strong's #3956
tô (τῷ) [pronounced <i>toh</i>]	<i>in the; by the; by means of the; for the benefit [advantage] of; for the disadvantage of</i>	masculine singular definite article; locative, dative, or instrumental case	Strong's #3588
laos (λαός) [pronounced <i>lah-OSS</i>]	<i>people, people group, tribe, nation, all those who are of the same stock and language; of a great part of the population gathered together anywhere</i>	masculine singular noun; locative, dative or instrumental case	Strong's #2992
eimi (εἶμι) [pronounced <i>eye-ME</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, will be; am; to exist; to stay; to occur, to take place; to be present [available]</i>	3 rd person singular, future middle indicative	Strong's #1510
eirênê (εἰρήνη, ης, ἡ) [pronounced <i>eye-RAY-nay</i>]	<i>peace, harmony, order, welfare</i>	feminine singular noun; nominative case	Strong's #1515

Translation: ...and in all the people [there] will be peace. With David out of the way, there will be peace among the people; or so Ahithophel says.

The entire Greek translation of v. 3 is: **And I will turn around all the people toward you, who, as the bride, is turned around toward her husband. Moreover, the breath toward the husband you seek after; and in all the people [there] will be peace.**

The updated Pulpit commentary translation¹² reads: "And I will bring back all the people to you as a bride returns to her husband, excepting the life of the one man you seek; and for all the people there will be peace." The Pulpit commentary then makes the following observation: *Ahithophel was bad enough, but scarcely so brutal as to compare to a bridal procession the sad return of David's mourning friends and companions in arms weeping round the corpse of their master murdered at the bidding of his own son.*¹³

Now let's take the Hebrew vv. 1–2 preceding the Greek of v. 3: **Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose [right] now 12,000 men that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will come upon him when he [is] weary and discouraged [lit., slack of hands], and I will frighten him; and the people with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king by himself. Then I will turn around all the people toward you, who, as the bride, is turned around toward her husband. Moreover, you seek after the life of the [one] man; and in all the people [there] will be peace.**

What is in this darkened section is all you really need to know about this text (although the Keil and Delitzsch commentary in the first paragraph is somewhat dense):

¹² *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:3.

¹³ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:3 (that is, assuming this is what Ahithophel said).

Keil and Delitzsch disagree with the Greek text, writing: It is very obvious that ἡ νύμφη πρὸς τὸν ἀνδρα αὐτῆς owes its origin simply to a false reading of לכה שיא as להלכה שיא, and that πλὴν ψυχὴν ἀνδρὸς ἑνός has been interpolated by way of explanation from nothing but conjecture. No other of the ancient versions contains the slightest trace of a different reading from that given in the text.¹⁴ One ought to be wary when an exegete says *it is obvious that*; and even more wary when they say *it is very obvious that*; however, it is very obvious that Keil and Delitzsch understand the Greek and Hebrew more than I do.

Keil and Delitzsch translation¹⁵ (updated) of most of vv. 1–3: “I will choose out twelve thousand men, and arise, and pursue after David this night; and fall upon him when he is exhausted and weak, and fill him with alarm: so shall all the people that are with him flee; and I will smite the king alone (when he is alone), and then I will bring back all the people to you. As the return of the whole (the whole nation) is the man; and the whole nation will be at peace.”

The Pulpit commentary writes: *Both the amendments of the text and the various translations offered are innumerable, but nothing is really more satisfactory than the literal rendering of the words, virtually given us in the Authorized Version.*¹⁶ The MKJV reads: “And I will bring back all the people to you, when all return, except the man whom you are seeking. All the people shall be in peace.”

Even though there is a big difference in this one phrase, there are no new doctrines introduced or contradicted, no matter how we read the text (which is the case 99% of the time with disputed readings). So, you pastor may teach that, undoubtedly, the Greek text is accurate; or he may teach that he believes only the Hebrew text to be accurate, the Greek arising from an incorrect reading. However, what is taught as a result of this is essentially the same.

The English Standard Version translates these 3 verses in this way: *Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee. 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."* The ESV, like many translations, incorporates the Greek into their translation.

Although there are certainly flaws in this plan—how does one really separate David from his men? Would the men run, as Ahithophel predicts. His general approach of getting their quickly with a sufficient force, hitting David hard, and going right after David specifically could be devastating. Also, not having Absalom there is helpful; Ahithophel can simply be the one in charge. He knows war; Absalom does not. The last thing he needs is Absalom freaking out in battle.

Let me suggest something else: Ahithophel has over-simplified this plan for the sake of Absalom. Does Ahithophel really believe that he can immediately separate David from his men, and that they will all run, leaving David exposed? I think not. I do not think that is a reasonable scenario and I don't think that Ahithophel believes it to be what will happen either. I think he dumbed down this plan; he knows that there will be a lot of bloodshed, but what Ahithophel will be after is to get David and kill him by any means necessary. In other words, this could all get quite messy, but Ahithophel does not feel the need to clutter Absalom's handsome head with all that information. What I am saying here is, to be sure, conjecture; but I am basing this upon Ahithophel's brilliance as a man of war, along with his understanding that Absalom knows nearly nothing about war.

Application: Most people know nothing about war, except that it is gruesome. Few people have even the slightest realistic take on war. So, it is quite easy for young college students to be convinced that war is bad (particularly under the helm of a Republican president) and that we ought not to have it. However, the realistic position is,

¹⁴ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:1–3.

¹⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:1–3.

¹⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:3.

there are wars going on all the time. Although I tend to think that there are 10–15 wars going on simultaneously, R. B. Thieme, III, this evening¹⁷ said that he counted about 52 conflicts going on right now. I would think that he is better qualified to make this count than I am. According to the website [Warsintheworld](#), there are **60 countries** in which there are armed conflicts occurring right now. However, on most college campuses, this often eludes many of the anti-war protestors (or anti-war sympathizers). Liberals tend to think that, if you don't see it, then it really isn't happening. Since we do not have news on these many wars, we tend to greatly underestimate their frequency in life. As an aside, this [page](#) may help to prove just how much God has blessed the United States.

My point in all of this is, it would seem reasonable that Ahithophel gave Absalom the reduced detail version of his plan. Why try to convince Absalom that this will be messy, but Ahithophel will bring David's head to him? So Absalom is given the sanitized version of Ahithophel's plan.

Vv. 1–3: Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose right now twelve-thousand men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself. Allow me to then bring all of the people back to you, at which point everything will return to normal. Furthermore, I will bring back the body of the man you seek and all of the people will be at peace.”

The Selling of Ahithophel's Battle-Plan

1. There is not this big crowd of people around Absalom saying, “Listen to my plan.” There is only Ahithophel standing before him with a plan.
2. Clearly Absalom has no plan to get David, because he used up his chess moves when he entered into Jerusalem unopposed. We found this out at the end of 2Sam. 16. Absalom planned ahead to this point, but did not determine what he ought to do next.
3. Ahithophel has managed to distract Absalom by having him rape David's mistresses. This requires time and concentration. He cannot fake this, as all of Israel is watching; so Absalom's physical strength and mental prowess, which includes a mental toughness and great emotional insensitivity in order to rape these women. So Absalom is not formulating military plans. Nor is this in his wheelhouse. He has advisors for this, which boils down to Ahithophel.
4. No matter how Ahithophel's plan sounds to us, Ahithophel recognizes any weaknesses in the plan, and no doubt has contingency plans. He is not a stupid man; he is not a simpleton; he is not a man who will be surprised by anything that occurs on the battlefield.
5. He and he alone stands before Absalom with a plan to finish off David and to end the revolution.
6. And because Absalom is a non-military man, Ahithophel keeps his plan short and simple. He does not talk to Absalom about supply lines, about the number of men who are with David, about the variety of things that may happen when he clashes with David.
7. He gives Absalom the best-case scenario, the easiest outcome, which Ahithophel himself knows may or may not occur.
8. There is no competition; there are no competing plans, so Ahithophel does not have to sound especially impressive nor does he have to tell Absalom about every contingency plan.
9. So, Ahithophel is not making a pitch to sell his plan; essentially he is answering the question, *what do you plan to do to get David?*
10. Essentially, Ahithophel knows he's got the job, so he has to sound competent enough to keep what he already has. The next verse indicates that he knows what is required: [This plan that Ahithophel presented was agreeable, both to Absalom and to the elder of Israel who are with him.](#)
11. What is particularly clever about Ahithophel is, he has formulated a plan, and that plan includes *handling Absalom*. He has already done that. He's got Absalom raping David's mistresses, committing himself to a position that he cannot come back from. Furthermore, this ties up Absalom for 2–3 days. He cannot very well tell the public, “Okay, I have raped 4 of David's mistresses. I need to go kill David and then I will come back and rape the other 6.” He cannot do that. He has to finish this job. He would look like a fool to do anything else.

¹⁷ Wednesday night's class April 11, 2013.

The Selling of Ahithophel's Battle-Plan

12. Absalom will not be there, looking over Ahithophel's shoulder, saying, "I thought you said David's people would scatter out of fear." Ahithophel knows this is very likely; and he knows what he will do about it; but Absalom is essentially left out of the loop on Ahithophel's contingency plans. He's busy; he won't be with Ahithophel; therefore, there is no reason to make this plan any more detailed than it has to be.
13. With Absalom tied up, this leaves Ahithophel to handle the military angle. And Absalom is conveniently tied up for the next couple days, while Ahithophel is ready to gather up his troops and leave tonight. This is quite brilliant on Ahithophel's part, because this deals with David and with Absalom.
14. However, so there is no confusion, Ahithophel plans to get David; Ahithophel plans to end this revolution in favor of Absalom. His plan A may or may not work; but Ahithophel *will* bring back David's head. He sees that as his objective, something he is completely able to pull off. He does not go into any messy details with Absalom. No need to.

Ahithophel's approach is spot-on; the problem is, Absalom is going to suddenly haul in Hushai and ask his opinion, and this is not something that Ahithophel anticipated. I will guarantee you that Ahithophel anticipated a number of various battle scenarios with David; he did not anticipate Absalom bringing Hushai on board.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And so is pleasing the word in eyes of Absalom and in eyes of all elders of Israel. 2Samuel 17:4

This idea was agreeable to Absalom [lit., *in the eyes of Absalom*] and to [lit., *in the eyes of*] the elders of Israel.

This plan that Ahithophel presented was agreeable, both to Absalom and to the elders of Israel who are with him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And his saying pleased Absalom, and all the ancients of Israel.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is pleasing the word in eyes of Absalom and in eyes of all elders of Israel.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the saying was right in the eyes of Absalom, and in the eyes of all the elders of Israel.

Significant differences: Although the phrase *in the eyes of* is lacking in the Latin and Syriac, that does not mean that their original Hebrew text lacked these words.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	This plan seemed excellent to Absalom and the Israelite elders.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom and all the leaders of the tribes of Israel agreed that Ahithophel had a good plan.
Easy English	Absalom and all the leaders in *Israel thought that this was good advice.
Good News Bible (TEV)	This seemed like good advice to Absalom and all the Israelite leaders.
The Message	Absalom thought it was an excellent strategy, and all the elders of Israel agreed.
New Berkeley Version	The plan seemed good to Absalom, as well as to all the elders of Israel.
The Voice	This advice appealed to Absalom and to Israel's elders.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, this sounded like a good idea to AbSalom and all the elders of IsraEl, but AbSalom said: 'Call HushAi the Arachite; for, I want to hear what he has to say about this.' V. 5 was included for context.
Beck's American Translation <i>God's Word</i> ™	Absalom and all the elders of Israel thought it was a good plan. Absalom and all the leaders of Israel approved this plan.
New American Bible	This plan was agreeable to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel.
New American Bible (R.E.) NIRV	This plan sounded good to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel. Ahithophel's plan seemed good to Absalom. It also seemed good to all of the elders of Israel.
New Jerusalem Bible	The suggestion seemed a good one to Absalom and all the elders of Israe.
New Simplified Bible	This seemed like good advice to Absalom and all the Israelite leaders.
Revised English Bible	Absalom and all the elders of Israel approved of Ahithophel's advice;...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English The Expanded Bible	And the saying was pleasing to Absalom and to the responsible men of Israel. This plan ·seemed good to [pleased] Absalom and to all the ·leaders [elders] of Israel.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	All this advice was right in the opinion of Absalom and the opinion of all the Nobles of Israel.
HCSB	This proposal seemed good to Absalom and all the elders of Israel.
New Advent Bible	Both Absalom and all the elders of Israel liked his counsel well; but Absalom would have them summon Chusai the Arachite, to find out his opinion too. V. 5 was included for context.
NET Bible®	This seemed like a good idea to Absalom and to all the leaders [Heb "elders."] of Israel.
NIV – UK	This plan seemed good to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible exeGeses companion Bible	What he said pleased Avshalom and all the leaders of Isra'el. ... —and the word is right in the eyes of Abi Shalom and in the eyes of all the elders of Yisra El.
Orthodox Jewish Bible <i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And the saying pleased Avshalom well, and kol Ziknei Yisroel. And the saying pleased Abshalom and all the elders of Yisra' ēl.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.
English Standard Version	And the advice seemed right in the eyes of Absalom and all the elders of Israel.
Green's Literal Translation	And the thing was pleasing in Absalom's eyes, and in the eyes of all the elders of Israel.
Modern KJV NASB	And the saying pleased Absalom very much, and all the elders of Israel. So the plan pleased [Lit word was pleasing in the sight of] Absalom and all the elders of Israel.
Syndein/Thieme	And the plan seemed right to Absalom, and all the princes/elders of Israel. {those tribe leaders who revolted with Absalom - ruling revolutionary counsel}
World English Bible	The saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.
Young's Updated LT	And the thing is right in the eyes of Absalom, and in the eyes of all the elders of Israel.

The gist of this verse: Absalom and his elders were pleased with Ahithophel's plan.

2Samuel 17:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshar (יָשָׁר) [pronounced yaw-SHAHR]	<i>to be smooth, straight, right; figuratively, it means to be pleasing, agreeable, right (particularly when followed by in my eyes)</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3474 BDB #448
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced éy-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Together, the bêyth preposition and the construct form ʿîyîy (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced ée-NAY], literally mean <i>in the eyes of</i> ; it can be understood to mean <i>in the opinion of, in the thinking of, in the estimation of; as _____ sees things to be</i> .			
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: [This idea was agreeable to Absalom](#) [lit., *in the eyes of Absalom*]... I have estimated that Ahithophel come to Absalom in the first day with this plan, and he presents the plan to Absalom and to his staff of elders. Absalom listened to this plan, and it sounded fine to him.

There was only one plan presented, so Ahithophel, although excited about this plan, did not fully try to sell it. As far as he knew, his was the only plan. You do not have to oversell the only plan out there. In fact, that would have looked weird. However, this became a problem, as Absalom would ask another for another plan, and that plan would be sold to Absalom.

Secondly, as I suggested before, I don't think this was Ahithophel's entire plan, because portions of it are best-case-scenario plans. I think that Ahithophel had a contingency plan or two, but that he was not willing to give Absalom any of the details. There was no reason to.

2Samuel 17:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>ġay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Together, the bêyth preposition and the construct form ʿîynêy (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>ġee-NAY</i>], literally mean <i>in the eyes of</i> ; it can be understood to mean <i>in the opinion of, in the thinking of, in the estimation of; as _____ sees things to be</i> .			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
z ^e qênîym (זִקְנֵיִם) [pronounced <i>zê-kay-NEEM</i>]	<i>old men; elders; chiefs, respected ones</i>	masculine plural adjective; construct form	Strong's #2205 BDB #278
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...and to [lit., *in the eyes of*] **the elders of Israel**. Apparently, Absalom did have an advisory staff who perhaps did not have many original ideas, but they made themselves available to Absalom and were loyal to him. They listened, along with Absalom, to this plan, and they liked it as well.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *The recommendation to take prompt and decisive measures before the royalist forces could be collected and arranged, evinced the deep political sagacity of this councillor. The adoption of his advice would have extinguished the cause of David; and it affords a dreadful proof of the extremities to which the heartless prince was, to secure his ambitious objects, prepared to go, that the parricidal counsel "pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel."*¹⁸

Gill remarks: *Absalom could so easily come into a scheme to take away the life of so indulgent a father, which is only to be accounted for by his ambition; but it is stranger still that the elders of Israel should be pleased with it, and agree to and determine upon the death of a prince, who had so many years ruled them with justice and equity, clemency and mercy; and fought their battles for them, and raised their nation to such a pitch of glory it never had before.*¹⁹ No doubt that many of these men had difficulties with David's women-chasing behavior, and were not willing to simply let God deal with him directly.

The entire verse reads: **This plan that Ahithophel presented was agreeable, both to Absalom and to the elders of Israel who are with him.** There is a psychology which seems to be at play here as well, which will become more

¹⁸ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 17:1–14.

¹⁹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:4.

clear a few verses down. Absalom's cronies appear to be *yes-men*. Absalom indicates that he likes this plan, and they chime in and say, "Yes, we agree; this sounds like a great plan." Hushai will later offer up a plan, and Absalom will like it better; and the elders will go along with him. Odd that not one of them speaks up and says, "Why don't we lay these plans out side-by-side and examine them? Why don't we discuss them?"

Application: There is a change of culture in the United States where many have rejected the advice of those who have lived many years and have seen a lot of things. How many times have you heard the Republican party referred to as *the party of old white guys*, as if this is a bad thing (or true). For a variety of reasons, our culture has leaned toward youth as being some kind of ideal; and with this comes the opinion of youth, which is often shaped by their parents and/or by their schools. Communists and socialist dictators have found that you reach down to the youth and radicalize them, and before they are smart enough to realize that they are being used, you have a movement, a revolution, or a large group of enthusiastic supporters. Now, the idea of the wisdom of youth is imbecilic, because they have no wisdom; they have no real concept of cause and effect. They lack a true historical perspective. As Rush Limbaugh has said on many occasions, "For most people, history begins the day that they are born."

Application: A good example of this is how young people tend to line up behind Democrats and liberals at around 60% or higher. Now, it never occurs to them that these Democrats to whom they are loyal are shameless power junkies and greedheads (not all of them, but many of them); who are essentially destroying the economy for these young people who are coming up. When entering into office, President Barack Obama inherited a national debt that was too high. However, instead of dealing with national debt and the economy, which were in moderate shambles, President Obama, instead, spent money like there was no tomorrow, raising the national debt to astronomical levels, and stifling what should have been a robust rebound in the economy (as is typical after a recession). Instead, he saddled the youth—those who could not vote and those who are just able to vote—with a huge debt, as if their lives and future did not matter. The national debt today (2013) if interest rates were only 7% would cost \$1 trillion/year in **interest alone**. Although Barack Obama is not responsible for this entire debt (there is a lot of blame to spread around to both parties), he will double the debt during his tenure as president. Who will be most affected by this debt? Young people. Who supported Obama in overwhelming majorities? Young people. History has shown us that it is not difficult to get young people to vote against their own interests; and in America, this is doubly true if the **presidential candidate is cool** (yes, young people in America will vote for a candidate because **he is cool**).

Application: It never occurs to young people that intelligent, good-looking liberals want to have as much power and control as possible and want to spend as much money as possible in order to keep their power. So, even though liberals talk about the importance of *investing in education*, they are pouring money into teacher unions which, in turn, pour money into their campaigns.

Israel, along with many cultures, understood the value of the aged. I suspect that much of this went back to a time, not too long before this, when Shem, Ham and Japheth were still alive, along with nearly 10 generations of descendants. These men were the only men who knew about the pre-flood civilization. In fact, only they knew about the flood itself. They may have even spoken with the revealed Lord; so a natural respect for the elderly began in that very early era and continued for many centuries and has remained an important part of many cultures.

So, Absalom has with him a group of elders, who have been alive during the reigns of Saul and David (maybe one or two go back even before Saul), so they have a good historical perspective on things. So they listen to this plan that Ahithophel puts forth, and, given their loyalty to Absalom, it sounds good to them.

Our passage, so far, reads: Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose right now 12,000 men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself. Allow me to then bring all of the people back to you, at which point everything will return to normal. Furthermore, I will bring back the body of the man you seek and all of the people will be at peace.” This plan that Ahithophel presented was agreeable, both to Absalom and to the elders of Israel who are with him.

Why There is Only One Plan

1. No one steps forward and offers a second opinion; no one suggests this or that tweak on Ahithophel’s plan. They hear it and everyone seems to like it.
2. It appears as if Absalom has surrounded himself with *yes-men*. They like this plan, but then, they will like Hushai’s plan as well (Absalom has not yet called Hushai in; at this point, no one realizes that Hushai will be called in). 2Sam. 17:14
3. Absalom’s arrogance has squeezed our original thinking. He does not gather a set of minds with differing opinions around him; he has one man he trusts as an advisor, and other men who are pretty much going to go along with what Absalom likes.
4. Absalom himself is out of ideas, as we saw at the end of the previous chapter.
5. Ahithophel gave Absalom an assignment (rape David’s mistresses) to keep him busy while Ahithophel came up with a suitable plan.
6. Ahithophel looks around, sees Absalom’s advisors, knows Absalom’s advisors, and therefore does not feel that he needs to sell his plan. He states it simply; he does not deal in contingencies, and Absalom seemingly goes along with it.
7. Arrogant people are unable to make good decisions; and this is why Absalom will be unable to see the benefits of Ahithophel’s plan over Hushai’s.
8. Absalom is too concerned about himself and how he is perceived. He makes himself the issue, not the defeat of his father. Therefore, he will not be able to defeat his father.
9. Arrogance reduces options; true humility increases options. Absalom will see himself as having only one option (Hushai’s plan); and Ahithophel, therefore, will see himself as having only one option, which is suicide.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

These arrogant revolutionaries think that there is something that they can do, something that they can attain, some circumstance that can take place that will give them happiness and gratification. Absalom believed that taking over the kingship of Israel from his father would make him happy; but he has it, and he is not happy. He thinks that killing his father and his father’s supporters will make him happy, but it would not.

Ahithophel believed that his plans being followed would make him happy, but they would not. When his plan is not followed, he becomes suicidal.

There is a problem which David faces here, which has not been mentioned or emphasized. David has a lot of civilians with him. He would be hard-pressed to get involved in face to face combat with all of these civilians to look out for. Some of the soldiers and guard brought their wives and children. They were ready to die—they and their whole family—if David dies. So this is a big problem, as David does not want any innocents to be killed.

The more distance that David can put between himself and Absalom, the better equipped he is to determine where the women and children can be placed. He does not want to engage in a war where there are hundreds of civilian casualties (which appears to be one of the reasons that he exited Jerusalem in the first place).

If Ahithophel strikes David quickly, he would have problems organizing his line and taking care of his civilian adjacent. Ahithophel does not say anything to Absalom about this, even though Ahithophel knows that, when he

strikes David, he may have to wade through hundreds and even thousands of people in order to kill David. He is fully aware of this contingency, but has no reason to reveal it to Absalom.

For Absalom, there is a big problem with Ahithophel's plan, and it is a problem that Absalom cannot speak of publically. Ahithophel's plan was thought up by Ahithophel and executed by Ahithophel. Absalom does not even go along for the ride. This is a plan without Absalom in the middle of it. But he is king; as king, he is lord of his armies. But Absalom cannot say, "Your plan needs more Absalom in it." Somewhat like the old SNL skit where Christopher Walken calls for **more cow bell**. Absalom wants more a plan with more Absalom in it.

So, from a technical standpoint, Ahithophel's plan sounds great. It even sounds like it might work. But it lacks the Absalom factor. Therefore, Absalom believes he ought to explore the options which are out there.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom Calls in Hushai to Hear his Advice; Absalom Prefers Hushai's Plan

And so says Absalom, "Call now also Hushai the Archite and let us hear what [is] in his mouth—him also."

2Samuel
17:5

But Absalom said, "Call now Hushai the Archite as well and let us hear what he has to say [lit., *what (is) in his mouth—also he*]."

But Absalom said, "Call now Hushai the Archite and we will hear what he has to say as well."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

But Absalom said: Call Chusai the Arachite, and let us hear what he also saith.
And so says Absalom, "Call now also Hushai the Archite and let us hear what [is] in his mouth—him also."

Peshitta (Syriac)

Then Absalom said, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us likewise hear what he has to say.

Septuagint (Greek)

And Absalom said, Call now also Hushai the Archite, and let us hear what is in his mouth, even in his also.

Significant differences:

The English translation from the Latin and Syriac give the idiomatic translation of *let's hear what he has to say*. That will be done numerous times below as well.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible

Hushai's advice

Easy English

But Absalom said, "Call Hushai from Erek. Let's hear what he has to say as well."
Then Absalom said, 'Bring Hushai the *Arkite to me. I want to know what he thinks about this.'

Easy-to-Read Version
New Living Translation

But Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Arkite. I also want to hear what he says."
Hushai Counters Ahithophel's Advice
But then Absalom said, "Bring in Hushai the Arkite. Let's see what he thinks about this."

The Voice

Absalom: ⁵ Call in Hushai the Archite, and see what he thinks.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

God's Word™	Absalom said, "Please call Hushai, who is descended from Archi's family, and let us hear what he, too, has to say."
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Counsel of Hushai.</i> Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Archite also; let us hear what he too has to say."
NIRV	But Absalom said, "Send for Hushai, the Arkite. Then we can find out what he suggests."
New Simplified Bible	Absalom said: »Bring in Hushai. Let us hear what he has to say about this.«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Then Absalom said, Now send for Hushai the Archite, and let us give ear to what he has to say.
The Expanded Bible Ferar-Fenton Bible	But Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Arkite, so I can hear what he says." Hushai counter-plots Akhitophel (B.C. 1023) Absalom, however, said, "Let us now call Hushai the Arki, for I would also hear what is his idea."
The Knox Bible	Both Absalom and all the elders of Israel liked his counsel well; but Absalom would have them summon Chusai the Arachite, to find out his opinion too. V. 4 is included for context.
New Advent Bible	Both Absalom and all the elders of Israel liked his counsel well; but Absalom would have them summon Chusai the Arachite, to find out his opinion too. V. 4 is included for context. Which makes me wonder, is the New Advent Bible equivalent to the Knox Bible? At the bottom of the page, it turns out that is the case.
NET Bible®	But Absalom said, "Call for [In the MT the verb is singular, but in the LXX, the Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate it is plural.] Hushai the Arkite, and let's hear what he has to say [Heb "what is in his mouth."]."
NIV – UK	But Absalom said, 'Summon also Hushai the Arkite, so that we can hear what he has to say as well.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then Avshalom said, "Now call also Hushai the Arki, and let's give equal hearing to what he has to say."
exeGesés companion Bible	And Abi Shalom says, Call, I pray you, Hushay the Arkiy also and likewise hear what is in his mouth.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then said Avshalom, Call now Chushai the Archi also, and let us hear likewise from his peh (mouth).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	Then Absalom said, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he says.
Green's Literal Translation	And Absalom said, Please call for Hushai the Archite also. And we shall hear what is in his mouth, also he.
New King James Version	The Advice of Hushai Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he says too."
New RSV	Then Absalom said, 'Call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear too what he has to say.'
Syndein/Thieme	{Operation Hushai} Then Absalom commented, "Please summon also Hushai the Archite, and let us hear likewise 'what he has to say'." {idiom: literally 'what is in his mouth'}.

Webster's Bible Translation	Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.
World English Bible	Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he says.
Young's Updated LT	And Absalom says, "Call, I pray you, also for Hushai the Archite, and we hear what is in his mouth—even he."

The gist of this verse: Absalom then says to call for Hushai the Archite to come in and give his opinion.

2Samuel 17:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
qârâʾ (אָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>call, proclaim, read, call to, call out to, assemble, summon</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
nâʾ (אָן) [pronounced <i>naw</i>]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
<p>Nâʾ is used for a submissive and modest request. It is used to express a wish (Job 32:21: "Oh, that I may not respect any man's person"); to incite or to urge (Jer. 5:24); it is depreciatory when affixed to the 2nd person with a particle of negation (do not, I implore you—see Gen. 33:10 19:18); with the it expresses a wish or request (Psalm 124 129:1 SOS 7:9), a challenge (Jer. 17:15), asking leave (Gen. 18:4), and depreciation with a negation (Gen. 18:32). In many of these examples, we would express this with the addition of the word <i>let</i>.</p>			
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Chûwshay (חֹושַׁי) [pronounced <i>khoo-SHAH-ee</i>]	<i>to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
ʾArkîy (אֲרָכִי) [pronounced <i>ahr-KEE</i>]	<i>from Arkansas,²⁰ transliterated Archite</i>	Gentilis adjective with the definite article	Strong's #757 BDB #74

Translation: But Absalom said, "Call now Hushai the Archite as well... You may not realize this, but this is a momentous occasion, at least in the eyes of Absalom. He is going to issue his first order that he did not have

²⁰ Just a joke, derivation unknown.

previously scripted. Before, Absalom was the master of plans and intrigue; and he determined what he wanted to do, and then he determined just the steps that would get him to that point. But now, he is acting king in Jerusalem, he does not really know what his next move is (as was discussed in the previous chapter), because he is now as far along as his chess moves were planned. So, at this point, he is standing on a precipice, and he begins to plan out his next move, but he is now down to planning out one move in advance on the chess board.

Absalom has a tremendous ego—remember, he was brought up as the king’s son—and he killed his older half-brother, which essentially opened up the throne to him. But, like many young people, Absalom believed himself to deserve to be king simply because he was born.

Gill remarks about the providence of God and Absalom’s choice to call in Hushai: *There is something very remarkable in the providence of God, to incline Absalom to have the opinion of Hushai upon this point, when the counsel of Ahithophel was so universally approved of.*²¹ However, this is not remarkable at all; this is Absalom’s human nature.

There are 4 important men in this narrative: David, Absalom, Ahithophel and Hushai (David’s friend).

The Four Men

1. Absalom has revolted against his father David. Absalom is in Castle Zion and David is on the trail near the fords of the Jordan, waiting to hear if he should cross over.
2. Ahithophel is a man who has it out for David, and it appears that he is the grandfather of Bathsheba, so he has a good reason to be angry with David. However, Ahithophel ought to be able to step aside and let God deal with David.
3. Ahithophel has just given a plan to Absalom which would probably result in the defeat and death of King David, making Absalom the undisputed king of Israel.
4. However, Absalom calls for Hushai, David’s man in Jerusalem. But Absalom does not realize that Hushai is David’s man.
5. Absalom will ask for Hushai’s opinion on this matter, and Hushai will denigrate the plan of Ahithophel, and offer up his own plan, which has less of a chance to be successful. However, Hushai has to sell this inferior plan to Absalom.
6. Because Absalom is arrogant, Hushai will appeal to his arrogance, and that is the key for Absalom choosing to execute Hushai’s plan.
7. The elders who give their opinions appear here to be men who will agree with whatever their lord Absalom has to say.
8. No one will offer a third plan or suggest debating the two plans. Absalom will like Hushai’s plan more, and that will be that.
9. When Absalom attempts to execute Hushai’s plan, David will be ready for him and defeat him in battle.

Ahithophel knew his plan was best, but did not try to sell it. Hushai knew his plan was inferior, so he had to appeal to Absalom’s arrogance.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Let’s explain this. Why does Absalom call for another opinion? Absalom looks at Ahithophel’s obvious excitement and enthusiasm, and he thinks, “I cannot call for advice and *every single time Ahithophel offers up advice and I take it.*” Absalom realizes that if, in this public setting, he takes Ahithophel’s advice over and over again, he is going to appear less of a leader and more of a follower of Ahithophel. Absalom’s ego is too big for this. He needs Ahithophel, but he cannot have Ahithophel appear as if he is running the show.

So, Absalom does what any good leader without a clue would do: “How about a second opinion?” Now, he is there in front of the elders and Ahithophel; Ahithophel has offered up a plan and everyone likes the plan. No one shouts

²¹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:5.

out, “What about this?” or “What about that?” No one speaks up and says, “Let me propose this modification to Ahithophel’s plan.” No one raises his hand and says, “Why don’t we try this instead.” One person offers up a plan; and everyone agrees with it. And Absalom was apparently concerned that would be what would continue to happen; he would ask for suggestions, Ahithophel would speak, and everyone would agree.

Absalom cannot have this. He cannot have one person set the agenda time after time. Then he is no longer the true leader but a figurehead. Now Absalom looks over the small gathering before him, and no one else offers up a plan, so Absalom pulls a rabbit out of his hat: “What about Hushai? What is his opinion?” Hushai isn’t there. He is not a part of Absalom’s inner circle. But Absalom knows that Hushai will have an opinion. Absalom knows that, with two opinions, then it is up to him—Absalom the king—to make the final judgment.

Absalom, from the very beginning, was somewhat of an inclusive guy—not only did he sell himself as that way (by telling those who bowed down before him to get up)—but was willing to consider all of his resources.

Application: We had an incident like this when President Carter sent in men to rescue the hostages in Iran. The biggest problem, from what I understand is, he called in various members of different elite organizations. He brought together elite men who had never worked with one another, and did not have the same training. He was inclusive. President Obama, when ordering the killing of Osama bin Laden, did quite the opposite. He took one team of one elite group (NAVY SEALS), made sure that they were trained on this one mission, and then he sent them in to strike. No one else went in. As a result of their training and their commonality, the SEAL team was successful.

Absalom is intelligent. Just as Ahithophel determined that he would be running the show in the previous chapter, it also appears that Absalom recognized this as well—possibly just this instant—and figured that he had better bring in someone else so that Ahithophel does not overshadow him.

Absalom’s next problem is, he really believes that he can listen to both plans and figure out which plan was the best. He had no training in this area. He knows nothing about military strategy or logistics.

As a child, I had a ton of army men, and I set up all kinds of wars and battles; but I always left out one thing—logistics. My plastic army men did not need victuals. I had a very incomplete understanding of what an army needs to function. Let me suggest to you that Absalom is nearly as lacking in his understanding of the army that he commands.

2Samuel 17:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
shâma ^c (שמע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong’s #8085 BDB #1033
The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
mâh (מה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why; what [thing]; anything, something, whatever</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle; indefinite pronoun; relative pronoun	Strong’s #4100 BDB #552

2Samuel 17:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced peh]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6310 BDB #804
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
hûw' (אוּהוּ) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...and let us hear what he has to say [lit., *what (is) in his mouth—also he*].” So Absalom calls for Hushai so that his opinion can be known. Absalom assumes that getting Hushai should only take 15 minutes or an hour; and he will come in, say what is on his mind, and then Absalom, the king, can make the final determination.

If this is the first day of Absalom raping David's mistresses, then Absalom realizes that he has time to do this, as there are still more women on his schedule to rape.

Nobody says, “Hey, Absalom, what's your plan?” That is because Absalom does not have a plan.

V. 5 reads: **But Absalom said, “Call now Hushai the Archite and we will hear what he has to say as well.”** What is actually remarkable is the exchange that Absalom had with Hushai the Archite, a day previous, where Absalom rides into Jerusalem as the new king, and Hushai is there along the side shouting, “Long live the king!” Absalom interviewed Hushai; he seemed fine. You may remember the scene from the previous chapter: **Now Absalom and all the Israelites came to Jerusalem. Ahithophel was also with him. When David's friend Hushai the Archite came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, “Long live the king! Long live the king!” “Is this your loyalty to your friend?” Absalom asked Hushai. “Why didn't you go with your friend?” “Not at all,” Hushai answered Absalom. “I am on the side of the one that the LORD, the people, and all the men of Israel have chosen. I will stay with him. Furthermore, whom will I serve if not his son? As I served in your father's presence, I will also serve in yours.”** (2Sam. 16:15–19; HCSB). This appeared to be a chance meeting to Absalom, but Hushai put himself right there, where Absalom could not miss him. And now, a day later, when faced with the prospect that Ahithophel might gain too much power as his chief advisor, Absalom calls for Hushai.

Let's summarize what has just been discussed.

Why Absalom calls for Hushai

1. Absalom is an egomaniac and he has come to the conclusion that, by his birthright, he should have the crown of Israel.
2. However, his plans to become king just took him to Jerusalem. When his father David is not there ready to wage war, Absalom does not have the next move ready. He wants the power, but he does not know what he is going to do with all that power.
3. Therefore, Absalom turns to his advisors—primarily to Ahithophel—and asks what to do. Ahithophel gives

Why Absalom calls for Hushai

- Absalom some unusual advice: “Take this time and go rape your father’s concubines.” This advice was given before Absalom’s chief advisors, and this was certainly something he was able to do, so he did it.
4. Now Absalom is about to determine what his next move should be, and again, Ahithophel gives him the solution: “Let me take an army of 12,000 men and I will isolate King David and kill him. And all the people will be returned to you in peace.”
 5. This was no doubt a good plan, and the elders all agreed.
 6. Ahithophel’s plan did not have enough Absalom in it. Absalom needs to play a starring role, and Ahithophel, in order to insure mission success, does not even give Absalom a secondary role.
 7. Another problem is, Ahithophel has given Absalom advice on what to do twice in a row; the advice is given in public; the advice is publically approved of; and Ahithophel promises to lead an army and deal with David. This all concerns Absalom. Where is he in all of this? Where is his power, brilliance and charisma?
 8. Absalom cannot let Ahithophel run the show, because his entourage would begin to look to Ahithophel for guidance.
 9. Furthermore, Absalom has never had to make a quick decision before which involved his own life and death. All that he has done in the past was plotting over a period of several years to bring to pass that which he wanted (the death of his brother; a revolution against his father David). He has never had to make a snap decision right then and there, so he is unable to with Ahithophel’s excellent plan.
 10. Since Absalom does not have an original plan of his own, not really understanding strategy and tactics, he calls for a second opinion, and who better than Hushai, who he had just run into the day before.
 11. Absalom figures that he can hear the two plans, and if Hushai’s plan is reasonable, he can go with it, so that people will not see Absalom as merely the figurehead.
 12. Absalom cannot have Ahithophel being known to be the brains behind Absalom.
 13. So there is no animus in what Absalom is doing here; he just needs to make certain that everyone knows that he is in charge.

Unlike King David, who deferred to the opinion of his nephew, General Joab, Absalom did not want to set the precedent of just being the face on an Ahithophel reign. He has been king for a few days and already, Absalom is paranoid about his own power.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Application: We saw an example of this a few years ago when new President Obama had to make a decision as to how many troops would be sent to Afghanistan. He opposed the surge in Iraq (when he was not in power), but the generals under him proposed a surge Afghanistan as well. This decision took him about 2.5 months to make (compare **request date** with **speech** on troops to be deployed there²²), and he did not give the generals the number of troops that were needed, and then he set a **timetable for the removal** of the troops the day that he announced that he would send additional troops. The president was never called upon before to make a snap decision that involved the lives of many soldiers; in fact, he had made very few big decisions up to that point in time. In fact, with his presidency, Obama began to make decisions far more consequential than he had ever made before in his life—this was a man that, as state senator, **voted present 129 times** (This was 3% of Obama’s votes; fact check.org did not list any of his contemporaries to compare him to; however, a **NY Times article** at least suggested that Obama voted present much more often than his contemporaries). As president, it is difficult for a man to vote *present* on anything.

It does not matter that Hushai is not yet fully vetted; Absalom assumes that he can listen to Hushai and, as the brilliant king that he is, make the final judgment. He may appear to be testing Hushai’s loyalty as well. Absalom certainly figures that if Hushai gives him bad advice, that will be obvious to him. However, as each hour goes by, David gets further away, and more organized. Eventually, David would make Absalom’s troops come to him.

²² I cannot seem to find a simple timeline where it can be found on the internet.

2Sam. 17:1–5 Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Please, let me choose 12,000 men, and I will set out in pursuit of David tonight. Consequently, I will attack him while he is weak and weary of hands, throw him into a panic [I will immobilize him with fear], and all the people with him will scatter. Consequently, I will strike down only the king [R. B. Thieme, Jr. says, *I will assassinate the king while he is alone*] and I will bring [back] all [restore] the people back to you. When everyone returns except the man [David] you're [Absalom] seeking, all the people will be at peace." This proposal [word, plan, idea] seemed good to Absalom and all the elders [princes] of Israel. Then Absalom said, "Summon Hushai the Archite also. Let's hear what he has to say as well." Absalom, unable to listen to one plan and make a good decision, calls for Hushai, and, thereby, calls for his own downfall.

And so comes in Hushai unto Absalom and so says Absalom unto him, to say, "As the word the this spoke Ahithophel; do we do his word; if not, you speak."

2Samuel
17:6

Hushai came in to Absalom, and Absalom spoke to him, saying, "Ahithophel said this [lit., as *this word*]; do we do what he advises [lit., *do we do his word*] or, if not, [then] you speak."

When Hushai came in to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, "Ahithophel gave us this advice; should we follow his advice or do you have a better plan?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And when Chusai was come to Absalom, Absalom said to him: Achitophel has spoken after this manner: will we do it or not? what counsel will you give?
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so comes in Hushai unto Absalom and so says Absalom unto him, to say, "In the word the this spoke Ahithophel; do we do his word; if not, you speak."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, Ahithophel has spoken after this manner; shall we do what he has said? If not, you speak.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Hushai went in to Absalom, and Absalom spoke to him, saying, After this manner spoke Ahithophel: shall we do according to his word? But if not, speak up.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	When Hushai from Erech arrived, Absalom said to him, "This is what Ahithophel has advised. Should we follow it or not? What do you say?"
Contemporary English V.	Hushai came in, and Absalom told him what Ahithophel had planned. Then Absalom said, "Should we do what he says? And if we shouldn't, can you come up with anything better?"
Easy English	When Hushai arrived, Absalom spoke to him. Absalom said, 'Ahithophel has given us this advice. Should we do what he says? If not, tell us what to do.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Hushai came to Absalom. Absalom said to Hushai, "This is the plan Ahithophel gave. Should we follow it? If not, tell us."
New Century Version	When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "This is the plan Ahithophel gave. Should we follow it? If not, tell us."
The Voice	When Hushai arrived, Absalom told him what Ahithophel had advised. Absalom: What do you think? Should we do as he suggests? If not, tell us what you'd advise.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

Christian Community Bible	When Hushai came before Absalom, Absalom asked him, "Ahitophel has given this advice. Shall we follow it? If not, you speak."
New American Bible	When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him: "This is what Ahithophel proposed. Shall we follow his proposal? If not, speak up."
New American Bible (R.E.)	When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him: "This is Ahithophel's plan. Shall we follow his plan? If not, give your own."
NIRV	Hushai came to him. Absalom said, "Ahithophel has given us his advice. Should we do what he says? If we shouldn't, tell us what you would do."
New Jerusalem Bible	When Hushai had come to Absalom, Absalom said, 'This is what Ahithophel says. Are we to do as he suggests? If not, suggest something yourself.'
New Simplified Bible	Hushai came to Absalom. He told him what Ahithophel planned. Then Absalom said: »Should we do what he says? If we should not, can you come up with something better?«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And when Hushai came, Absalom said to him, This is what Ahithophel has said: are we to do as he says? if not, what is your suggestion?
The Expanded Bible	When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "This is the plan Ahithophel gave. Should we follow it? If not, tell us [give us your view]."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So they brought Hushai to Absalom, when Absalom said to him, "This is the advice of Akhitophel. Shall I act upon his advice? —If not, what is your advice?"
HCSB	So Hushai came to Absalom, and Absalom told him: "Ahithophel offered this proposal. Should we carry out his proposal? If not, what do you say?"
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So Chusai the Arachite came in, and Absalom told him what Achitophel had said; Were it well done? he asked. What advice givest thou?
NET Bible®	So Hushai came to Absalom. Absalom said to him, "Here is what Ahithophel has advised. Should we follow his advice? If not, what would you recommend?"
New Heart English Bible	When Hushai had come to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, "Ahithophel has spoken like this. Shall we do what he says? If not, speak up."
NIV – UK	When Hushai came to him, Absalom said, 'Ahithophel has given this advice. Should we do what he says? If not, give us your opinion.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	When Hushai appeared before Avshalom, Avshalom said to him, "Achitofel has said such-and-such. Should we do what he says? If not, you tell us."
exeGesés companion Bible	And Hushay comes to Abi Shalom, and Abi Shalom says to him, saying, Achiy Thophel words after this word: Work we after his word? If not; you word.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Hushai came to Absalom; and Absalom spoke to him saying, "In this manner has Ahithophel spoken; shall we do his bidding? If not, then you speak."
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And when Chushai was come to Avshalom, Avshalom spoke unto him, saying, Achitophel hath spoken after this manner; shall we do after his saying? If not; speak thou.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When Hushai came, Absalom said to him, Ahithophel has counseled thus. Shall we do what he says? If not, speak up.
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Concordant Literal Version And Hushai comes in unto Absalom, and Absalom speaks unto him, saying, 'According to this word has Ahithophel spoken; do we do his word? if not, you--speak you.

Green's Literal Translation And Hushai came in to Absalom. And Absalom spoke to him, saying, Ahithophel has spoken according to this word. Shall we do this word? If not, you speak.

NASB When Hushai had come to Absalom, Absalom said to him [Lit him, saying], "Ahithophel has spoken thus [Lit according to this word]. Shall we carry out his plan [Lit do his word]? If not, you speak."

New King James Version And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, "Ahithophel has spoken in this manner. Shall we do as he says? If not, speak up."

New RSV When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, 'This is what Ahithophel has said; shall we do as he advises? If not, you tell us.'

yndein/Thieme {Hushai's Opportunity to Frustrate the Counsel of Ahithophel}
 And when Hushai reported to Absalom, then Absalom confided in him, saying, "Ahithophel has submitted the following plan." {idiom: literally "After this manner, Ahithophel has spoken . . ."} {Note: This verse indicates Hushai's success in infiltrating the highest levels of Absalom's command. It is one thing to trust a person, but even deeper to trust his counsel.} "Shall we execute the plan?" If not, 'state your objections'/speak you'."

World English Bible When Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, Ahithophel has spoken *after* this manner: shall we do after his saying? if not, speak up.

Young's Updated LT And Hushai comes in unto Absalom, and Absalom speaks unto him, saying, "According to this word has Ahithophel spoken; do we do his word? If not, you—speak you."

The gist of this verse: When Hushai comes to Absalom, Absalom lays out Ahithophel's plan and asks Hushai's opinion of it.

2Samuel 17:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Chûwshay (חֹשַׁי) [pronounced khoo-SHAH-ee]	to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: Hushai came in to Absalom,... This is the best way for a mole to act—he does not try to worm his way into the organization. He lets the person at the top invite him in. So, despite what some commentators

incorrectly said about the previous chapter, Hushai was not a part of any upper echelon of Absalom's until this very day when Absalom calls him in.

This obviously takes great patience on the part of Hushai, who was probably chomping at the bit to get to Absalom.

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: "Insurgency is revolution; counterinsurgency is counter-revolution. Insurgency is anti-God; counter-insurgency is serving God."²³

The nation which wins clandestine warfare often wins conventional warfare as well. The same is true for a revolution; the side which best employs clandestine warfare is often the side which eventually wins the revolution.

2Samuel 17:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אבִּישַׁלֹּוּם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eh</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

A Qal infinitive construct with a preposition can introduce a purpose clause, a result clause or a temporal clause.

Translation: ...and Absalom spoke to him, saying,... Here is how Absalom looks at it—Hushai is not trying to get into his organization. If he has any allegiance to David, Absalom will be able to figure it out. And Absalom can make the call— "I will accept or reject this advice." So Hushai can say anything—good advice, bad advice; no matter what, Absalom makes the final call. So Absalom thinks that everything is okay. What could go wrong?

So far, nothing has stood in his way for becoming king. He mapped it out, stuck to the plan, and it all came together. At this point, he believes that he is the golden boy who can do no wrong. Calling in Hushai was a simple precaution.

²³ From the 1972 David series, Lesson #631_0438. Probably not an exact quote.

Absalom has a very high opinion of himself. He thinks that he can do nearly anything. Right now, he is king of Israel, and he schemed that all out. Becoming king to him, was a matter of his personal brilliance; so, despite his complete lack of experience, Absalom thinks he is smart enough to figure out of Hushai gives him good advice or not.

Absalom does not want Ahithophel to think that he is running the show, or that he is Absalom's only brilliant advisor. If Absalom was smart, he would keep Ahithophel on, and follow his every word of advice. But that would give Ahithophel too much authority and power, and Absalom does not want to share that.

2Samuel 17:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâbâr (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
Together, dâbâr zeh mean <i>this thing, this matter, this command</i> .			
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʾĀchîythôphel (אֲחִי־תוֹפֵל) [pronounced uhkh-ee-THOH-feh]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27

Translation: ...“Ahithophel said this [lit., as this word];... Essentially, Absalom lays out the advice given by Ahithophel. This is not an exact quote, or that much of it is left out, where Absalom says, “Ahithophel wants to get 12,000 soldiers right now and go after David and kill him.” Absalom had to lay out Ahithophel's plan in order for Hushai to properly evaluate it and offer up an alternative.

2Samuel 17:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (ה) [pronounced heh]		interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied. This can be used in an indirect interrogation and translated <i>whether</i> .	Strong's #none BDB #209

2Samuel 17:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Hă (ה) [pronounced <i>heh</i>] usually an interrogative particle; but can act as indirect interrogation and be translated <i>if, whether [or not]</i> .			
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAWR</i>]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

Translation: ...do we do what he advises [lit., *do we do his word*]... Then Absalom asks Hushai, carefully watching his face: “Do we do what Ahithophel suggests?”

One has to imagine that Hushai’s mind is now working at 1000 mph. He knows up front that Ahithophel is going to have offered up a good plan—that is a given. Hushai has to disparage this plan, but not in such a way as to make it seem as if he is doing it for his own benefit. Then Hushai has to come up with an alternate plan, right there on the spot, which is inferior to Ahithophel’s plan, but one that he can sell.

2Samuel 17:6e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
When we have two sentences, the first introduced by the disjunctive particle <i>ha</i> (ה) [pronounced <i>hah</i>] (Strong's #none BDB #209) and the second by the hypothetical particle <i>’îm</i> (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>] (Strong's #518 BDB #49), this is a disjunctive question. A disjunctive question may express a real alternative or the same thought may be repeated in a different form as two parallel clauses. In the latter case, the answer <i>no</i> is expected. We can express this negative in several ways— <i>this can't be true; that makes no sense; this isn't right</i> .			
’îm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
’al (אֵל) [pronounced <i>a]</i>	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
’attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

2Samuel 17:6e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1696 BDB #180

Translation: ...or, if not, [then] you speak.” The combination of particles here means that there is an alternative to be offered. “If you don’t think that he has a good plan, then what do you suggest? What is your idea?”

Again, Absalom thinks this is a good idea. He can reject Hushai’s idea if it is bad; and he does not look as if Ahithophel is telling him what to do. All of this sounds as if Absalom is simply picking Hushai’s brain. “Here is the plan that Ahithophel has put forth. What do you think about it? Do you have a better plan?”

The entire verse: [Hushai came in to Absalom, and Absalom spoke to him, saying, “Ahithophel said this \[lit., as this word\]; do we do what he advises \[lit., do we do his word\] or, if not, \[then\] you speak.”](#) This is exactly what Hushai wants; he wants Absalom to call him into his inner circle; this way he can tell David exactly what is going on, and what Absalom’s plans are. And, the more difficult thing, to offer an inferior alternative plan and sell it as being better. However, Hushai has this advantage—it does not appear as if he is going to be debating his plan with Ahithophel. He is just going to state it, with the idea that it has to sound better.

In fact, Hushai has two advantages here. Absalom called him in, possibly to find a better plan than that proposed by Ahithophel. Secondly, Hushai knows Ahithophel’s plan; but Ahithophel had no idea another plan was going to be offered up.

There is the distinct possibility that Absalom is testing Hushai’s loyalty at this point, so that what he proposes will tell Absalom just whose side he is really on. If Hushai proposes a good plan, than Absalom will rest assured that he can trust Hushai in the future for additional advice.

In any case, God the Holy Spirit tells us exactly what is going on. 1Chron. 27:33 [Ahithophel was the king’s counselor; but Hushai the Archite was the king’s friend.](#) Ahithophel was, at one time, David’s advisor, but he had turned against David. Hushai, on the other hand, remained David’s friend, and his advice will counteract Ahithophel’s advice in order to save his friend David.

And so says Hushai unto Absalom, “Not good the counsel which has counseled Ahithophel in the time the this.”

2Samuel
17:7

Hushai answered [lit., said to] Absalom: “The counsel which Absalom has given [lit., counseled] [is] not good at this time.”

Hushai answered Absalom, saying, “The counsel that Absalom gave is not good advice at this time.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And Chusai said to Absalom: The counsel that Achitophel hath given this time is not good.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Hushai unto Absalom, "Not good the counsel which has counseled Ahithophel in the time the this."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Hushai said to Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good at this time.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Hushai said to Absalom, This counsel which Ahithophel has counseled this one time is not good.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Hushai said to Absalom, "This time, the advice Ahithophel has given isn't right.
Contemporary English V.	Hushai said: This time Ahithophel's advice isn't so good.
Easy English	Hushai replied to Absalom, `This time, Ahithophel has not given good advice to you.
<i>The Message</i>	Hushai said, "The counsel that Ahithophel has given in this instance is not good.
New Berkeley Version	Hushai replied to Absalom, "This time the plan recommended by Ahithophel is not wise."
New Living Translation	"Well," Hushai replied to Absalom, "this time Ahithophel has made a mistake.
The Voice	Hushai: ⁷ I don't think the advice from Ahithophel is good this time, <i>and I'll tell you why:...</i>

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And HushAi said to AbSalom: 'This counsel that AhiThophel has given you isn't a good idea this time.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	"This time Ahithophel's advice is no good," Hushai said to Absalom.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Hushai replied to Absalom, "This time Ahithophel has not given good counsel."
NIRV	Hushai replied to Absalom, "The advice Ahithophel has given you isn't good this time.
New Jerusalem Bible	Hushai said to Absalom, 'On this occasion the advice given by Ahithophel is not good.
New Simplified Bible	Hushai said: »This time Ahithophel's advice is not very good.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And Hushai said to Absalom, Ahithophel's idea is not a good one at this time.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And Hushai answered Absalom, "The advice that Akhitophel has advised is not good, for this reason."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And Chusai answered, No, it will not serve our turn, this counsel Achitophel has given.
NET Bible®	Hushai replied to Absalom, "Ahithophel's advice is not sound this time [Heb "Not good is the advice which Ahithophel has advised at this time."]."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And Hushay says to Abi Shalom, The counsel Achiy Thophel counsels is not good at this time.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Chushai said unto Avshalom, The etza (counsel) that Achitophel hath given is not tovah at this time.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Geneva Bible	And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given [is] not good [Hushai shows himself faithful to David, in that he reproves this wicked counsel and purpose.] at this time.
Syndein/Thieme	{Counter-Insurgency} And Hushai said unto Absalom, "The counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good . . . at this time." {Note: In counter-insurgency, an honorable person has to do what normally would be a dishonorable act. So, if someone must deceive, the best way is 'to tell the truth'. And, that is what Hushai does here. It would be 'not good' - for David! Yet he knows the opinion of Ahithophel is highly respected so he says, the plan is good . . . but just wait a little while first. And, that is the key. David is at his weakest right now. A delay is necessary.}
World English Bible	Hushai said to Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel has given this time is not good.
Young's Updated LT	And Hushai says unto Absalom, "Not good [is] the counsel that Ahithophel has counselled at this time."

The gist of this verse: Hushai first gives the blanket statement that Ahithophel's advice is not any good.

2Samuel 17:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Chûwshay (חשו) [pronounced khoo-SHAH-ee]	to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אבולשי) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: Hushai answered [lit., said to] Absalom:... Hushai, like Ahithophel, has to be quick on his feet. He knows where David is, he knows who is with David, and he knows David's weaknesses. At this point, through being back in Jerusalem, and having been called into the palace, and hearing Ahithophel's plan, Hushai immediately evaluates how good Ahithophel's plan is—and it is a good plan. So, Hushai knows that, if Ahithophel does what he wants, there is a very good chance that David will be defeated.

Here is where it gets tricky. Hushai has to denigrate Ahithophel's plan and then offer up a superior plan, and he also has to sell this plan. How can you do that? How do you sell an inferior plan? Hushai will have to appeal to Absalom's ego.

Although Absalom believed that he was taking the measure of the man Hushai when he interrogated him in the previous chapter, Hushai was taking the measure of Absalom. Right now, as he speaks, Hushai concentrates on Absalom and his expressions as he speaks. When Hushai presses the right button, then he needs to know that and continue with it. When giving his plan, Hushai concentrates on Absalom, which will be clear in what he says.

Hushai is going to intentionally give Absalom wrong advice in the hope that it will result in Absalom's death. Hushai is a mole in Absalom's organization. In order to get there, Hushai had to lie to Absalom and make it appear as if he would serve Absalom, which he has no intention of doing.

Warfare and Revolution Require a New Set of Values for the Believer

1. Most people understand that there are different values for the believer in warfare.
2. A believer may don the uniform of his country and kill the enemy, and he has not sinned.
3. That same believer cannot return from the battlefield and kill people in the streets of his own country whom he perceives as personal enemies.
4. So killing in battle, okay; killing people you don't like, not okay. Not a difficult thing to understand and most believers do (there are few nutcases who do not get this).
5. In fact, it is honorable and moral to kill the enemy in war. This does not include vicious attacks against the civilian population (although sometimes civilians are used in warfare, which changes this).
6. Counterinsurgency is the clandestine warfare done by the establishment side.
7. Under clandestine warfare, there are a whole new set of values, which values do not apply on the streets of your home town (unless, of course, you are working undercover for the police).
8. Counterinsurgency may require you to lie, steal, intimidate, kill, assassinate, take drugs, sell drugs, and have illicit sexual affairs in order defeat the enemy. These same things are wrong in a society functioning under the laws of divine establishment.
9. That means, the believer has a dual set of values: one set of values when he is involved in counterinsurgency and another set of values when he is off-duty and home and the war is over.
10. Just like you can kill an enemy in battle, you can, as a man or woman involved in clandestine warfare, lie to the other side in order to gain some objective or some piece of information; and you do not have to confess that sin.
11. Counterinsurgency is not for everyone. Only a few individuals are able to deal with the rigors of warfare; even fewer are able to deal with the rigors and dual set of values involved in counterinsurgency.
12. A person must have an outstanding moral character to grasp his role as a counterinsurgent, one protecting his country from revolutionaries.
13. Divine approval is confirmed by the last sentence in v. 14: [Since the LORD had decreed that Ahithophel's good advice \[better plan\] be undermined in order to bring about Absalom's ruin.](#)
14. God is perfect; he cannot solicit to sin; He cannot approve of sin as a means to anything. God used Hushai's lying to defeat Absalom.
15. We may therefore conclude that counterinsurgency is legitimate.
16. However, more widely applied, many believers will need to assume a new set of values during warfare, a revolution or a national or local emergency. A simple example is, you might not say *boo* to your next-door neighbor, but in an emergency, you may be needed to assist him or his family in some way.
17. Emergency situations (and most of us rarely face emergency conditions) simply require us to do things differently than we normally do. Therefore, it is not difficult to see how a revolution or how being thrust into the middle of a wartime situation how our scale of values must change appropriately.
18. The more Bible doctrine a believer has, the better that believer is able to cope with changing circumstances.

This is a very difficult doctrine for most believers. It does not matter to them that God the Holy Spirit has spent 3 chapters on this particular topic, it is very difficult for them to grasp and believe.

2Samuel 17:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לא or לוּל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ṭôwb (טוב) [pronounced <i>tohbv</i>]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
As a noun, this can mean <i>the good thing, that which is good [pleasing, approved, kind, upright, right]; goodness, uprightness, kindness, right; that which is fair [beautiful]</i> .			
ʿêtsâh (אֶצֶחַ) [pronounced <i>gay-TZAW</i>]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6098 BDB #420
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yâʿats (יָצַח) [pronounced <i>yaw-ḠAHTS</i>]	<i>to advise, to counsel; to take counsel; to decree; to consult for [anyone], to provide for; to predict, to declare future thing</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3289 BDB #419
ʾĂchîythôphel (אֲחִיתּוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
paʿam (פַּעַם) [pronounced <i>PAH-ḡahm</i>]	<i>beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time, steps; the connotation is the passage of time</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6471 BDB #821
zôʿth (זֹה) [pronounced <i>zoth</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb; with the definite article	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260

Together, these appear to mean *at this time*.

Translation:...“The counsel which Absalom has given [lit., *counseled*] [is] not good at this time.” First thing, Hushai says that Absalom has been presented with a lousy plan. Hushai has to do more than that, however, and he has to explain why this plan is a bad plan.

You can bet that, while all this is going on, Hushai's mind is going a mile a minute determining two things: what about Ahithophel's plan is bad and what is a worse plan that he can come up with that will sound like a better plan? Myself, I would have to sit down, speak to advisors, and give this several days thought, and I might be able to pull it off. Hushai does not have the luxury; he is hearing all of this at once and he has to give a response right then and there. He does not say, “Let me get back to you on this one, Mr. Absalom.”

He does know this: Absalom is an egomaniac, so he needs to appeal to Absalom's ego to get this through. Furthermore, he has the advantage the Absalom called on him. This suggests that, for whatever reason, Absalom wants to hear an alternative plan. Now, I think the reason he does is, Absalom does not want to appear as if Ahithophel is running the show—and following him exactly on his first two big moves as king would appear as if Ahithophel is the true power. So, there is that advantage to Hushai.

Let's lay out Hushai's advantages at this point.

Advantage Hushai

1. Hushai hears Ahithophel's plan, and knows that he is offering up an alternative plan. Ahithophel did not have that advantage. As far as Ahithophel knew, he was offering up the only plan to Absalom.
2. Hushai can take the time to sell his plan; Ahithophel did not have to sell his plan, because his was the only plan.
3. Hushai can take time to pick Ahithophel's plan apart; Ahithophel did not have the chance to do this.
4. Hushai has the advantage that Absalom called him in specifically for two things: two give his opinion of Ahithophel's plan and to offer up a different plan. This in itself suggests that Absalom *wants* to go with an alternate plan.
5. Hushai knows that, because Absalom called him in, that there is some missing ingredient or some problem with Ahithophel's plan. If Absalom was wholeheartedly in favor of it, he would just go ahead and do it. So Hushai needs to read Absalom as he criticizes Ahithophel's plan and offers up his own.
6. Absalom does not mind having a great advisor, but he does not want to depend upon his only advisor for every choice. In fact, this seems like an excellent approach for Absalom to have two advisors at his beck and call. So Hushai has the additional advantage that Absalom does not want to appear completely dependent upon Ahithophel.

Hushai has several big advantages: he has to come up with an alternate plan off the top of his head, and he has to make his plan sound better than Ahithophel's plan, yet make it worse than Ahithophel's plan.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The entire verse reads: **Hushai answered [lit., *said to*] Absalom: "The counsel which Absalom has given [lit., *counseled*] [is] not good at this time."** Hushai does something which is quite slick here, which I would not have caught if it were not for Barnes.²⁴ Hushai is not denigrating Ahithophel overall. Hushai does not take a cheap shot at Ahithophel. He does not say, "That Ahithophel's plan? Well, we know that Ahithophel is an ass." Hushai does not use that approach. He implies here that his first piece of advice and other pieces of advice that Ahithophel has made over time have been good. But this plan that Ahithophel is offering is not good *at this time*. So there is no slight against Ahithophel personally. The implication may even be, "Under another set of circumstances, this plan of Ahithophel's might be an outstanding approach; but it is not good at this time." So Hushai is not even slighting Ahithophel's plan. Might be a good plan; just not at this time.

Poole suggests: *Though at other times he generally gives most wise and admirable counsel; yet, as he is a man, he seems now to be under a mistake, and not sufficiently to consider all the present circumstances of this business.*²⁵

Hushai is able to think under pressure. He has been called before Absalom, the man who could kill him at a whim, a man who knows his previous affiliation with David, and he asks Hushai's advice. If his advice seems phoney, Absalom could kill him right there on the spot. If his advice is good, then Hushai could be setting up his friend David to be killed. However, what makes Hushai a great man is, he is brilliant, he knows people, he knows how to manipulate people if necessary (he will have to manipulate Absalom), and he knows what to say to both save David and insure the demise of Absalom.

²⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:7.

²⁵ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:7.

You may recall, when Hushai came to David on the Mount of Olives, David expressed concern that he might not be able to keep up, and that suggests to us that Hushai is an older man whose body could not handle the rigors of a forced march in multiple terrains. But, even though his body is giving out, his mind is clear as can be. He is still able to think circles around Absalom. Absalom respects Hushai's brilliance, but does not realize that Hushai is using his brilliance to crush Absalom.

Absalom is a brilliant man and he knows that he is. He does not see himself as having shortcomings. A person with humility realizes that there are many areas in which he is not an expert, and he does not pretend to be an expert in every area. Being brilliant or having a high I.Q. does not qualify you to do or to be anything. But Absalom arrogance made him think that he could do anything. He can listen to these two old men and make a good decision on military tactics, something which he knows nothing about.

We have had many presidents listen to a whole host of advice and make bad decisions based upon that advice. It is not that they received bad advice, but that they chose the wrong way to go. And it is worse for arrogant Absalom, as he does not have a variety of thinking before him. He has mostly yes-men, and the last thing a leader needs when trying to make a difficult decision, is a lack of options; or no clear trusted voice in this or that area.

And so says Hushai, "You have known your father and his men, that mighty ones they [are] and [they are] bitter [vehement?] of soul like bear bereaved [of her cubs] in the field. And your father a man war and he will not lodge the night with the people.

2Samuel
17:8

Hushai also said, "You know your father and [you know] his men, that they [are] mighty men and [they are] bitter of soul, [just] like a bear bereaved [of her cubs] in the field. And [you know that] your father is a man of war and he will not spend the night with the people.

Hushai then added, "You know your father and his men—that they men are warriors and they are bitter right now, like a bear bereaved of her cubs in the field. Furthermore, your father is an experienced man of war and he knows not to spend the night in the midst of the people.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And again Chusai said: You know your father, and the men <u>that are with him</u> , that they are very valiant, and bitter in their mind, as a bear raging in the wood when her whelps are taken away: and your father is a warrior, and will not lodge with the people.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Hushai, "You have known your father and his men, that mighty ones they [are] and [they are] bitter [vehement?] of soul like bear bereaved [of her cubs] in the field. And your father a man war and he will not lodge the night with the people.
Peshitta (Syriac)	For said Hushai to Absalom. You know well that your father and his servants are mighty men, and they are furious as a bear <u>that devours the prey in the field</u> ; moreover, your father is a man of war, and will not spend the night with the people.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Hushai said, You know your father and his men, that they are very mighty, and bitter in their spirit, as a bereaved bear in the field, <u>and as a wild boar in the plain</u> ; and your father is a man of war, and <u>will not give the people rest</u> .
Significant differences:	There is an additional phrase in the Latin <i>that are with him</i> , which is not in the Hebrew. The Syriac gives a different sense to the rage of the bear and the Greek adds in another phrase after the bear.

The final phrase of the Greek is an entirely different sense than is found in the Hebrew (or in the other ancient languages).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	You know that your father and his men are warriors," he continued, "and they are as desperate as a wild bear robbed of her cubs. Your father is a seasoned fighter. He won't spend the night with his troops.
Contemporary English V.	You know that your father and his followers are real warriors. Right now they are as fierce as a mother bear whose cubs have just been killed. Besides, your father has a lot of experience in fighting wars, and he won't be spending the night with the others.
Easy English	You know that your father and his men are strong men. They are fierce, like a mother bear when someone steals her baby bears. Also, your father is a skilled soldier. He will not stay with his soldiers at night.
Easy-to-Read Version	Hushai added, "You know that your father and his men are strong men. They are as dangerous as a wild bear when something has taken its babies. Your father is a skilled fighter. He will not stay {all night} with the people.
<i>The Message</i>	You know your father and his men, brave and bitterly angry--like a bear robbed of her cubs. And your father is an experienced fighter; you can be sure he won't be caught napping at a time like this.
New Berkeley Version	Hushai went on, "You know your father and his troops; they are fine soldiers, besides being embittered in their minds like a bear that has been robbed of her cubs in the open. Furthermore, your father is an experienced fighter; he is not going to stop with the people for the night.
New Century Version	Hushai added, "You know your father and his men are strong. They are as angry as a bear that is robbed of its cubs. Your father is a skilled fighter. He won't stay all night with the army.
New Life Bible	Hushai said, "You know your father and his men. They are powerful and angry, like a bear robbed of her young ones in the field. And your father is a very able man of war. He will not stay with the people during the night.
New Living Translation	You know your father and his men; they are mighty warriors. Right now they are as enraged as a mother bear who has been robbed of her cubs. And remember that your father is an experienced man of war. He won't be spending the night among the troops.
The Voice	You know that your father and his men are hardened soldiers. <i>Right now</i> they're angry, like a bear that's been robbed of her cubs in the field. Also your father is <i>such</i> a wise warrior that <i>he'll know he's our target</i> . He won't sleep in the same camp with his people.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	For, you know your father and his men; they're very brave and strong, and they're as angry as a bear that has lost its cub in a field, or a wild boar that has been cornered. And your father is a warrior, so he would never sleep with his family.
Christian Community Bible	You know that your father and his men are warriors. When enraged, they are like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert enough in war not to spend the night with his men.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	"You know your father and his men. They are warriors as fierce as a wild bear whose cubs have been stolen. Your father is an experienced soldier. He will not camp with the troops tonight.
New American Bible (R.E.)	And he went on to say: "You know that your father and his men are warriors, and that they are as fierce as a bear in the wild robbed of her cubs. Moreover, since your father is a skilled fighter, he will not spend the night with the army.

NIRV	You know your father and his men. They are fighters. They are as strong as a wild bear whose cubs have been stolen from her. Besides, your father really knows how to fight. He won't spend the night with his troops. Hos 13:8.
New Jerusalem Bible	You know', Hushai went on, 'that your father and his men are great fighters and that they are now as angry as a wild bear robbed of her cubs. Your father is a man of war: he will not let the army rest during the night.
New Simplified Bible	You know your father and his followers are mighty warriors. They are as fierce as a mother bear whose cubs have just been killed. Your father has a lot of experience in fighting wars. He will not spend the night with the others.
Revised English Bible	You know', he went on, 'that your father and the men with him are hardened warriors and savage as a bear in the wilds robbed of her cubs. Your rather is an old campaigner and will not spend the night with the main body,...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Hushai said, "You know your father and his men are mighty. They have bitter souls, as a bear with miscarriage in the field. Your father is a man of war and does not lodge with the people.
Bible in Basic English	Hushai said further, You have knowledge of your father and his men, that they are men of war, and that their feelings are bitter, like those of a bear in the field whose young ones have been taken from her: and your father is a man of war, and will not take his night's rest with the people;...
The Expanded Bible	Hushai added, "You know your father and his men are ·strong [L?mighty fighters/warriors]. They are as ·angry [fierce] as a bear that is robbed of its cubs. Your father is a ·skilled [experienced; expert] ·fighter [in war]. He won't stay all night with the ·army [troops].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	—Then Hushai continued,—“You know your father and the men who are with him, —that they are soldiers, and sore in mind like a bear robbed of her whelps in the field, and your father is a man of war, so will not lodge with the forces.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Bethink thee now, what brave warriors they are, thy father and the men he leads; how fierce in their anger, fierce as the she-bear that lurks in a wood, when her cubs have been taken away from her; thy father is a fighting man, he will not remain there among the common folk.
NET Bible®	Hushai went on to say, "You know your father and his men - they are soldiers and are as dangerous as a bear out in the wild that has been robbed of her cubs [The LXX (with the exception of the recensions of Origen and Lucian) repeats the description as follows: "Just as a female bear bereft of cubs in a field."]. Your father is an experienced soldier; he will not stay overnight with the army.
NIV – UK	You know your father and his men; they are fighters, and as fierce as a wild bear robbed of her cubs. Besides, your father is an experienced fighter; he will not spend the night with the troops.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	You know," continued Hushai, "that your father and his men are powerful men, and that they are as bitter as a bear deprived of her cubs in the wild. Moreover, your father is a military man, and he won't camp with the rest of the people -...
exeGesés companion Bible	For, says Hushay, you know your father and his men are mighty; and bitter of soul as a bereft bear in the field: and your father is a man of war and stays not overnight with the people.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	For, said Chushai, thou knowest Avicha and his anashim, that they be Gibborim, and they be enraged in their nefesh, as a dov (bear) robbed of her cubs in the

sadeh; and Avicha is ish milchamah, and will not spend the night with HaAm (the troops).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Hushai said, "You know that your father and his men are mighty men, and that they are enraged, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night with the people.
Green's Literal Translation	And Hushai said, You have known your father and his men, that they <i>are</i> mighty men. And they <i>are</i> bitter of soul, like a bear bereaved of cubs in the field. And your father <i>is</i> a man of war, and shall not stay the night with the people.
New RSV	Hushai continued, `You know that your father and his men are warriors, and that they are enraged, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night with the troops.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 8:-10: Sabotage of Plan Ahithophel} "Furthermore", Hushai advised, "you know . . . your father and his army . . . that they are great soldiers, and they have a ferocious mental attitude . . . like a {mother} bear deprived of her cubs in the bush. And your father is a 'professional soldier'/'man of war', and will not bivouac with the {fleeing and frightened} civilians.
Updated Webster Trans.	For, said Hushai, you knowest your father and his men, that they [are] mighty men, and they [are] chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and your father [is] a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.
World English Bible	Hushai said moreover, You know your father and his men, that they are mighty men, and they are fierce in their minds, as a bear robbed of her cubs in the field; and your father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.
Young's Updated LT	And Hushai says, "You have known your father and his men, that they are heroes, and they are bitter in soul as a bereaved bear in a field, and your father [is] a man of war, and does not lodge with the people.

The gist of this verse: Hushai points out that David and his men are experienced soldiers and right now, they are as unpredictable and dangerous as a bear who has had her cubs taken from her. Furthermore, David would not stay the night with the troops.

The presentation of Ahithophel's plan, as you will recall, lacked the wâw conjunctions that we would have expected. However, when Hushai speaks, every phrase is preceded by a conjunction of some sort. My guess would be that Hushai is thinking on his feet and each conjunction simply represents a new thought. Furthermore, each conjunction gives him an additional second to think about the answer that he is giving.

Now, there is certainly the possibility that Hushai, when called upon, has spent the time it takes to get to Absalom (20 minute to an hour) thinking about why he is being called and what advice Ahithophel might have given Absalom. So he may have an idea. He may have even asked the couriers who came for him—of, if they were tight-lipped, pumped them for knowledge.

Whatever the case, the structure of the two men's sentences is much different. Ahithophel's was unusual and could suggest that Ahithophel was excited to give his plan, or that he was originally from a different country and Hebrew was his second language; Hushai's way of speaking here is much more common.

2Samuel 17:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Chûwshay (חוש) [pronounced <i>khoo-SHAH-ee</i>]	<i>to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
'attâh (אתָּ) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
yâda' (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see; to learn; to recognize [admit, acknowledge, confess]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw^bV</i>]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: Hushai also said, “You know your father... Hushai speaks directly to Absalom, and he tells him, “You know what kind of a man your father is.” But Absalom really doesn’t. David, as an errant father, did not spend enough time with any of his children, allowing his children to be raised by their mothers as wards of the state. Hushai knows this, but he appeals to Absalom directly in this way.

Absalom knows his father by reputation and by some of his recent actions which were deplorable (not making a good decision on Amnon at the very beginning), but he really does not know his father.

As mentioned before, none of David’s sons are soldiers; and it is likely that most of them (if not all of them) never spent a day out in the field with David’s army under David or under Joab. So, Absalom does not know his father; and he does not know his father as a warrior.

However, this puts Ahithophel in a bad position. He cannot just interject and say, “Well, David is not like that.” Then he is claiming to know more of about David than David’s own son the king. Furthermore, Ahithophel cannot object to anything unless it is a blatant lie that someone else can affirm as being a lie. So Ahithophel can give this enough coloring to not state an out-and-out falsehood, but to help show that Ahithophel’s advice is not good.

2Samuel 17:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ânâshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>uh-NAW-sheem</i>]; also spelled 'îyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced <i>ee-SHEEM</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #376 BDB #35

Translation: ...and [your know] his men,... Again, Absalom does not know David's soldiers. He probably never endured the real hardship of war; he did not really know how tough these men really are. But Hushai pushes his buttons. "Sure, you know your father and his men..." If anyone should know David and his army, it ought to be his own sons; but Absalom cannot speak up and say, "I really don't know any of these men. I've never been in my father's army before."

2Samuel 17:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹר) [pronounced <i>gib-BOAR</i>]	<i>strong man, mighty man, soldier, warrior, combatant, veteran</i>	masculine singular noun/adjective	Strong's #1368 BDB #150
hêmmâh (הֵמָּה) [pronounced <i>haym-mawh</i>]	<i>they, those; themselves; these</i> [with the definite article]	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241

Translation: ...that they [are] mighty men... This is quite obvious, that David's men are great soldiers; they are warriors. They are seasoned veterans. How they feel at this moment is something else indeed, because, in the past, they had defended Israel and their families from enemies without. This was something entirely different.

2Samuel 17:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mar (מָר) [pronounced <i>mahr</i>]	<i>bitter, bitterness; sad, sorrowful; fierce, vehement, powerful, raging</i>	adjective/ substantive; masculine plural construct	Strong's #4751 BDB #600

2Samuel 17:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The final 4 words are suspect, in my opinion, as to being accurate translations for this word.			
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i>]	<i>soul, life, living being; breath; mind; desire, volition; will</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
dôwb (בֹּדֵב אוֹ בֵּדֵב) [pronounced <i>doh^bv</i>]	<i>bear</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1677 BDB #179
shakkûwl (לֹאֵם אוֹ לֹאֵמָה) [pronounced <i>shahk-KOOL</i>]	<i>childless; barren; bereaved [robbed] of children [cubs]</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7909 BDB #1014
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced <i>saw-DEH</i>]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

Translation: ...and [they are] bitter of soul, [just] like a bear bereaved [of her cubs] in the field. Ahithophel painted one picture of David, that he is *weary, tired, exhausted; wearisome* and he is *weak-handed; both hands hanging down; discouraged, feeble, weak*. These things are true, given his situation; and he is on a forced march out of Jerusalem. However, Ahithophel paints a different picture of David and his men. The word used here generally means *bitter, bitterness*. In fact, these or similar words are used in the KJV 34 of the 38 times this word occurs. Some of the additional definitions given here are, quite frankly, suspect.

With what has come to pass, David and his men are bitter; and you must realize that these are men who have risked their lives to preserve and protect Israel, and they have all been pushed out, so *bitter* is a reasonable descriptor.

Then Hushai adds the additional description, of being like a bear in the woods who has been bereaved of her cubs. This makes them very dangerous and unpredictable. Bitterness can lead men to do a number of different things; some men, when they are bitter, they become despondent. But others—David and his men—can become dangerous and unpredictable.

Clarke gives us quite a graphic description of this: *[This is] A remarkable account of maternal affection in a she-bear: "In the year 1772, the Seahorse frigate and Carcass bomb, under the command of the Hon. Captain C. J. Phipps, afterwards Lord Mulgrave, were sent on a voyage of discovery to the north seas. In this expedition the late celebrated admiral Lord Nelson served as midshipman. While the Carcass lay locked in the ice, early one morning, the man at the masthead gave notice that three bears were making their way very fast over the frozen sea, and were directing their course towards the ship. They had no doubt been invited by the scent of some blubber of a seahorse that the crew had killed a few days before, which had been set on fire, and was burning on the ice at the time of their approach. They proved to be a she-bear and her two cubs, but the cubs were nearly as large as the dam. They ran eagerly to the fire, and drew out from the flames part of the flesh of the seahorse that remained unconsumed, and ate voraciously. The crew from the ship threw great lumps of flesh*

of the seahorse, which they had still left upon the ice, which the old bear fetched away singly, laid every lump before her cubs as she brought it, and dividing it, gave each a share, reserving but a small portion to herself. As she was fetching away the last piece, they levelled their muskets at the cubs, and shot them both dead; and in her retreat they wounded the dam, but not mortally. It would have drawn tears of pity from any but unfeeling minds, to have marked the affectionate concern expressed by this poor beast in the dying moments of her expiring young. Though she was sorely wounded, and could but just crawl to the place where they lay, she carried the lump of flesh she had fetched away, as she had done the others before, tore it in pieces and laid it down before them; and when she saw that they refused to eat, she laid her paws first upon one, and then upon the other, and endeavored to raise them up; all this while it was piteous to hear her moan. When she found she could not move them, she went off; and being at some distance, looked back and moaned. This not availing to entice them away, she returned, and smelling around them, began to lick their wounds. She went off a second time, as before; and having crawled a few paces, looked again behind her, and for some time stood moaning. But still her cubs not rising to follow her, she returned to them again, and with signs of inexpressible fondness went round one, and round the other, pawing them and moaning. Finding at last that they were cold and lifeless, she raised her head towards the ship, and growled a curse upon the murderers, which they returned with a volley of musket balls. She fell between her cubs, and died licking their wounds.” Had this animal got among the destroyers of her young, she would have soon shown what was implied in the chafed mind of a bear robbed of her whelps.²⁶

2Samuel 17:8e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾâb (אב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
ʾîysh (איש) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
mil ^c châmâh (מלחמה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

Translation: [And \[you know that\] your father is a man of war...](#) Again, Hushai speaks directly to Absalom, saying, “You know your father is a man of war.” Now, lately, David has not been much of a man of war, with the exception of going to Ammon with Joab to do the final military operations. Joab has been the one to oversee David’s army. In fact, David apparently went on an extended spring break with regards to Bathsheba (and, you will recall, that we did not know how long this general behavior went on).

However, it is unquestionable that, for most of David’s career, he was a man of war—and everyone in the room knows this, but Hushai is saying this to Absalom—probably the only one in the room who does not know that much about David, his father.

²⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:28.

2Samuel 17:8f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
lûwn (לוֹן) [pronounced <i>loon</i>]	<i>to cause to lodge, to cause to pass the night, to cause to spend the night; to be stubborn; to murmur or complain [as a stubborn person would]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3885 BDB #533
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
'am (אִם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...and he will not spend the night with the people. And then here is a bit of information that we have never heard before—and we do not even know if it is true. David, when at war, separates himself from his army. This has never been mentioned before in Scripture, so we do not know if Hushai is just making this up on the spot or if he is revealing to Absalom and the room and great secret of David's.

The idea is, Ahithophel's plan to suddenly come upon the army and to scatter them, and leave David there alone would not work, because David won't be right there with his army. David is smart enough not to stay with his army; and that would be even more true in this situation, as the men who are with David support him specifically. If David is dead, then they have no more reason to war against Absalom.

Let's suppose for the moment that Hushai is just making this up—isn't he afraid to be called on this? Not necessarily. In previous wars, David would not have been a target, because these armies threatened Israel; but in this revolution, he is the only true target. Therefore, Hushai's assertion could very well be true for this situation alone; or, if need be, Hushai could sell it as such.

In any case, Hushai is putting information out there—whether true or false—which was not known in that room. Hushai is saying, "Well, now, Absalom, you know this about your father..." when he really knows very little about the specifics his father going to war.

It also has another psychological affect—if Absalom does not question Hushai's explanation that his father lodges away from the men—then who is the room is going to dispute this. Absalom ought to know this but he certainly does not.

This also calls into question Ahithophel's advice. If David does not spent the night somewhere with his army, then Ahithophel's plan cannot not work.

Like earlier in this verse, Hushai emphasizes Absalom's supposed knowledge of his father by using the 2nd person masculine singular suffix.

Let's take this verse as a whole: Hushai then added, "You know your father and his men—that they men are warriors and they are bitter right now, like a bear bereaved of her cubs in the field. Furthermore, your father is an experienced man of war and he knows not to spend the night in the midst of the people. Absalom cannot dispute any of what is being said because he really does not know anything about his father. And Ahithophel cannot jump in there and say, "That's not right;" because it is close enough to the truth. Nothing that Hushai is saying is false, per se; and the final assertion appears to be a little nugget that Hushai threw in there, true or not.

If I was to make a guess, at this point in David's retreat from Jerusalem, he has not thought to do this. He is making very good decisions, but it does not appear that he is sleeping somewhere else apart from his personal army.

However, let me also point out that Ahithophel probably had a contingency plan; and was ready to kill every last soldier with David, if necessary to get to David. However, he saw no reason to share this with Absalom, because, when laying out his plan, Ahithophel did not have to give details—his was the only plan under consideration.

Behold now, he [even] he has been hidden in one of the pits or in one of the places. And he has been as a falling in them in the first and has heard the hearer and he has said 'Has been a slaughter in the people who follow Absalom.'

2Samuel
17:9

Listen, he has [certainly] now been hidden in one of the pits or in some other [lit., a certain] place. And it has been when [there is] a falling upon them in the first [battle], that a messenger [lit., hearer] will hear and then announce, 'A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.'

Listen, even now, your father has certainly hidden himself in one of the pits or in some other place. And it will be when there is a surprise attack at first contact, then a messenger will announce, 'A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.'

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Perhaps he now lies hidden in pits, or in some other place <u>where he lies</u> : and when any one shall fall at the first, every one that hears it shall say: There is a slaughter among the people that followed Absalom.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Behold now, he [even] he has been hidden in one of the pits or in one of the places. And he has been as a falling in them in the first and has heard the hearer and he has said 'Has been a slaughter in the people who follow Absalom.'
Peshitta (Syriac)	Behold now, he has hidden in one of the <u>countries</u> or in some other place; and when we attack them <u>according to the first counsel</u> , then the rumor will spread that there has been a great slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.
Septuagint (Greek)	For behold, he is now hidden in one of the <u>hills</u> or in some other place; and it shall come to pass when he falls upon them at the beginning, that someone will certainly hear, and say, There has been a slaughter among the people that follow after Absalom.
Significant differences:	Although the Latin and Hebrew have David hiding in some pit, the Syriac has him off in some country and the Greek has him in the hills.

The English translation from the Syriac has *according to the first counsel* rather than a reference to someone who hears what happens and then transmits it.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Even now he has probably hidden himself in one of the caves or some other place. When some of the troops [LXX] fall in the first attack, whoever hears it will say, 'The soldiers who follow Absalom have been defeated!'
Contemporary English V.	He has probably already found a hiding place in a cave or somewhere else. As soon as anyone hears that some of your soldiers have been killed, everyone will think your whole army has been destroyed.
Easy English	He has probably already hidden in a cave or some other place. David will attack your soldiers first. Then everyone will hear about it. They will say, "Many of Absalom's men are now dead."
Easy-to-Read Version	He is probably already hiding in a cave or some other place. If your father attacks your men first, then people will hear the news. And they will think, 'Absalom's followers are losing!'
Good News Bible (TEV)	Right now he is probably hiding in a cave or some other place. As soon as David attacks your men, whoever hears about it will say that your men have been defeated.
<i>The Message</i>	Even while we're talking, he's probably holed up in some cave or other. If he jumps your men from ambush, word will soon get back, 'A slaughter of Absalom's army!'
New Century Version	He is probably already hiding in a cave or some other place. If the first attack fails, people will hear the news and think, 'Absalom's followers are losing!'
New Life Bible	He has now hidden himself in one of the caves, or in another place. When some of the people are killed in the first battle, whoever hears it will say, 'There have been many people killed who follow Absalom.'
New Living Translation	He has probably already hidden in some pit or cave. And when he comes out and attacks and a few of your men fall, there will be panic among your troops, and the word will spread that Absalom's men are being slaughtered.
The Voice	He's probably hidden in a cave or some other hole <i>where he will be hard to find</i> . When our troops start dying in the first attack, everyone will say, "Absalom's men are being slaughtered."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Look, he's hiding in the hills or somewhere else. So, when the attack begins, he'll hear it and say, <i>AbSalom's people are attacking</i> .
<i>God's Word</i> ™	He has already hidden in one of the ravines or some other place. If some of our soldiers are killed in the initial attack, others will definitely hear about it and say, 'The troops that support Absalom have been defeated.'
New American Bible (R.E.)	Even now he lies hidden in one of the caves or in one of his other places. And if some of our soldiers should fall at the first attack, whoever hears of it will say, 'Absalom's followers have been slaughtered.'
NIRV	In fact, he's probably hiding in a cave or some other place right now. "Suppose he attacks your troops first. When people hear about it, they'll say, 'Many of the troops who followed Absalom have been killed.'
New Jerusalem Bible	At this moment he is concealed in some hollow or other place. If at the outset there are casualties among our troops, word will go round that the army supporting Absalom has met with disaster.
New Simplified Bible	»He has no doubt already found a hiding place in a cave or somewhere else. When people hear that some of your soldiers have been killed, everyone will think your entire army has been destroyed.

Revised English Bible ...even now he will be lying hidden in a pit or in some such place. Then if any of your men are killed at the outset, whoever hears the news will say, "Disaster has overtaken Absalom's followers."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Behold, now he conceals in one of the sinkholes, or in one of the places. Those falling in the beginning will be ||hearing|| it said, 'A plague is with the people after Absalom!'

Bible in Basic English But he will certainly have taken cover now in some hole or secret place; and if some of our people, at the first attack, are overcome, then any hearing of it will say, There is destruction among the people who are on Absalom's side.

The Expanded Bible He is probably already hiding in a cave or some other place [^Lpit; hollow]. If the first attack fails [^LWhen some of our men fall at the first attack], people will hear the news and think, 'Absalom's followers are losing [being slaughtered]!'

Ferar-Fenton Bible —He will hide in some cave or in some tower. And it may be we might miss him by accident, and it will be heard of, and said, 'There has been a defeat of the people who are following Absalom!'

New Advent (Knox) Bible No, by now he is hidden in some pit under ground, or some other vantage-point. A few deaths among his pursuers, and the word will go round, Absalom's followers are routed!

NET Bible® At this very moment he is hiding out in one of the caves or in some other similar place. If it should turn out that he attacks our troops first [Heb "that he falls on them [i.e., Absalom's troops] at the first [encounter]; or "that some of them [i.e., Absalom's troops] fall at the first [encounter]."], whoever hears about it will say, 'Absalom's army has been slaughtered!'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible ...right now he's hidden in a pit or somewhere. So what will happen is this: when they begin their attack, and whoever hears about it says, 'A slaughter is taking place among Avshalom's followers,'...

exeGesés companion Bible Behold, even now he hides in one of the pits or in one of the places:
and so be it,
when some of them fall at the beginning,
that in hearing, a hearer says,
There is a plague among the people
who go after Abi Shalom;...

Judaica Press Complete T. Behold, now he is surely hidden in one of the pits or one of the places; and it will come to pass, if there fall among them at the first, then someone will hear it and say, 'There has been a massacre among the people that are behind Absalom.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible Hinei, he is hid now in one of the pits, or in some other makom; and it will come to pass, when some of them be overthrown at the outset, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a magefah (slaughter) among the people that follow Avshalom.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Behold, he is hidden even now in some pit or other place; and when some of them are overthrown at the first, whoever hears it will say, There is a slaughter among the followers of Absalom.

Concordant Literal Version ...lo, now, he is hidden in one of the pits, or in one of the places, and it has been, at the falling among them at the commencement, that the hearer has heard, and said, There has been a slaughter among the people who [are] after Absalom;"...

English Standard Version	Behold, even now he has hidden himself in one of the pits or in some other place. And as soon as some of the people fall [Or And as he falls on them] at the first attack, whoever hears it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.'
Green's Literal Translation	Behold, now he is hidden in one of the pits, or in one of the places. And it shall be, at the falling among them at the beginning, that whoever hears even shall say, There has been a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.
Syndein/Thieme	Behold/Now . . . he {David} has concealed himself {chaba' - Niphal tense} in some cave or other strategic position. {Note: Chaba' means to conceal for the purpose of 'aggressive offense' not defense. Hushai is counseling that David is without mercy. He will use the civilians as bait. When Absalom attacks the column, David and his men will hit them from surprise and they will not know what hit them!} So, it will come to pass {continuation of historical sequence}, when he ambushes them in the first attack {Idiom: literally: 'according to the falling among them first'}, then who ever hears the news will say, "There has been a great slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom." {Note: Hushai is saying it would be disastrous for the revolution if they lose the first battle. Next, the principle is "weak men in power rely on 'public opinion' instead of their own good judgment".}.
World English Bible	Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some <i>other</i> place: and it will happen, when some of them are fallen at the first, that whoever hears it will say, There is a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.
Young's Updated LT	Lo, now, he is hidden in one of the pits, or in one of the places, and it has been, at the falling among them at the commencement, that the hearer has heard, and said, There has been a slaughter among the people who are after Absalom.

The gist of this verse: Hushai suggests that already, David is hidden away where he cannot be found; and if, upon first contact, any of Absalom's soldiers are killed, it will be noised abroad that there has been a slaughter among the people (referring to Absalom's people).

2Samuel 17:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
This seems to attempt to take others and put them in the place of the person saying this (so that they see the same thing); or to grab the attention of the reader. From the many times I have seen this word used in a narrative, I believe that we may update the translation to, <i>he observed [that]</i> . This goes along with the idea that this word is to cause us to see things from the viewpoint of someone in the narrative.			
'attâh (אָתָּע) [pronounced <i>ghat-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
hûw' (אוּה) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
châbâ' (חָבֵא) [pronounced <i>khaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>to hide oneself; to lie hiding; [fleeing away] secretly</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #2244 BDB #285

2Samuel 17:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective; construct form	Strong's #259 BDB #25
ʿEchâd can function like an indefinite article, and be rendered <i>a certain [person, place or thing]</i> . ʿEchâd can be used elliptically to mean <i>one time, once</i> .			
pachath (פַּחַת) [pronounced PAHKH-ahth]	<i>pit, hole</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #6354 BDB #809
ʾôw (אוּ) [pronounced oh]	<i>or, or rather, otherwise, also, and; if, perchance; except, or else; whether, not the least</i>	conjunction	Strong's #176 BDB #14
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective; construct form	Strong's #259 BDB #25
ʿEchâd can function like an indefinite article, and be rendered <i>a certain [person, place or thing]</i> . ʿEchâd can be used elliptically to mean <i>one time, once</i> .			
mâqôwm (מַקְוִים) [pronounced maw-KOHM]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #4725 BDB #879

Translation: Listen, he has [certainly] now been hidden in one of the pits or in some other [lit., a certain] place. Hushai begins to explain what the reality on the ground is, and what will happen with Ahithophel's plan. First of all, David is not going to be found among his men. He might be in a pit or some other place, but he will not be found to begin with. Recall that Ahithophel's plan was to send David's soldiers on the run, close in on David, and kill him alone. If Ahithophel cannot find David, then his plan would suddenly go to crap.

According to Hushai, Ahithophel's plan will fail at the beginning, because David might not be found anywhere around. His initial attack may not turn up David. David might even stay out of the early fighting. Again, we do not know if this is true; it does not appear to be; but no one challenges Hushai, in part, because he is speaking directly to Absalom, continuing to say things like, "Well, you know your father." The last thing that Absalom can say is, "No, I really don't know him." If Absalom has taken up arms against his own father, then he must know him well enough to do so.

Absalom simply makes a personal judgment call at this point. If he was on the run, and there were thousands of men coming to kill him, he would hide from them really well. Absalom is all about self-protection. Therefore, he judges his father the same way, which is wrong. We will later find out that David's own troops will implore David to go hide, although David wants to stand and fight (2Sam. 18:3–4). David would love to go down fighting, and those with him recognize that the revolution is successful if David is killed.

2Samuel 17:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
I would have expected to find the bêyth preposition here (which looks very similar).			
nâphal (לָפַל) [pronounced <i>naw-FAHL</i>]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply; to desert</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
The infinitive construct with the kaph preposition is very similar to its use with the bêyth preposition. Generally, this is seen as a temporal clause, where the preposition is translated <i>when, as, just as, as soon as</i> . ²⁷			
b ^e (בּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
b ^e (בּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
t ^e chillâh (תְּחִלָּה) [pronounced <i>t^e-khil-LAW</i>]	<i>beginning, first, in the beginning; previously, prior to; at the commencement of</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8462 BDB #321

Translation: *And it has been when [there is] a falling upon them in the first [battle],...* Although Ahithophel suggests a strike force of 12,000, which is more than adequate, Hushai is giving a different outcome. There will be an initial battle; it will not be over suddenly, as Ahithophel has suggested. Remember that David's soldiers are like a bear in the woods bereaved of her cubs, so they are bitter and unpredictable. There will be a violent push-back at the first attack against them. Remember, Ahithophel suggested that they would be sent running instead.

²⁷ *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 182.

Hushai says, they will stand and fight. He warns that in the initial battle, it is David's soldiers that may fall upon Ahithophel's. That is, they might be waiting for them and attack first.

All Hushai knows for certain is that David and these soldiers are on the run, leaving Jerusalem. He knows that David is relatively clear-headed, because he immediately suggested a spy network, which was brilliant. But Hushai is exaggerating David's response to an attack by Ahithophel.

2Samuel 17:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHÇ</i>]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHÇ</i>]	<i>the hearer, the listener; the one being attentive to; to one taking cognizance of; hearing, listening; being attentive</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

Translation: ...that a messenger [lit., hearer] will hear... The *hearer* here is someone designated by David to keep track of what is going on (there are probably several of these men), and if something occurs, they will go to David immediately and tell him exactly what is going on.

It is also possible that this is a person who simply pays attention to what is occurring and he reports this as news, so to speak. So there may be several like this. There were newsmen in this day.

2Samuel 17:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
maggêphâh (מַגֵּפָה) [pronounced <i>mahg-gay-FAW</i>]	<i>a blow, a slaughter, plague, pestilence</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4046 BDB #620

2Samuel 17:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
‘am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
’āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
’achārēy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
’Ābîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...and then announce, ‘A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.’ He will announce (presumably to the cities about) that there was a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.

If the *hearer* can refer to several people, then they will tell others (say, at the entry gate of the cities) that there has been a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom. If this is the case, Absalom does not want this kind of information spread across the land. Recall that Absalom became king, in part, by acting the part and by having men all over Israel stand in the midst of the city and cry out, “Absalom is king in Hebron.” If this first battle against David does not go well, that is also going to be noised abroad. This would be a serious problem with Ahithophel’s plan.

You will note that Hushai’s talk here is considerably longer than Ahithophel’s; and he paints a very plausible picture of the response of David’s troops. The elders who are there with Absalom can visualize this. Hushai has painted a picture where Absalom can see these early newscasters going about saying, “David’s army has inflicted serious casualties on Absalom’s army.” Once this picture is painted in Absalom’s mind, and in the minds of the elders, then it will be difficult for them to want to go with Ahithophel’s plan.

The entire verse reads: Listen, he has [certainly] now been hidden in one of the pits or in some other [lit., a certain] place. And it has been when [there is] a falling upon them in the first [battle], that a messenger [lit., hearer] will hear and then announce, ‘A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.’ Dictators hate bad press and many seek to control the news that goes out there. The last thing that Absalom needs is people who hear this initial conflict and go out there telling about it to anyone who will listen (and everyone will be interested in this news). Potentially, in the first battle, Absalom could appear weak and this news might go out to everyone.

Application: During several of the early years that Barack Obama was president, **he** and his **staff** attacked Fox News, saying that they were **not a legitimate news-gathering organization**. Fox News would report things that were unfavorable to the Obama administration, and they found many of these reports (on Obamacare, on Operation Fast & Furious or on Benghazi) to be very damaging. So they attempted to **paint Fox News** as illegitimate, and even warned other news organizations from **following their lead** and posting the same stories. They were similarly thuggish toward **others** who did not report as the White House believed they should.

In the same vein, Hushai is warning Absalom that he does not want news like this getting out there. This would damage him greatly.

The entire verse reads: Listen, he has [certainly] now been hidden in one of the pits or in some other [lit., a *certain*] place. And it has been when [there is] a falling upon them in the first [battle], that a messenger [lit., *hearer*] will hear and then announce, 'A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.'

Absalom and Public Opinion

1. Hushai warns Absalom about public opinion, because this may send his troops running in the other direction.
2. Absalom, for his kingship, depends upon public opinion. He got where he is by working the courts and bad-mouthing his father as a judge.
3. So, even though Absalom seems cold and callous, he is very likely to be hyper-sensitive about public opinion. He sold himself to the people as being cool, a man of equality, a man of the people. Take this away from him, and he holds onto his power by force alone.
4. Public opinion lacks judgment, discernment, and wisdom. We have an excellent example of this right now. Much of the public still **blames George Bush**¹ for the state of our economy, even though Barack Obama, as of this writing, has been president for more than 4 years.
5. Absalom cannot allow for himself to appear weak. He cannot allow for David to take the upper hand in the first battle.
6. Arrogant people are just as concerned about public opinion as they are about doing the right thing. Often, more so.
7. Absalom's favorable public opinion was based upon him selling himself and his good looks. Part of it was based upon a dislike some had for David due to **iconoclastic arrogance**. It was only a matter of time before Absalom was the recipient of iconoclastic arrogance as well.

¹ This link is an AP story which is extremely biased, using much of the same language that Obama's team has used over the past 5 years.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

If this initial news of Ahithophel's attack being pushed back gets out there, those who support Absalom will re-think their support.

And he also a son of courage who his heart like a heart of a lion. Melting he melts for knows all Israel that a mighty man [is] your father; and sons of courage who [are] with him.

2Samuel
17:10

He also is a man [lit., *son*] of courage whose heart is like the heart of a lion—melting, it will melt [at hearing such a report]—for all Israel knows that your father [is] a [great] warrior along with the men [lit., *sons*] of courage who [are] with him.

Even though your soldiers are men of great courage with hearts like a lions, their hearts will surely melt at hearing such a report. All Israel knows that your father is a great warrior along with the men of courage who are with him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the most valiant man whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall <u>melt for fear</u> : for all the people of Israel know thy father to be a valiant man, and that all who are with him are valiant.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And he also a son of courage who his heart like a heart of a lion. Melting he melts for knows all Israel that a mighty man [is] your father; and sons of courage who [are] with him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Even though he is valiant and his heart is as the heart of a lion, he shall utterly melt; for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man and that those who are with him are valiant men.
Septuagint (Greek)	Then even he that is strong, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, it shall utterly melt: for all Israel knows that your father is mighty, and they that are with him are mighty men.
Significant differences:	Two verbs are found for <i>melt</i> ; and the English translation from the Latin reasonably renders this <i>melt for fear</i> .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Then even those who are as brave as a lion will lose their courage. All Israel knows what a great warrior your father is and what brave soldiers he has.
Easy English	Your bravest soldiers are as brave as lions. But even those soldiers will become afraid. All the *Israelites know that your father is a strong man. And they know that his soldiers are brave men.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then even the people who are as brave as a lion will become scared. Why? Because all the Israelites know that your father is a strong fighter and that his men are brave.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then even the bravest men, as fearless as lions, will be afraid because everyone in Israel knows that your father is a great soldier and that his men are hard fighters.
<i>The Message</i>	Even if your men are valiant with hearts of lions, they'll fall apart at such news, for everyone in Israel knows the kind of fighting stuff your father's made of, and also the men with him.
New Century Version	Then even the men who are as brave as lions will be frightened, because all the Israelites know your father is a fighter. They know his men are brave!
New Living Translation	Then even the bravest soldiers, though they have the heart of a lion, will be paralyzed with fear. For all Israel knows what a mighty warrior your father is and how courageous his men are.
The Voice	Then even the courageous warriors, the ones with the courage of lions, will disintegrate <i>in fear</i> . Everyone in Israel knows that your father is a true warrior, and those with him are hardened veterans.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Remember that this mighty man who has the heart of a lion will just melt away once he knows that he's finished; for, all IsraEl knows how mighty your father and his men are.
Christian Community Bible	Then even the valiant man whose heart is like that of a lion will utterly melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a warrior, as are the men who are with him.
NIRV	Then the hearts of your soldiers will melt away in fear. Even those who are as brave as a lion will be terrified. That's because everyone in Israel knows that your father is a fighter. They know that those who are with him are brave.
New Jerusalem Bible	And then even the valiant, the truly lion-hearted, will be demoralised; for all Israel knows that your father is a champion and that the men with him are valiant.
Revised English Bible	The courage of the most resolute and lion-hearted will melt away, for all Israel knows that your father is a man of war and has seasoned warriors with him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Then even the strongest, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will become like water; for all Israel is conscious that your father is a man of war, and those who are with him are strong and without fear.
The Expanded Bible	Then even the men who are ·as brave as lions [^L valiant, with the heart of a lion] will ·be frightened [^L melt/be paralyzed with fear], because all the Israelites know your father is a ·fighter [^L mighty warrior]. They know his men are brave!
Ferar-Fenton Bible	He himself is also a bold man, whose heart is like the heart of a lion. Then the power of Israel will melt, for it knows that your father is a hero, and how brave a man he is.
HCSB	Then, even a brave man with the heart of a lion will melt because all Israel knows that your father and the valiant men with him are warriors.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Then the most lion-hearted will be overcome with sudden fear; well all the people of Israel knows that thy father and the warriors that bear him company are men of mettle.
NET Bible®	If that happens even the bravest soldier - one who is lion-hearted - will virtually melt away. For all Israel knows that your father is a warrior and that those who are with him are brave.
NIV, ©2011	Then even the bravest soldier, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a fighter and that those with him are brave.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	...then even the strongest among them, someone whose courage is that of a lion, will completely collapse! For all Isra'el knows that your father is a powerful man, and those with him are powerful men.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and he who also is the son of valour whose heart is as the heart of a lion, in melting, he melts: for all Yisra El knows that your father is mighty and they with him are sons of valour.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And he also that is chayil (valiant), whose lev is as the lev ha'aryeh (heart of a lion), shall utterly melt; for kol Yisroel knoweth that Avicha is a Gibbor, and they that be with him are Bnei Chayil (valiant men).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Then even the valiant man, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will utterly melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man, and that those who are with him are valiant men.
Syndein/Thieme	Then even 'the bravest' . . . {idiom: literally: "he . . . son of courage"} whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will be paralyzed with fear. For all Israel knows that your father is a great soldier, and those with him are brave men."
Webster's Bible Translation	And he also [that is] valiant, whose heart [is] as the heart of a lion, will utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father [is] a mighty man, and [they] who [are] with him [are] valiant men.
Young's Updated LT	And he also, the son of valour, whose heart is as the heart of the lion, does utterly melt, for all Israel does know that your father is a hero, and sons of valour are those with him.

The gist of this verse: All Israel knows how tough David and his men are, and at the first report of casualties, their heart will melt.

2Samuel 17:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
chayil (חַיִל) [pronounced <i>CHAH-yil</i>]	<i>army, force; strength, courage, power, might; efficiency; and that which is gotten through strength—wealth, substance</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2428 BDB #298
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced <i>lay^bv</i>]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced <i>lay^bv</i>]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
'ăriy (אֲרִי) [pronounced <i>uh-REE</i>]	<i>lion</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #738 BDB #71

Translation: He also is a man [lit., son] of courage whose heart is like the heart of a lion. Hushai is now speaking of those brave supporters of Absalom. He is not discounting their courage, saying that they have hearts like lions. However, the tenacity of Absalom's father David must be taken into consideration, as well as that first report of their initial contact.

Now all of this is predicated on an initial bad report (bad for Absalom) and upon David's reputation as a great warrior.

2Samuel 17:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâçaç (מָצַח) [pronounced <i>maw-SAUCE</i>]	<i>to be dissolved, to be melted; figuratively to become faint, fearful, to despair; to sorrow, to grieve</i>	Niphal infinitive absolute	Strong's #4549 BDB #587
mâçaç (מָצַח) [pronounced <i>maw-SAUCE</i>]	<i>to be dissolved, to be melted; figuratively to become faint, fearful, to despair; to sorrow, to grieve</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #4549 BDB #587

Translation: ...—melting, it will melt [at hearing such a report]—... The idea is, even though Absalom has great soldiers who support him, when they hear this initial report that David has defeated and killed many of their soldiers, their hearts will melt, which suggests a lack of courage (Deut. 1:28 Joshua 2:9–11). They will become tremendously discouraged.

2Samuel 17:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yâda' (יָדָע) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>]	<i>knowing, knowing by experience [or practice]; skilled; seeing; recognizing, admitting, acknowledging</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹר) [pronounced <i>gib-BOAR</i>]	<i>strong man, mighty man, soldier, warrior, combatant, veteran</i>	masculine singular noun/adjective	Strong's #1368 BDB #150
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw^bv</i>]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...for all Israel knows that your father [is] a [great] warrior... All Israel refers to those who would go to war against David, that it is they who would melt, knowing what they are up against. They would hear this first report of their first clash, and if there are any losses on Absalom's side, the people will become afraid, because

of the report and because of David's reputation. They would no longer see David as a king in exile, a man on the run, but as a man who is as fearless and as dangerous as a lion.

There is some implication here that Ahithophel does not seem to really know who he is up against. Hushai has a better understanding of David's capabilities as a soldier. In fact, all Israel knows about how great David is as a man of war. When this is added to the initial negative report, the supporters of Absalom will begin to melt away.

2Samuel 17:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
chayil (חַיִל) [pronounced <i>CHAH-yil</i>]	<i>army, force; strength, courage, power, might; efficiency; and that which is gotten through strength—wealth, substance</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2428 BDB #298
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: ...along with the men [lit., sons] of courage who [are] with him. And not only is there David, with great courage, but there are all the men who are with him, who are also men of great courage. So, attacking with a force of 12,000 quickly may not be the right way to go.

There is something that I need to point out in general about what Hushai is doing—he is using a lot of various military jargon and he is explaining things in some detail. You may recall that Ahithophel's plan, although probably the best plan, was given all in one sentence. Hushai is giving an explanation of why Ahithophel's plan is no good, and then explaining his plan, and then explaining why his plan is the right plan. He will take 7 verses to do this, which is a third of this chapter. Ahithophel's plan was probably given in more detail; and Hushai's plan was probably given in more detail as well (than what we read here). However, Ahithophel's plan was given as the only plan before Absalom; Hushai's plan was given with the idea of supplanting Ahithophel's plan. Therefore, Hushai is going to give more details.

Keil and Delitzsch give this translation: *And even if he (the hearer, 2Sam. 17:9) be a brave man, who has a lion's heart (lion-like courage), he will be thrown into despair; for all Israel knows that your father is a hero, and brave men (are those) who are with him.*²⁸

Vv. 9–10 are fairly long verses, but they are closely related: Listen, he has [certainly] now been hidden in one of the pits or in some other [lit., a certain] place. And it has been when [there is] a falling upon them in the first [battle], that a messenger [lit., hearer] will hear and then announce, 'A slaughter has occurred among the people

²⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:10.

who follow Absalom.' He also is a man [lit., son] of courage whose heart is like the heart of a lion—melting, it will melt [at hearing such a report]—for all Israel knows that your father [is] a [great] warrior along with the men [lit., sons] of courage who [are] with him. Hushai is saying that David knows what is going on; even right now, he is probably in some pit or in some other hiding place. Furthermore, if there are any problems when the armies first clash, messengers will broadcast that Absalom's army is being slaughtered. This will cause the rest of the people to lose heart, because they know David's reputation as a great warrior.

The Message ties these previous two verses together quite well, taking some liberties with the text: *Even while we're talking, he's probably holed up in some cave or other. If he jumps your men from ambush, word will soon get back, 'A slaughter of Absalom's army!' Even if your men are valiant with hearts of lions, they'll fall apart at such news, for everyone in Israel knows the kind of fighting stuff your father's made of, and also the men with him. Hushai has painted a very bleak picture of what would happen if Ahithophel's plan goes awry. The concern is, if there are any casualties taken up front by Ahithophel's troops, then this will become news, and the people who support Absalom will become too discouraged, knowing how tough David and his men are. This could break the spirit of Absalom's supporters. "This is exactly why," Hushai maintains, "that Ahithophel's plan is lousy."*

Charles Smith sums it up in this way: *For David and his men, they are valiant men, you know how tough they are, and they are right now like a lion that has been robbed of her little cubs. They're like a lion that has been cornered; you attack them now, and they're going to be vicious. Their backs are against the wall, and they're going to be even more valiant than normal if you seek to attack them now. What's going to happen is that with their backs against the wall, they're going to be fighting like everything. And after they wipe out the first contingent, then news is going to spread through all of Israel that your unit that went out to capture David was wiped out, and all of Israel is going to be afraid, because they know how tough and how valiant David and his men are.*²⁹

For I advise assembling assemble all Israel, from Dan as far as Beersheba, and as the sand which [is] upon the sea to the multitude and your faces goes in the battle.

2Samuel
17:11

For I advise [that] all Israel be assembled, from Dan to Beersheba, a multitude like the sand which [is] by the sea, and [that] you [lit., your faces] go into battle.

For I advise you, King Absalom, that all Israel—from Dan to Beersheba—be assembled, so your army is as the sand by the sea, and that you go into battle with them.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	But this seems to me to be good counsel: Let all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Bersabee, as the sand of the sea which cannot be numbered: and you will be in the midst of them.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	For I advise assembling assemble all Israel, from Dan as far as Beersheba, and as the sand which [is] upon the sea to the multitude and your faces goes in the battle.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Therefore I counsel that when all Israel is gathered to you from Dan to Beer-sheba, then you yourself march in their midst.
Septuagint (Greek)	For thus I have surely given counsel, that all Israel be generally gathered to you from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is upon the seashore for multitude; and that your presence go in the midst of them.
Significant differences:	The Syriac leaves out the number of soldiers being land the sand upon the seashore.

²⁹ Smith, Chuck, *Through the Bible Commentary C2000 Series*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17 (edited; Chuck used about 4 gonna's).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So I would advise that all the Israelites, from Dan to Beer-sheba-a group as countless as sand on the seashore-be summoned to join you, and that you yourself go into battle.
Contemporary English V.	My advice is to gather all the fighting men of Israel from the town of Dan in the north down to the town of Beersheba in the south. You will have more soldiers than there are grains of sand on the seashore. Absalom, you should lead them yourself,...
Easy English	This is what I suggest. Gather all the *Israelites from the whole nation. They should even come from the area called Dan in the north, and from Beersheba in the south. You will have a huge army that is too big to count, like the bits of sand by the sea. You yourself should lead them into the battle.
Easy-to-Read Version	"This is what I suggest: You must gather all the Israelites together from Dan to Beersheba [This means all the people of Israel. Dan was the town farthest north, and Beersheba was in the south.]. Then there will be many people, like the sand by the sea. Then you yourself must go into the battle.
Good News Bible (TEV)	My advice is that you bring all the Israelites together from one end of the country to the other, as many as the grains of sand on the seashore, and that you lead them personally in battle.
<i>The Message</i>	"Here's what I'd advise: Muster the whole country, from Dan to Beersheba, an army like the sand of the sea, and you personally lead them.
New Century Version	"This is what I suggest: Gather all the Israelites from Dan to Beersheba [Dan was the city farthest north in Israel, and Beersheba was the city farthest south. So this means all the people of Israel.]. There will be as many people as grains of sand by the sea. Then you yourself must go into the battle.
New Life Bible	But I say that all Israel should be gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as much as the sand by the sea. And you yourself should go into battle.
New Living Translation	"I recommend that you mobilize the entire army of Israel, bringing them from as far away as Dan in the north and Beersheba in the south. That way you will have an army as numerous as the sand on the seashore. And I advise that you personally lead the troops.
The Voice	No, my counsel is to <i>take your time</i> . Gather the people of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, <i>so that you have a large army</i> , like the grains of sand on the beach, and lead them into battle yourself.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, this is what I advise: Gather all [the men of] IsraEl from Dan to BeerSheba, [and create an army] as large as the sands of the sea. and you should lead them.
Christian Community Bible	My advice is for you to gather all the Israelites from Dan to Beersheba, as many as the sands of the sea, and go to battle in person.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	So my advice is to gather all Israel's troops from Dan to Beersheba, since they are as numerous as the sand on the seashore. Lead them into battle yourself.
New American Bible	"This is what I counsel: Let all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba, who are as numerous as the sands by the sea, be called up for combat; and go with them yourself.
New American Bible (R.E.)	This is what I counsel: Let all Israel be assembled, from Dan to Beer-sheba, as numerous as the sands by the sea, and you yourself go with them.
NIRV	"So here's what I suggest. Bring together all of the men of Israel from the town of Dan all the way to Beersheba. They are as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. You yourself should lead them into battle.
New Jerusalem Bible	For my part, I offer this advice: Summon all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, to rally to you, as numerous as the sand on the seashore, and you take the field in person with them.

Revised English Bible 'Here is my advice. Wait until the whole of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, is gathered about you, countless as grains off sand on the seashore, and then march to battle with them in person.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English But my suggestion is that all Israel, from Dan as far as Beer-sheba, comes together to you, a great army like the sands of the sea in number; and that you yourself go out among them.

The Expanded Bible "This is what I suggest [advise; counsel]: Gather all the Israelites from Dan to Beersheba [^Cin the far north and south of Israel]. There will be as many people as grains of sand by the sea. Then you yourself must go [personally lead them] into the battle.

Ferar-Fenton Bible Consequently I advise you to collect to yourself the army of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, like the sand that is by the sea for number, and let them march before you in a mass,...

HCSB Instead, I advise that all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba--as numerous as the sand by the sea--be gathered to you and that you personally go into battle.

New Advent (Knox) Bible No, here is a plan more to my liking, that thou shouldst summon all Israel, from Dan to Bersabee, an army countless as the sand, and thyself march out with it.

NET Bible® My advice therefore is this: Let all Israel from Dan to Beer Sheba - in number like the sand by the sea! - be mustered to you, and you lead them personally into battle.

NIV – UK `So I advise you: let all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba - as numerous as the sand on the seashore - be gathered to you, with you yourself leading them into battle.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Rather, I advise that you summon all Isra'el to come to you, from Dan to Be'er-Sheva, numbering as many as sand grains on the seashore; and then you go to battle, yourself.

exeGesés companion Bible So I counsel, that in gathering,
all Yisra El gathers to you
- from Dan even to Beer Sheba,
as the sand by the sea for abundance;
and that you go to war by yourself:...

Hebrew Names Version But I counsel that all Yisra'el be gathered together to you, from Dan even to Be'er-Sheva, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that you go to battle in your own person.

Orthodox Jewish Bible Therefore, I counsel that kol Yisroel be fully gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-Sheva, as the chol (sand) that is by the yam for multitude; and that thou thyself go into battle in person.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version `So that I have counseled: Let all Israel be diligently gathered unto you, from Dan even unto Beer-Sheba, as the sand that [is] by the sea for multitude, and you yourself are going in the midst;"...

Context Group Version But I counsel that all Israel be gathered together to you, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that you go to battle in your own face.

Updated Darby Translation But I counsel that all Israel be speedily gathered to you, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that you go to battle in your own person.

Green's Literal Translation	So I counsel <i>this</i> : Gathering, let all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that <i>is</i> by the sea for multitude. And you in person shall go into battle.
NASB	But I counsel that all Israel be surely gathered to you, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea in abundance, and that you personally go [Lit your face go] into battle.
New King James Version	Therefore I advise that all Israel be fully gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, like the sand that is by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 11-13: Trump card- Appeal to Absalom's Arrogance} "But, I advise you to completely mobilize first all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba, under your own command . . . an army as numerous as the sand of the seashore . . . personally lead by you. {idiom: literally: 'your person in the midst'} {Note: Hushai is suggesting Ahithophel is going to lead the army first against David and then back against him. So suggesting he lead the troops will also appeal to the vanity of Absalom.}
World English Bible	But I counsel that all Israel be gathered together to you, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that you go to battle in your own person.
Young's Updated LT	So that I have counseled: Let all Israel be diligently gathered unto you, from Dan even unto Beer-Sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude, and you yourself are going in the midst.

The gist of this verse: Hushai says that Absalom needs to gather up all Israel to go into battle—gather everyone, from Dan to Beersheba, and that Absalom lead them into battle.

In studying Absalom's expression, Hushai recognized that he had talked down Ahithophel's plan enough to move on to his own. Now, Hushai is David's mole, and in clandestine warfare, a man must have a dual set of values. Hushai will offer up a plan to Absalom which will sound good, but will result in his defeat. Hushai never stops for a moment to tell Absalom the truth. He never says, "Well, I am suggesting this plan because I don't think it will work and because I work for your father." There is no honesty here—Hushai is lying to Absalom about the best way to go, and this will not be the only lie in this chapter.

2Samuel 17:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yâ'ats (יָאָט) [pronounced <i>yaw-GAHTS</i>]	<i>to advise, to counsel; to take counsel; to decree; to consult for [anyone], to provide for; to predict, to declare future thing</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3289 BDB #419
'âçaph (אָפַח) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i>]	<i>to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather</i>	Niphal infinitive absolute	Strong's #622 BDB #62
'âçaph (אָפַח) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i>]	<i>to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 17:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis ^e rā'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: For I advise [that] all Israel be assembled,... There are problems here. It will take a very long time to organize all of Israel. Half of Israel does not support Absalom. Half of Israel will not want to go after David. In fact, there will be considerable numbers of people who are not going to join in wholeheartedly. However, Absalom does not really consider this. He is a fan of himself; and he believes his own propaganda. So, this all sounds great to him. Assemble all Israel? No problem.

There are several things which are accomplished by a huge army led by Absalom which actually favor David. The larger the army it is, the more unwieldy and disorganized it is. Furthermore, Absalom would be in charge, and this is a huge force to guide—this is way outside of his wheelhouse. The smaller and better trained a strike force is, the easier it is to lead them into battle and to accomplish their objective. Secondly, this will gather in one place those who support Absalom over David. If David has a good day on the battlefield, then many of his indigenous enemies will be destroyed in this battle. Thirdly—if even one section of this army becomes afraid and begins to run, this will set off a chain reaction. A well-trained soldier—such as is found in Ahithophel's 12,000 man strike force—is more like to focus on accomplishing the objective, despite the setbacks. Less professional soldiers—the large numbers that Hushai suggest be gathered—if they see their comrades run, are likely to do the same. So, this is actually brilliant on Hushai's part.

2Samuel 17:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Dân (דָּן) [pronounced <i>dawn</i>]	<i>judge and is transliterated Dan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1835 BDB #192
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Together, min...wa 'ad (וְעַד ... מִן) mean <i>from...to</i> or <i>both...and</i> ; as in <i>from soup to nuts</i> or <i>both young and old</i> .			
B ^e êr Shâbā' (בְּעֵר שֶׁבַע) [pronounced <i>b^eayr SHAW^B-vahg</i>]	<i>well of the oath [seven] and is transliterated Beersheba, Beer-sheba</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #884 BDB #92

Translation: ...from Dan to Beersheba,... Dan is in the far north and Beersheba is in southern Judah. This was a common saying meaning simply to gather all Israel (2Sam. 24:2 Judges 20:1).

2Samuel 17:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
chôwl (חול) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sand</i>	masculine singular noun, used as a collective noun; with the definite article	Strong's #2344 BDB #297
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
yâm (יָם) [pronounced <i>yawm</i>]	<i>sea, lake, river, seaward, west, westward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3220 BDB #410
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
rôb (רַב) [pronounced <i>roh^bv</i>]	<i>multitude, abundance, greatness</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7230 BDB #913

In 1Chron. 4:38, Gesenius suggests that *pârats* is the infinitive of its verbal cognate, which, considering the *lâmed* prefix, makes sense. We have the same construction here. The verb means *to become much, to be many, to increase*. Here (1Chron. 4:38 12:40), we might render this, *to increase, to become great in number*; or let me suggest *to an abundance; in great abundance*. In 1Chron. 12:40, ESV, HCSB and NRSV moved this further back into the verse and rendered it *abundant provisions of* (in combination with a previous noun); so did *The Amplified Bible* rendering it *abundant supplies of*; *God's Word™* also moved it further back in the verse, rendering it *plenty of*; so did the NASB (*great quantities of*) and NAB (*in great quantity of*). Others have rendered this as follows: *abundantly* (MKJV, NKJV); *in abundance* (HNV, Rotherham, Tanakh, WEB); *abundant* (Owen); *to great plenty* (LTHB).

Translation: ...a multitude like the sand which [is] by the sea,... Absalom would be gathering up a multitude of supporters like the sand of the sea. For a man who does not know much about the military, more seems better. Why have 12,000 men when you might gather up 50,000 or 100,000 or more? Absalom is certainly going to favor a large army over a small one.

You may think, "Well, this will take months in order for Absalom to raise such an army." Not so. Remember, Absalom has men scattered in every city—those who shouted out and proclaimed that Absalom is king in Hebron. Then he apparently has 12,000 men at least at his immediate disposal (this would be by Ahithophel's estimation), so he can dispatch 1000 men to each territory, and bring that army across the Jordan in a week. The only estimation which is wrong is what we read above—we do not know how many will respond to his call and we do not know how enthusiastic they will be.

2Samuel 17:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence; person; surface</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular) with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
When found by itself, pânîym, without a preposition preceding it and with a personal possessive pronoun, can be used for doing or saying something to someone, in front of someone or in their presence.			
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>those walking, those going, those who are departing; walkers, travelers</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qerâb (קָרַב) [pronounced <i>ker-AW^BV</i>]	<i>battle, war, hostile approach</i>	masculine singular noun; with the definite article	Strong's #7128 BDB #898

Translation: ...and [that] you [lit., *your faces*] go into battle. Furthermore, it only makes sense that Absalom go into battle with all of these supporters. Whereas Ahithophel reasonably figured that he would better be the man to lead the revolutionary soldiers to victory, Absalom is sold on the idea of being them himself, of giving the order to kill his father and perhaps even killing his own father. This is arrogance. Absalom believes that he can do it all. He ran out his father of town, and now he thinks he can, leading a great army, finish the job.

The entire verse reads: For I advise [that] all Israel be assembled, from Dan to Beersheba, a multitude like the sand which [is] by the sea, and [that] you [lit., *your faces*] go into battle. Less literally, For I advise you, King Absalom, that all Israel—from Dan to Beersheba—be assembled, so your army is as the sand by the sea, and that you go into battle with them. Absalom has not been to war before, nor has he killed anyone (he had his servants kill Amon, his half-brother). Therefore, one might assume that suggesting that he go to war might be something which he is not really willing to do. However, Absalom was more than willing to be there to watch his half-brother get slaughtered, so he was not opposed to bloodshed. When this advice is given, he has brutally raped some or all of David's mistresses, so his heart is hardened to pleas for mercy.

When Absalom goes into battle, he is the king, and he is mostly surrounded by troops. He has a general running the show (Amasa, as we will see), along with at least one advisor and many elders there to support him. So, although he might be in the midst of the battle with slaughter occurring all around him, he is essentially in a buffer zone. Quite obviously, he is not as isolated as those who operate today's drones, he is not really doing anything by way of battle—although he will certainly issue some orders here and there.

In fact, let me suggest to you that Absalom has a very romanticized view of war—not that he does not expect a lot of blood and suffering—but he does not see himself as seriously in danger, given the picture that Hushai has painted here. He will be going with all Israel into battle, with an army as numerous as the sand of the sea. Absalom cannot see how this can fail.

Let me also suggest that Absalom is arrogant and does not recognize his own shortcomings. He is attractive, personable and brilliant—like some movie stars—but this does not mean that he can do anything. However, he thinks that he can. Going to war against his father is something that Absalom believes he can do, even though he has absolutely no military experience. This is why he believes that, surrounded by a numerically superior army, that he can defeat his father. His view of war is simplistic. He sees it as a numbers game, and he is so full of himself, that no one is going to convince him any differently. If you questioned him, he might respond, “Look, I’m king, dammit, and who are you?”

Another way of putting this is, Absalom thinks he knows what he does not really know.

Application: We saw this many times in the Obama campaign. He made a number of **foolish statements** which were not gaffes, but things which he thought he knew which he did not.

In Hushai’s plan, Absalom will be seen as the king leading his army into battle. He is surrounded by a huge number of troops, so he is safe, but he is right there in the midst of the battle. That is a big plus for Absalom. He can give the order to kill his own father. If Absalom has hardened himself in raping these mistresses of his father, then how much more will he desire to see his father killed before his very eyes? If you have studied Absalom from the beginning, you can see what a change has occurred in him over the years, where he has gone from being a sympathetic and tender brother to his sister Tamar to now being an egomaniac without restraint.

I don’t believe that Hushai did anything to poison Absalom against Ahithophel personally. If anything, Absalom himself was concerned about Ahithophel’s role in the revolution as being too front a center for an advisor, but Hushai does not say or imply this; and his criticism is only of Ahithophel’s plan, and that it is **not good at this time**. He is not overly deferential to Ahithophel, nor does he slander his character in any way. Hushai’s plan has to be what captures Absalom’s imagination, and Hushai does this by appealing to Absalom’s arrogance. Absalom thinks he can do anything; so Hushai implies that his faith in Absalom is almost equal to that of Absalom himself.

Hushai’s advice to Absalom: “**For I advise you, King Absalom, that all Israel—from Dan to Beersheba—be assembled, so your army is as the sand by the sea, and that you go into battle with them.**” This advice is aimed directly at Absalom. It is certainly not the best advice, but it is designed to appeal to Absalom in particular.

Keil and Delitzsch point out some of the intentional flaws found in Hushai’s plan: *All that Hushai had said about the bravery and heroism of David and his followers, was well founded. The deception lay in the assumption that all the people from Dan to Beersheba would crowd around Absalom as one man; whereas it might easily be foreseen, that after the first excitement of the revolution was over, and great calmness ensued, a large part of the nation and army would gather round David. But such a possibility as this never entered the minds of Absalom and his supporters.*³⁰

The Pulpit commentary sums up Ahithophel’s counsel: *Hushai gives his advice with much Oriental exaggeration, such as ought to have put Absalom on his guard. His main points are that David was too practiced a soldier to let himself be surprised. In his adventures with Saul he and his men had been trained to hold large bodies of pursuers at bay, and evade them. The men, too, who were with him were warriors of desperate valour, whose first thought would be the king’s personal safety, and to ensure this they would conceal him in some pit, some cave or ravine, safe and inaccessible by nature; or in some place (omit the inserted word “other”), that is, in some camping place, made strong with ramparts, so as to resist the first attack. “To strike the king only” is, therefore, an impossibility; and if the attack fail, and David’s mighty men, in their irritation, slaughter a large number of their assailants, and a panic be the result, men will hesitate before they attack such redoubtable champions a second time. A check is fatal to a rebellion, and Absalom, was staking his chance on one hasty encounter. Better leave the decision to all Israel. Their hearts were with Absalom, and, when there has been time for them to gather in their thousands, success is certain. Their numbers will be countless as the sands on the shore, or as the dew upon the grass; while David and his heroes will shrink to so*

³⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:14.

small a body as to be scarcely able to man the walls of one small city. And fighting there will be none; for the myriads of Israel will drag city and fugitives with ropes down into the nearest torrent bed, where the next floods will wash all away. There was more in this than an appeal to Absalom's vanity. If all Israel did take his side, then David's cause would soon be hopeless, and there would be no need of parricide. David's death would be the act of Israel, and not of Absalom. Evidently Absalom believed that all Israel was on his side, and his success hitherto had been so rapid as almost to justify the assumption. To us this success is almost unaccountable, but it suggests that there were great faults in David's administration. Yet even so we wonder at the existence of such general dissatisfaction.³¹

We may think, "I would be quite nervous about going to war against King David and Joab, men who are geniuses in this area." Absalom was not.

Why Absalom was willing to go to war against David and Joab

1. As you read through this, you may have been thinking, "Why not let Ahithophel go to war against David; that would be safer than going to war against King David and General Joab."
2. However, this is not Absalom's mindset. Absalom has been successful so far, and he has pulled off a revolution against David that, 4 years ago, would have seemed impossible. So Absalom has an inflated opinion of himself.
3. Absalom is a young man. Although we do not know his exact age, he was probably in his 20's. Many men, in their 20's, are much more willing to face danger and to take chances. For men with a certain temperament, they are prone toward taking chances more than the average person anyway, which is probably Absalom.
4. Absalom wants a starring role in his revolution; he does not want to appear as though Ahithophel is running the show.
5. Absalom has an unrealistic view of warfare, as he has never been in the middle of a battle, insofar as we know.
6. Absalom, because of his own arrogance, does not recognize that David and Joab are far smarter than he is in conventional warfare. Some people believe that they are experts in many fields. We see this with actors all of the time; they are great in their profession, much admired, and often very rich. This causes some of them to have an inflated view of themselves, thinking themselves to be brilliant in areas of politics, religion and humanism. This is Absalom; he has a very inflated view of himself, as he is the celebrity of his era.
7. Absalom does not have a realistic view of warfare, of the competence of his father in warfare, and therefore, he does not fear for his own life as he ought to. In fact, part of this is due to the fact that he knows his father is sentimental towards him, so that, if push came to shove, he could kill his own father much more easily than his father could kill him (which is probably true in nearly all father-son relationships of animus). However, the person that Absalom will misjudge in this regard is Joab. All of this information will come out in the next chapter.

In fact, David and Joab are so smart that their own man, Hushai, is right now giving Absalom advice on what to do, and Absalom does not even have a clue.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Throughout Hushai's speech, he paints a clear picture of how everything will go down—particularly in this verse.

³¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:7 (slightly edited).

And we have come unto him in one the place that he is found there. And we [come] upon him as which falls the dew upon the ground, and he does not remain in him; and all the men who [are] with him, moreover one.

2Samuel
17:12

And we will come upon him in the one place where he is to be found; and we will [be] upon him as the dew that falls upon the ground, so that none remains of him; nor of all the men who are with him, not even one.

We will come upon him in the one place where he can be found, and we will be upon him like the dew falling upon the ground, so that there is no one that remains of him—nor of all the men who are with him—not even one.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And we shall come upon him in what place soever he shall be found: and we shall cover him, as the dew falleth upon the ground, and we shall not leave of the men that are with him, not so much as one.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And we have come unto him in one the place that he is found there. And we [come] upon him as which falls the dew upon the ground, and he does not remain in him; and all the men who [are] with him, moreover one.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So we shall go against him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and of all the men who are with him there shall not be left even one.
Septuagint (Greek)	And we will come upon him in one of the places where we shall find him, and we will encamp against him, as the dew falls upon the earth; and we will not leave of him and of his men so much as one.

Significant differences: No serious differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	When we attack him wherever he might be, we will fall on him like dew that falls on the ground. No one will survive—not him and not one of the soldiers who are with him!
Contemporary English V.	...and we will all go to fight David wherever he is. We will fall on him just as dew falls and covers the ground. He and all his soldiers will die!
Easy English	We will go and find David. Then we will attack him. We can descend on him like rain that falls on the ground. We will kill him and all his men.
Easy-to-Read Version	We will catch David in the place where he is hiding. We will attack David with many soldiers—We will be like the many drops of dew that cover the ground. We will kill David and all of his men. No man will be left alive.
Good News Bible (TEV)	We will find David wherever he is, and attack him before he knows what's happening. Neither he nor any of his men will survive.
<i>The Message</i>	We'll smoke him out wherever he is, fall on him like dew falls on the earth, and, believe me, there won't be a single survivor.
New Berkeley Version	Then if we come upon him in one of the places where he may be found, we will spread over him like the dew falling on the ground; and there will be left of him and of all the men with him not a one!
New Life Bible	So we will find David wherever he is. We will fall on him like water falls on the ground in the early morning. And not he or any of the men with him will be left.
The Voice	Wherever David is, we will fall on him like the dew on the ground. We'll kill him and all who defend him. No one will remain.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And when you catch up with him - no matter where he may be - you must camp around him. Then, [attack him] just as the dew is settling on the ground, and don't leave him or any of his men alive.
New American Bible (R.E.)	We can then attack him wherever we find him, settling down upon him as dew alights on the ground. None shall survive-neither he nor any of his followers.
NIRV	"Then we'll attack David no matter where we find him. As dew completely covers the ground, we'll completely overpower his entire army. We won't leave him or any of his men alive.
New Jerusalem Bible	We shall reach him wherever he is to be found; we shall fall on him as the dew falls on the ground, and not leave him or any one of the men with him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	We will come to him as one in the places we find him as the dew falls over the earth, and preserve none of his and also any one of the men with him.
Bible in Basic English	Then we will come on him in some place, wherever he may be, falling on him as the dew comes on the earth: and of him and all the men who are with him not one will get away with his life.
The Expanded Bible	We will go to [attack; come at] David wherever he is hiding. We will fall on him as dew falls on the ground. We will kill him and all of his men so that no one [Neither he nor any of his men] will be left alive.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and come upon him secretly at the place where he may be found, and assail him, like rain falling on the ground, so that he cannot escape, or any one of the men who are with him.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Hide he where he may, we will find him, and we will be all about him, covering the earth like dew; never a man of his company shall escape us.
NET Bible®	We will come against him wherever he happens to be found. We will descend on him like the dew falls on the ground. Neither he nor any of the men who are with him will be spared alive - not one of them!
NIV – UK	Then we will attack him wherever he may be found, and we will fall on him as dew settles on the ground. Neither he nor any of his men will be left alive.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	In this way we'll come upon him wherever he is, and we'll fall on him as the dew falls on the ground; of him and all the men with him we won't leave even one alive.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and we come upon him in one of the places where we find him; and we light on him as the dew falls on the soil: and of him and of all the men with him not even one remains:...
Hebrew Names Version	So shall we come on him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light on him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and of all the men who are with him we will not leave so much as one.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	So shall we come upon him in some makom where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the tal (dew) falleth on the adamah; and of him and of kol ha'anashim that are with him there shall not be left so much as one.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	So shall we come upon [David] some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew settles [unseen and unheard] on the ground; and of him and of all the men with him there shall not be left so much as one.
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Concordant Literal Version	...and we have come in unto him in one of the places where he is found, and we [are] upon him as the dew falls on the ground, and there has not been left of him and of all the men who [are] with him even one.
Syndein/Thieme	Then we will attack him in one of those places where ever he may be found and we will fall upon him like the dew falls on the ground. {Note: Absalom does not have the military experience of his father. 'Wherever he may be found' is a key. A professional military man would have sent out reconnaissance men and know where David was! Hushai's advice appeals to Absalom's arrogant nature.
World English Bible	So shall we come on him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light on him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and of all the men who are with him we will not leave so much as one.
Young's Updated LT	And we have come in unto him in one of the places where he is found, and we are upon him as the dew falls on the ground, and there has not been left of him and of all the men who are with him even one.

The gist of this verse: When the huge army of Israel comes upon David and his army, they will be all over them like dew on the ground, and they will be completely destroyed.

I should prepare you that there are some difficult portions of this verse to translate conventionally, although my translation appears to be the gist of what is being said. Any misgivings or assumptions which I make in the translation will be noted in the greyed tables below.

2Samuel 17:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôw' (באוּ) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'echâd (אחד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective; construct form	Strong's #259 BDB #25
'Echâd can function like an indefinite article, and be rendered <i>a certain [person, place or thing]</i> . 'Echâd can be used elliptically to mean <i>one time, once</i> .			
mâqôwm (מקומו) [pronounced <i>maw-KOHM</i>]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #4725 BDB #879

2Samuel 17:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to acquire, to be found, to be detected, to be discovered, to be present, to exist</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

The combination ʾăsher + shâm, whether together or not, means *where, in what place, to what place*.

Translation: *And we will come upon him in the one place where he is to be found;...* Recall that Hushai has painted a picture of David not being with his men, but hiding out here or there. Hushai assures Absalom that they will come upon David where he is to be found. Hushai is not specific, at this point, whether they will come upon David in battle or in that secret place where he stays separate from the rest of his men. However, he has Absalom drawn into these battle plans, so Absalom's imagination has taken over for Absalom. Hushai is painting a picture, and Absalom is drawn in and seeing this picture.

What Hushai is suggesting is a huge army, so, quite obviously, this huge army is going to be able to find David. Hushai does not remind Absalom of the many years when Saul led his great army against David, and yet could never capture him (something that I believe Absalom is not even aware of).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. makes an excellent point here.³² No one is doing surveillance; no one is sending out scouts. *Wherever David may be found* indicates that they do not know where he is. This is not how an army should operate. There should be men out there right now in the field, looking for David. Ahithophel has not suggested reconnaissance because he advised a small, immediate strike force. However, Hushai has not proposed reconnaissance because that would give his suggestion a greater chance of success.

2Samuel 17:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾănôkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ǵahʃ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

³² From http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_17.html accessed April 12, 2013.

2Samuel 17:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ka'ăsher (כֹּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as</i> . Back in 1Sam. 12:8, I rendered this <i>for example</i> .			
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply; to desert</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
ṭal (טַל) [pronounced tahl]	<i>night mist, mist, dew</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2919 BDB #378
'al (עַל) [pronounced ġah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
'ădâmâh (אֲדָמָה) [pronounced uh-daw-MAWH]	<i>ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #127 BDB #9

Translation: ...and we will [be] upon him as the dew that falls upon the ground,... Again, Hushai is painting a picture, and it can be seen in two ways. One, Hushai's army of all Israel falls upon David's army, as the dew falls upon the ground—this indicates that there are more than enough troops to cover all of David's army. I think that this is the way this is intended to be understood, even with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix.

Dew, as the Amplified Bible says, is *unseen and unheard*. Furthermore, it covers everything. Hushai is suggesting a huge army which will engulf David's forces.

Barnes speaks³³ of the dew as being the irresistible and unavoidable descent of Absalom upon his enemies (that is how Absalom would picture it).

Gill says³⁴ that the dew will cover all the ground where it falls; and this picture that Hushai paints both expresses their numbers and the irresistible force they should come upon David with, in a manner that is sudden and undetected.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say that the dew falling upon the ground evokes a graphic image of *a sudden onset of an enemy...[which is a] silent, irresistible, and rapid descent of this natural moisture on every field and blade of grass.*³⁵ So would be Absalom's army falling upon David.

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge remarks: *This is a very beautiful and expressive figure. The dew in Palestine, and other warm climates, falls fast, sudden, and heavy; and it falls upon every spot of*

³³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:12.

³⁴ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:12. I took many liberties with Gill's text.

³⁵ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 17:12.

earth, so that not a blade of grass escapes it. It is therefore no inapt emblem of a numerous and active army; and it was, perhaps, for this reason that the Romans called their light armed forces *rorarii*.³⁶ Gill helps us with that final word: *The Romans had a sort of soldiers, called from the dew "rorarii", who carried light armour, and fought first in the battle, from whence they had their name, because dew falls before it rains.*³⁷ As an aside, this is *not* the word found in the Latin right here, but it is the word for *wet, dewy*; from the word **rorarius, a, um**.

However, this can be seen as closing in on David—finding him and being upon him, where he has no where to turn. After all, when the dew is upon the ground, which way to you go with that?

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown provide a good summary of what Hushai has to say: *[Ahithophel's plan was rejected] by the address of Hushai, who saw the imminent danger to which it would expose the king and the royal cause. He dwelt upon the warlike character and military experience of the old king--represented him and his adherents as mighty men, who would fight with desperation; and who, most probably, secure in some stronghold, would be beyond reach, while the smallest loss of Absalom's men at the outset might be fatal to the success of the conspiracy. But his dexterity was chiefly displayed in that part of his counsel which recommended a general levy throughout the country; and that Absalom should take command of it in person--thereby flattering at once the pride and ambition of the usurper. The bait was caught by the vainglorious and wicked prince.*³⁸

Here is the first half of v. 12: **And we will come upon him in the one place where he is to be found; and we will [be] upon him as the dew that falls upon the ground,...** Doesn't that sound reassuring? Hushai sounds like he is going to be right there with Absalom, but he won't be. Remember Hushai would have slowed David up, so goodness knows that he would slow Absalom down. We never get to the point where it is clear that Hushai is not going along with Absalom into battle. It sounds very much like he and Absalom will be war buddies, fighting together, side-by-side, or back-to-back. But that is not how it is going to really play out.

Will Hushai just not show up? Or will he show up, and be slow as can be on a mount? Will Absalom tell him to stay behind? Will Absalom, before they go into battle, recognize Hushai's infirmity and tell him to stay behind? After all, that would mean more glory for Absalom. These details we are not privy to, but Hushai's name will not show up in 2Sam. 18, where Absalom goes into battle against his father David.

It is just as possible that Hushai uses the *editorial we* here, which, in this case, means *Absalom and his great army*. However, I believe that Hushai uses this to reassure Absalom. He will be right there with him (even though he won't be). There will come a time when this picture that Hushai is painting will clearly not jive with reality, and Hushai will not be going into war with Absalom (however, the Bible does not deal directly with this portion of the revolution narrative). On the other hand, the Bible will certainly have Absalom going to war against his father, and that will be a rude awakening for Absalom and his over-estimation of his own abilities.

2Samuel 17:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

³⁶ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 17:12.

³⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:12.

³⁸ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 17:1–14.

2Samuel 17:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lō' (לו' or לול) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâthar (יָתַר) [pronounced yaw-THAHR]	<i>to be left over, to be left behind, to remain; to excel, to be superior [to the rest]; to gain a victory</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #3498 BDB #451
Literally, this reads, <i>and he does not remain, and he is not left over</i> . With the word below, this appears to have the sense of, <i>and not one remains among him, and no one remains among him</i> . However, I should point out, I could not find justification for this in Gesenius.			
bē (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; among, in the midst of; at, by, near, on, before, in the presence of, upon; with; to, unto, upon, up to; in respect to, on account of; by means of, about, concerning</i>	primarily a preposition of proximity; however, it has a multitude of functions; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
However, BDB allows for the verb and the bēyth preposition to be translated <i>to be left of</i> . ³⁹			

Translation: ...so that none remains of him;... Here, you may want to refer back to the tables, as I have taken some liberties with the translation here. A different negation would allow for the way I have translated this verse. However, it seems legitimate to me to understand that, which this huge army that Hushai speaks of, that they would destroy all of those who are with David. This would give Absalom complete power without a backlash from the people.

2Samuel 17:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wē (or vē) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾānāshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced uh-NAW-sheem]; also spelled ʾīyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced ee-SHEEM]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

³⁹ The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 451.

2Samuel 17:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

I am thinking that the gist of gam and lô³ together (even though they are separated in this verse) is *neither, not even*. The idea, of course, is that Jesse is causing another son to pass before Samuel, and Samuel indicates that he is *not* the right person *also* (or, *either*). This did not come out of a lexicon, but it seemed to make sense in 1Sam. 16:8.

Gam has five primary usages. ❶ It is used to denote *in addition to* or a continuation of or an adding to a previous thought or point. It is often rendered *also*. ❷ Gam can be used as an intensifier (*even*) and is sometimes used this way with a negative. ❸ Gam can be used to make a sentence emphatic (*yea, indeed, truly*) or it can simply be used to give considerable emphasis to the next word. ❹ It can be rendered *even if* when followed by an imperfect verb. ❺ Finally, it can be rendered as an adverb—*however, but*—but usually followed by a negative particle.

ʿEchâd can function like an indefinite article, and be rendered *a certain [person, place or thing]*. ʿEchâd can be used elliptically to mean *one time, once*.

In this case—and I cannot back this up with a reference—this seems to mean *and not even one [remains]*. Interestingly enough, there is another negative particle which could have been used where most of these meanings I have applied here would have been apropos.

Translation: ...nor of all the men who are with him, not even one. Again, I have taken some liberties, both with inserting the negative in this portion of the verse (actually, carrying it over into this portion of the verse). Again, this is not completely clear—is Hushai talking about David's entire army or just the bodyguard stationed with him? Hushai may know the actual configuration of David's army, because he was there and spoke to David. However, Absalom simply hears this as someone who does not know who exactly is with David. The picture that Absalom envisions is the key here. He listens to Hushai's words, he paints a picture in his own mind of what Hushai describes, and this is what sells him. He sees David and all of his supporters, and Hushai promises that all of them will be killed.

The complete verse reads: *And we will come upon him in the one place where he is to be found; and we will [be] upon him as the dew that falls upon the ground, so that none remains of him; nor of all the men who are with him, not even one*. One of the things that appeals to Absalom here is, all of those who oppose him will be destroyed in this battle. Absalom does not like an opposition. He thinks about killing only David, as Ahithophel has suggested, and compares that to killing David and his bodyguards and those who went with him, and he likes the latter approach better. It is more thorough. No one survives. His popular opposition vanishes.

And if unto the city he gathers [himself], and has brought all Israel unto the city the that topes and we have dragged him as far as the valley as far as which is not found there also a pebble.”

2Samuel
17:13

And if he gathers [himself] to a city, then all Israel will bring ropes into that city and we will drag it down into [lit., *as far as*] the valley until not even a pebble is found.”

If David withdraws to a city, then all of Israel will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it away stone by stone down to the river valley until not even a pebble remains.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And if he shall enter into any city, all Israel shall <u>cast</u> ropes <u>round about</u> that city, and we will draw it into the river, so that there shall not be found so much as one small stone thereof.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And if unto the city he gathers [himself], and has brought all Israel unto the city the that topes and we have dragged him as far as the valley as far as which is not found there also a pebble.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	Moreover, if he should enter into a city, then all Israel shall <u>cast</u> ropes on it, and we will drag it into the valley, and they shall leave there not even a cricket.
Septuagint (Greek)	And if he shall have <u>taken refuge with his army</u> in a city, then shall all Israel take ropes to that city, and we will draw it even into the river, that there may not be left there even a stone.
Significant differences:	The Greek seems to go one step further than the Hebrew in the first phrase, but this is certainly the sense of the first sentence.

In the second sentence, the English translation from the Latin has *cast* and *round about* instead of what the Hebrew has. The English translation from the Syriac also has *cast*. The words *valley* and *river* are essentially the same in the Hebrew (see the Hebrew exegesis below).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	If he retreats into a city, all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it into a valley until not even a pebble of it will be found.”
Contemporary English V.	If they go into a walled town, we will put ropes around that town and drag it into the river. We won't leave even one small piece of a stone.
Easy English	If he escapes to a city, then all the *Israelites will bring ropes (very thick strings) to that city. And we can pull the city down into the valley. Not one stone will remain.’
Easy-to-Read Version	But if David escapes into a city, then all the Israelites will bring ropes to that city. We will pull down the walls of that city. We will pull them down into the valley. There won't be even a small stone left {in that city}.”
Good News Bible (TEV)	If he retreats into a city, our people will all bring ropes and just pull the city into the valley below. Not a single stone will be left there on top of the hill.”
<i>The Message</i>	If he hides out in a city, then the whole army will bring ropes to that city and pull it down and into a gully--not so much as a pebble left of it!”
New Living Translation	And if David were to escape into some town, you will have all Israel there at your command. Then we can take ropes and drag the walls of the town into the nearest valley until every stone is torn down.”
The Voice	And if he slips into a <i>fortified</i> city, we'll have so many men of Israel that we could lasso that city and pull it down into the valley, so that not even a stone would be left in place.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Or if you should find him in a city, you must bring all Israel against that city, tear it down, and throw each of its stones into a riverbed.'
New American Bible (R.E.)	And if he retires into a city, all Israel shall bring ropes to that city and we can drag it into the gorge, so that not even a pebble of it can be found."
NIRV	He might try to get away by going into a city. If he does, all of us will bring ropes to that city. We'll drag the whole city down into the valley. No one will be able to find even a piece of that city."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	If he gathers into a city, all in Israel will lift ropes to that city and drag it unto the riverbed, until no bundle is found there."
Bible in Basic English	And if he has gone into some town, then let all Israel take strong cords to that town, and we will have it pulled into the valley, till not one small stone is to be seen there.
The Expanded Bible	If David ·escapes [withdraws] into a city, all the Israelites will bring ropes to that city and pull it into the valley. Not ·a stone will be left [a pebble will be found there]!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But if he is in a tower, —collect, and carry all the army of Israel to the tower with ropes, and drag it into the river by which it is built, and destroy it!
HCSB	If he retreats to some city, all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag its <i>stones</i> into the valley until not even a pebble can be found there."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Why, even if he should defend himself behind city walls, this great army of Israel could wind ropes round it and drag it down into the nearest valley, till never a stone was to be found of it!
NET Bible®	If he regroups in a city, all Israel will take up ropes to that city and drag it down to the valley, so that not a single pebble will be left there!"

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	If he withdraws into a city, then all Isra'el will bring up ropes to that city, and we will drag it into the riverbed until not even a pebble is left."
exeGesés companion Bible	...and if he gathers into a city, then all Yisra El bears lines to that city and we drag it into the wadi, until they find not even a bundle there.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And if he withdraws into a city, all Israel will bring ropes to that city and drag its stones [Heb., <i>it</i>] as far as the riverbed, until not even a pebble of it is left."
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Moreover, if he has withdrawn into a city, then shall kol Yisroel bring chavalim (ropes) to that city, and we will draw it into the ravine, until there be not one small stone found there.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	If he withdraws into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it into the ravine until not one pebble is left there.
Concordant Literal Version	And if unto a city he is gathered, then they have caused all Israel to bear unto that city ropes, and we have drawn it unto the brook till that there has not been found there even a stone.
Darby Translation	And if he withdraw into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the torrent, until there be not one small stone found there.
Green's Literal Translation	And if he is taken into a city, then all Israel shall bear ropes to that city. And we shall draw it into the torrent bed, until there shall not be found even a pebble.

New King James Version	Moreover, if he has withdrawn into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city; and we will pull it into the river, until there is not one small stone found there."
Syndein/Thieme	{More Illusion set up by Hushai} Furthermore, if he {David} withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and "we' will draw ever stone into the valley, until even a small stone will not be found there." {Note: Hushai know the arrogant fantasy. He uses the royal 'we' indicating he is so for the revolution that he himself and everyone in the land will help to destroy David - Absalom's arrogance is divorced from reality.}
World English Bible	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 not be one small stone found there.
Young's Updated LT	And if unto a city he is gathered, then they have caused all Israel to bear unto that city ropes, and we have drawn it unto the brook till that there has not been found there even a stone."

The gist of this verse: Hushai offers up an alternative plan; what if David hides out in a city? Then all Israel will bring ropes and haul away the city stone by stone.

This contingency plan is brilliant on the part of Hushai. It is not brilliant because it is a true contingency plan, but it makes Absalom think that Hushai is covering all of the bases and considering all of the angles. It is one of the things which makes his plan *appear* to be superior to Ahithophel's when it really isn't.

2Samuel 17:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
îm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
'âçaph (אָצַף) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i>]	<i>to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62

The full BDB meanings (and some from Gesenius) for the Niphal are *to assemble, be gathered; to be gathered to one's fathers; to be brought in or into (association with others), to be received; to be taken away, removed, perish.*

Translation: *And if he gathers [himself] to a city,...* Hushai lets it be known that he is considering all of the angles; he has another plan, just in case David does something different. Ahithophel only gave one plan in one sentence, and it was quick and brilliant, and could have brought David down. Hushai, on the other hand, paints this long involved scenario which draws Absalom in, so that Absalom can see all that is occurring under Hushai's inferior plan. Absalom is not a man of war; he does not really know what works and what does not work. But he is impressed with the meticulous detail that Hushai presents here.

Hushai says, "This plan has with it a contingency; if David goes into a city, then we will approach this problem in a different way." Absalom likes this. It seems brilliant to him. I would guess that Absalom, with the several plots that he has hatched, has considered contingency plans. Therefore, he likes a man that has contingency plans. In his own mind, this is the mark of brilliance.

2Samuel 17:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i>]	<i>to cause to bring, to have brought; to cause to lift up; to cause one to bear guilt; to bear the punishment of sin; to put upon, to apply [something to anything]</i>	3 rd person plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
hîy' (הִיא) [pronounced <i>hee</i>]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied; with the definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
chebel (חֶבֶל) [pronounced <i>KHE^B-vel</i>]	<i>rope, cord, bands; a measuring rope; a territory, lot, portion; a group [of things]</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #2256 BDB #286

Translation: ...then all Israel will bring ropes into that city... Hushai's plan was to gather up all Israel against David, so he will have a great deal of manpower there, outside of any city where David is. Worst case scenario is, they throw a rope around this stone, and then haul it away; then they throw a rope around the next stone and haul it away. So, at some point, there is nothing that David can hide behind.

Obviously, this city must be surrounded, but recall that Hushai said that a huge army should be gathered. So the manpower would be there to both surround the city and to haul it away stone by stone if necessary.

2Samuel 17:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çâchab (סָחַב) [pronounced <i>saw-SHAHBV</i>]	<i>to drag; to draw out; to tear [or pull] [into pieces]</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5498 BDB #694
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>him; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to him, toward him</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Owen calls this the preposition, but I think that is a typo.			
’ad (אֲדַ) [pronounced <i>ghad</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
nachal (נַחַל) [pronounced <i>NAHKH-al</i>]	<i>brook, torrent; valley</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5158 BDB #636

Translation: ...and we will drag it down into [lit., as far as] the valley... This suggests, reasonably, that cities and city walls are built with rocks, and these cities and their walls can be dismantled, and one rock after another hauled away. That is what Hushai proposes. No depth in the contingency plan is given here, as there is obviously the problem of men fighting from the city walls as well. However, with such a huge army, Absalom can completely surround the city, fight David's army, and simultaneously remove the city stone by stone.

The ideal place for a city to be built is upon a hill but near running water. When a city is on a hill, those who attempt to besiege it must move uphill, and then have to scale the walls and towers. Also, the city would be high enough to prevent flooding during a particular rainy season. However, water needed to be nearby, because water is necessary to human life and human function. Under less-than-ideal conditions, what is below city wall is a ravine cut through by the torrents of winter, but a dry bed when the rains have ended (Job 6:17).

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown write: *In besieging a town, hooks or cranes were often thrown upon the walls or turrets, by which, with ropes attached to them, the besiegers, uniting all their force, pulled down the fortifications in a mass of ruins.*⁴⁰

Hushai is over-simplifying matters, but that is because he is trying to sell Absalom on a plan of action; he is not briefing him on what steps must be taken and what orders must be issued along the way.

Application: Often, when selling a product, the target audience has to be made to place themselves in the car, in that house, wearing that cologne and turning the heads of all those women. The commercial which can transport the buyer to seeing himself using and enjoying the product is on the road to selling that buyer. However, this can certainly be overdone. I recall being hauled into a multi-level marketing scheme at one time, at a friend's house, but I am a very difficult person to sell, because I generally know when I am being manipulated. After 10 minutes of being presented with a lifestyle but without having a clue as to what it was someone was trying to sell me, I was quite resistant, knowing what was happening.

So Hushai had to hit that sweet spot with Absalom, manipulating him, but without him thinking that he was being manipulated. Absalom, if he questioned Hushai's loyalties at all, believed that he was smart enough to figure out if he was being sold a bill of goods. So, Hushai sells him on this inferior plan, but he does it in such a way that

⁴⁰ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 17:13.

Absalom thinks it is the superior plan. So, as Hushai explains his plan, Absalom sees this huge army putting a rope around a huge stone and dragging it away from the city. Because he can see this, he is sold on the plan.

2Samuel 17:13d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘ad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
’asher (אשר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ‘ad and ’asher mean <i>until that, until</i> . Generally used of an event which occurred in the past.			
Together, ‘ad + ’asher mean <i>until, until that, until the time, until that time, until then</i> ; referring generally to past time when used with a perfect tense and future when used with an imperfect tense.			
lô’ (לא or לוּא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mâtsâ’ (מצא) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i>]	<i>to acquire, to be found, to be detected, to be discovered, to be present, to exist</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
shâm (שם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
gam (גם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
I am thinking that the gist of gam and lô’ together (even though they are separated in this verse) is <i>neither, not even</i> . The idea, of course, is that Jesse is causing another son to pass before Samuel, and Samuel indicates that he is <i>not</i> the right person <i>also</i> (or, <i>either</i>). This did not come out of a lexicon, but it seemed to make sense in 1Sam. 16:8.			
ts ^e rôwr (צור) [pronounced <i>tzer-OHR</i>]	<i>bundle, parcel, pouch, bag (as packed); pebble</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #6872 BDB #866

Translation: *...until not even a pebble is found.*” Again, I am taking some liberties with the translation here which approach I did not find in BDB or in Gesenius, but which translation I believe is warranted (I make the translation before I see how others have translated this,⁴¹ but I am sure there will be some agreement⁴² with me here).

Hushai promises that this alternate possibility will end without there being anything around David to protect him. Every last stone will be hauled down into the valley, if need be, before he is killed, as per the plan.

Hushai knows that arrogant people fantasize; arrogant people have delusions of grandeur.

One of the keys to selling Hushai’s plan, as mentioned before, is painting a picture in Absalom’s mind. He needs to see all of this occurring in his mind’s eye, and that appeals to him. Keil and Delitzsch

⁴¹ In the past few chapters I have worked on, I see Young’s and Owens’ translations only before making my own. Afterward, I add in about 20–30 translations from others.

⁴² Keil and Delitzsch render this verse: *And if he draw back into a city, all Israel lays ropes to that city, and we drag it to the brook, till there is not even a little stone found there.*

write: *Hushai speaks in hyperboles of the irresistible power which the whole nation would put forth when summoned together for battle, in order to make his advice appear the more plausible.*⁴³ All that Hushai describes seems plausible, because all of Israel will be there to take David down, even if he withdraws to some city.

Application: We see this sort of thing in American politics all of the time. It is never who politicians really are or what their policies are; it is who they appear to be to the people of the United States, which is a matter of marketing. We had this in the 2012 election, where candidate Romney was painted as a **heartless, out-of-touch dog-hater**⁴⁴ who put business policies into play that **killed men's wives** (you will notice that most of this marketing was done by the **media**). President Obama was seen as **cool, charming** and **caring**, the kind of man you could have a beer with.⁴⁵ However, very nearly the opposite was true (both men would be interesting to have a beer with, even though Romney would have had a sarsaparilla instead).

What Hushai speaks of here is a contingency plan, and this impresses Absalom. He is not stupid. Absalom is brilliant, in fact. Therefore, he understands contingency plans very well. Ahithophel did not offer up a contingency plan, but Hushai did. Now why? Ahithophel did not realize that he was in competition with anyone. He certainly had a variety of contingencies that he considered, and he could certainly move from plan A to plan B with great alacrity. However, for Absalom, a non-military type, Ahithophel kept it simple. After all, he is the only man offering advice at the time, so why make any of this needlessly complex?

However, when Hushai steps into the scene, he knows that there is a competition, he hears Ahithophel's plan from Absalom, and then he goes from there to offer up a superior-sounding plan. Throwing in a contingency plan is like the icing on the cake. Hushai is thinking like a chessboard; and Ahithophel appears to be playing checkers (he is not, but we are speaking of Absalom's perception here).

All of v. 13 reads: *If David withdraws to a city, then all of Israel will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it away stone by stone down to the river valley until not even a pebble remains.*" Ahithophel presents no contingency plan, and what Hushai says, without a close inspection is, he will have all Israel with him, so, if necessary, they can haul an entire city down to the valley. With Absalom's smaller force, Absalom cannot propose to do this.

Interestingly enough, Jesus prophesies this for the Temple of Jerusalem in Matt. 24:1–2 *As Jesus left the Temple, His disciples approached Him as He was walking along the road and pointed out the Temple buildings. He responded to them by saying, "Do you see all these structures? Truly I tell you, there will not be one stone left on another here that will not be thrown down."* (AUV–NT)

Matthew Henry sums up Ahithophel's plan: *First, He advised that all Israel should be gathered together, that is, the militia of all the tribes. His taking it for granted that they are all for him, and giving him an opportunity to see them all together under his command, would gratify him as much as any thing. Secondly, He advises that Absalom go to battle in his own person, as if he looked upon him to be a better soldier than Ahithophel, more fit to give command and have the honour of the victory, insinuating that Ahithophel had put a slight upon him in offering to go without him. See how easy it is to betray proud men, by applauding them, and feeding their pride. [2.] He counselled that which seemed to secure the success, at last, infallibly, without running any hazard. For, if they could raise such vast numbers as they promised themselves, wherever they found David they could not fail to crush him. First, If in the field, they should fall upon him, as the dew that covers the face of the ground, and cut off all his men with him (2Sam. 17:12). Perhaps Absalom was better pleased with the design of cutting off all the men that were with him, having a particular antipathy to some of David's friends, than with Ahithophel's project of smiting the king only. Thus Hushai gained his point by humouring his revenge, as well as his pride. Secondly, If in a city, they need not fear conquering*

⁴³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:13.

⁴⁴ One columnist for the NY Times had over 50 stories on Romney and his dog.

⁴⁵ Do you think the president's **beer summit** was accidental? In fact, the president had more than one **beer summit**.

him, for they should have hands enough, if occasion were, to draw the city itself into its river with ropes (2Sam. 17:13).⁴⁶

Hushai quickly and rightly evaluated the situation and Absalom's problem with Ahithophel's plan. There was not enough Absalom in Ahithophel's plan. Not only is it Ahithophel's plan, but Ahithophel executes the plan. Now, this was the best route by far, because Absalom would not be in the middle of things to muck them up. But Absalom did not want that. He needed to be seen as defeating his father in battle; he did not want Ahithophel to be seen as the victor in that fight. Hushai puts Absalom right in the middle of it, and yet, safely insure him victory through numbers (in Absalom's mind, of course). A non-military man like Absalom understands numbers in a war, and he understands the concept of victory, with him in the middle of it all.

In other words, Absalom rejected the best plan to defeat David in favor of the plan the showcased him, a plan which seemed to him a winner, because he had the numbers on his side. However, the plan which he chose was inferior in all respects, except for the numbers.

Let me give you an example that might help you with the numbers thing, because you might still be thinking, "But Absalom has a much larger army than David—how can he lose?" A police force is nearly always smaller than the number of criminals operating in any given city at any given time. Although there is something to be said for having a huge police force, and having uniforms everywhere, sometimes that is just impractical. So, how do you beat the numbers game? With training, with integrity, with the newest technology, and with a great support staff and an excellent system of jurisprudence. And then the police force is carefully deployed and concentrated in areas when concentration is called for. If you put together large numbers of untrained bodies to outnumber the criminals, but you have no training and no integrity, then you have a train wreck.

So, it is David's men, well-trained, with the latest weaponry, with great personal integrity and humility, who can be deployed in a variety of ways, in a variety of concentrations, as the battle calls for it. One more thing: David's army will be well-supplied logistically. It is not certain that Absalom's army will be. A huge army means a huge logistical support staff, but will Absalom see the point in that? He is just going to go over the Jordan River, find David, and kill him. What logistics are needed for that? Although Absalom's lack of logistics are not stated outright, this is implied, as David's provisions are actually made a part of the Word of God.

There is one more thing that Hushai's plan did—Hushai is not in the middle of it all. In fact, Hushai is not in his plan at all. Absalom has the starring role in Hushai's plan; Hushai is not there at his side taking any of the glory away from him. Ahithophel's plan stars Ahithophel—the wrong main character, insofar as Absalom is concerned. Although Hushai, back in v. 12, says *we will do this* and *we will do that*, there is no indication in what follows that Hushai will be right there at Absalom's side. Hushai is here, right by Absalom's side right now, but he will not be mentioned in the battle chapter which follows.

And so says Absalom and every man of Israel, "Good a counsel of Hushai the Archite more than a counsel of Ahithophel." And Y^ehowah ordained to break a counsel of Ahithophel the good; to the intent that has brought Y^ehowah unto Absalom the evil.

2Samuel
17:14

Absalom then proclaimed [lit., *said*]*—with every man of Israel, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel." Y^ehowah had ordained to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel; with the intent that Y^ehowah has brought disaster upon Absalom.*

Absalom then proclaimed, along with his staff of elders, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is superior to the advice of Ahithophel." Jehovah had ordained that He would frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel, with the intent that He would bring disaster upon Absalom.

⁴⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:1–14.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Absalom, and all the men of Israel said: The counsel of Chusai the Arachite is better than the counsel of Achitophel: and by the will of the Lord the profitable counsel of Achitophel was defeated, that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Absalom and every man of Israel, "Good a counsel of Hushai the Archite more than a counsel of Ahithophel." And Y ^e howah ordained to break a counsel of Ahithophel the good; to the intent that has brought Y ^e howah unto Absalom the evil.
Peshitta (Syriac)	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 decreed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel so that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.
Septuagint (Greek)	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 has purposed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, that the Lord might bring all evil upon Absalom.
Brenton's Septuagint	And Abessalom, and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Chusi the Arachite is better than the counsel of Achitophel. For the Lord ordained to disconcert the good counsel of Achitophel, that the Lord might bring all evil upon Abessalom.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then Absalom and everyone in Israel agreed, "The advice of Hushai from Erech is better than Ahithophel's advice." This was because the Lord had decided to counter Ahithophel's good advice so that the Lord could bring disaster on Absalom.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom and the others liked Hushai's plan better than Ahithophel's plan. This was because the LORD had decided to keep Ahithophel's plan from working and to cause trouble for Absalom.
Easy English	Absalom and all the *Israelites said, 'Hushai's advice is better than Ahithophel's advice.' The *Lord had decided to destroy Ahithophel's good advice. The *Lord was going to ruin Absalom.
Easy-to-Read Version	Absalom and all the Israelites said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than Ahithophel's advice." {They said this} because it was the Lord's plan. The Lord had planned to make Ahithophel's good advice useless. That is how the Lord would punish Absalom.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Absalom and all the Israelites said, "Hushai's advice is better than Ahithophel's." The LORD had decided that Ahithophel's good advice would not be followed, so that disaster would come on Absalom.
<i>The Message</i>	Absalom and all his company agreed that the counsel of Hushai the Arkite was better than the counsel of Ahithophel. (GOD had determined to discredit the counsel of Ahithophel so as to bring ruin on Absalom.)
New Berkeley Version	Absalom and all Israel agreed that the advice of Hushai the Archite was better than that of Ahithophel. —The LORD had decreed that Ahithophel's sound advice be nullified, in order that the LORD might bring ruin upon Absalom.
New Life Bible	Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The words of Hushai the Archite are better than the words of Ahithophel." In this way the Lord had planned to destroy the good leading of Ahithophel, so He might bring trouble to Absalom.
New Living Translation	Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "Hushai's advice is better than Ahithophel's." For the Lord had determined to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, which really was the better plan, so that he could bring disaster on Absalom!

The Voice Absalom and his counselors decided that Hushai's plan was better than Ahithophel's, *not knowing that* the Eternal One had determined to thwart Ahithophel's good advice and bring about Absalom's destruction.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, AbSalom and all the men of IsraEl said, 'The counsel of HushAi the Arachite is better than the counsel of AhiThophel.' (However, it was Jehovah who caused the good counsel of AhiThophel to lose out, so He could bring bad things to AbSalom).
Christian Community Bible	Absalom and all the Israelites said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For Yahweh had decreed that the good counsel of Ahitophel be defeated, so that he might bring evil upon Absalom.
God's Word™	Absalom and all the people of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai from Archi's family is better than Ahithophel's advice." (The LORD had commanded Ahithophel's good advice to be defeated in order to ruin Absalom.)
New American Bible	Then Absalom and all the Israelites pronounced the counsel of Hushai the Archite better than that of Ahithophel. For the LORD had decided to undo Ahithophel's good counsel, in order thus to bring Absalom to ruin.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Then Absalom and all the Israelites said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For the LORD had commanded that Ahithophel's good counsel should be thwarted, so that he might bring Absalom to ruin. 2Sam. 15:31, 34.
NIRV	Absalom and all of the men of Israel agreed. They said, "The advice of Hushai, the Arkite, is better than the advice of Ahithophel." The Lord had decided that Ahithophel's good advice would fail. The Lord wanted to bring horrible trouble on Absalom.
New Jerusalem Bible	Then Absalom and all the people of Israel said, 'Hushai the Arkite's advice is better than Ahithophel's,' Yahweh having resolved to thwart Ahithophel's shrewd advice and so bring disaster on Absalom.
New Simplified Bible	Absalom and all the people of Israel said: »The advice of Hushai from Archi's family is better than Ahithophel's advice. Jehovah commanded Ahithophel's good advice to be defeated in order to ruin Absalom.«.
Today's NIV	Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel." For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For Yahweh commanded to void the good counsel of Ahithophel, because Yahweh brought evil to Absalom.
Bible in Basic English	Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, Hushai's suggestion is better than that of Ahithophel. For it was the purpose of the Lord to make the wise designs of Ahithophel without effect, so that the Lord might send evil on Absalom.
The Expanded Bible	Absalom and all the Israelites said, "The ·advice [counsel] of Hushai the Arkite is better than ·that [the counsel] of Ahithophel." (The Lord had ·planned [determined; resolved; ordained] to ·destroy [thwart; defeat; frustrate] the good ·advice [counsel] of Ahithophel so the Lord could bring ·disaster [calamity; ruin] on Absalom.).
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And Absalom, and all the princes of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arki is better than the advice of Akhitophel." But the EVER-LIVING had suggested it, to destroy the good advice of Akhitophel, because the EVER-LIVING intended to bring punishment upon Absalom.

HCSB	Since the LORD had decreed that Ahithophel's good advice be undermined in order to bring about Absalom's ruin, Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than Ahithophel's advice."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Thereupon Absalom and all the men of Israel agreed that Chusai the Arachite had given better counsel than Achitophel. Whereas in truth Achitophel's advice was the more to their purpose, but the Lord foiled it, to compass Absalom's ruin.
NET Bible®	Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite sounds better than the advice of Ahithophel." Now the Lord had decided [Heb "commanded."] to frustrate the sound advice of Ahithophel, so that the Lord could bring disaster on Absalom.
NIV – UK	Absalom and all the men of Israel said, 'The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel.' For the Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Avshalom and all the men of Isra'el said, "The advice of Hushai the Arki is better than the advice of Achitofel"- for ADONAI had determined to frustrate the good advice of Achitofel, so that ADONAI could bring disaster on Avshalom.
exeGeses companion Bible	And Abi Shalom and all the men of Yisra El say, The counsel of Hushay the Arkiy is better than the counsel of Achiy Thophel: and Yah Veh misvahs to break down the good counsel of Achiy Thophel, so that Yah Veh brings evil on Abi Shalom.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Absalom and all the Israelites said, 'Hushai the Archite has given us better advice than Ahithophel.' It was the LORD's purpose to frustrate Ahithophel's good advice and so bring disaster on Absalom.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Avshalom and kol Ish Yisroel said, The etza (counsel) of Chushai the Arki is better than the etza of Achitophel. For Hashem had resolved to annul the etza of Achitophel, to the intent that Hashem might bring ra'ah upon Avshalom.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	Aḇshalom and all the men of Yisra' ḗl then said, "The advice of Ḥushai the Arkite is better than the advice of Aḥithophel." For הוהי had ordained to nullify the good advice of Aḥithophel, for the sake of הוהי bringing evil upon Aḇshalom.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And Absalom said--and all the men of Israel--'Better [is] the counsel of Hushai the Archite than the counsel of Ahithophel;' and Yahweh willed to make void the good counsel of Ahithophel for the sake of Yahweh's bringing unto Absalom the evil.
Darby Translation	And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. And Jehovah had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, in order that Jehovah might bring evil upon Absalom.
English Standard Version	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 ordained [Hebrew commanded] to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring harm upon Absalom.
The Geneva Bible	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 [That counsel which seemed good at first to Absalom, (2 Samuel 17:4)], to the intent that the LORD might bring evil [For by the counsel of Hushai, he went to the battle, where he was destroyed.] upon Absalom.

Green's Literal Translation	And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. And Jehovah had ordained to break down the good counsel of Ahithophel, for the sake of bringing the evil of Jehovah to Absalom.
NASB	Then 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 ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring calamity on Absalom.
New King James Version	So Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than the advice of Ahithophel." For the Lord had purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring disaster on Absalom.
New RSV	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 ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring ruin on Absalom.
Syndein/Thieme	{Divine Approbation of Clandestine Warfare} Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said/concluded {erroneously}, "The advice/counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the advice/counsel of Ahithophel." {Note: Remember that Hushai is actually loyal to David so he is a 'mole' in their organization.} For the Jehovah/God had ordained/anointed/appointed to frustrate the 'better plan' of Ahithophel, in order that the Jehovah/God might bring disaster/evil upon Absalom.
World English Bible	Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For Yahweh had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that Yahweh might bring evil on Absalom.
Young's Updated LT	And Absalom says—and all the men of Israel—"Better is the counsel of Hushai the Archite than the counsel of Ahithophel;" and Jehovah willed to make void the good counsel of Ahithophel for the sake of Jehovah's bringing unto Absalom the evil.

The gist of this verse:

Absalom misjudges the situation the chooses the counsel of Hushai over the advice of Ahithophel. This was Y^ehowah's will.

2Samuel 17:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אבִּישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	every, each, all of, all; any of, any	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 17:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yis ^{er} ā`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: Absalom then proclaimed [lit., *said*]*—with every man of Israel,...* This little phrase is kind of interesting, because, for the first time, Absalom is presented as a leader. Absalom makes a pronouncement and everyone agrees with him. You may recall that, prior to this, when Absalom and those following him did anything, there were plural verbs attached, which suggested that Absalom was not clearly the leader. However, this time, Absalom makes a pronouncement and it appears that the others around him chime in, “Jolly good call, Absalom old boy.”

Truth be told, Hushai’s advice sounds good to me as well. However, this is assuming that he can really pull it off. There is no guarantee that Absalom can raise a huge army from throughout the country. And if they are half-hearted, as men would be, then his army as a whole would be half-hearted. There may have been thousands of men who were disappointed with David and some of the things that he did; however, how many of them really wanted to lead a charge against David to kill him? How many of them had that kind of animosity or nerve?

These same men might have followed David into war against the Philistines or the Moabites—and even followed Absalom into war against some national threat—but a lot fewer of them would want to follow Absalom into war against David.

Application: Let me give you sort of a half made-up example. The current president is Barack Obama, and there are a number of conservative men in the armed forces who would prefer a different president. However, if he calls them to go to war in Iran or Pakistan, these men would heed that call, and whole heartedly. However, if President Obama said, “Saddle up, we are going to Texas and we are going to get George W. Bush.” Well, that just would not fly.

My point is, there are limits as to what Absalom can demand of the people of Israel. If he follows Hushai’s advice, he will raise a larger army than what Ahithophel was proposing, but they would lack training and motivation. Furthermore, let’s just say that this is a 50-50 population of those who favor Absalom to those who favor David; Absalom is not going to get a complete turnout of all Israel. And even of those who turn out, there is not going to be whole-hearted support. Truth be told, in some revolutions, many people simply side with the man or movement that they believe is stronger. That is a matter of self-preservation.

2Samuel 17:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ṭōwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

2Samuel 17:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘êtsâh (אֶצַח) [pronounced <i>gay-TZAW</i>]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6098 BDB #420
Chûwshay (חֹשַׁי) [pronounced <i>khoo-SHAH-ee</i>]	<i>to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
’Arkîy (אֲרָכִי) [pronounced <i>ahr-KEE</i>]	<i>from Arkansas,⁴⁷ transliterated Archite</i>	Gentilis adjective with the definite article	Strong's #757 BDB #74
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
‘êtsâh (אֶצַח) [pronounced <i>gay-TZAW</i>]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6098 BDB #420
’Ăchîythôphel (אֲחִיתוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-fe</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27

Translation:...“The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel.” The Hebrew does not have a comparative form as we do in the English. They simply use the adjective or the noun, and throw in the min preposition into the mix. That is what we find here. Everyone there thinks it over and they agree that Hushai’s approach is better than Ahithophel’s.

There are a couple of things I want you to consider. Ahithophel has wanted to have revenge against David for a long time. He doesn’t even want Absalom to come in this attack against David. He wants to go there with a small strike force and, if possible, kill David or give the order to kill David. In this attack, he wants to kill just one man (and anyone who stands in the way of this objective). But his plan is not going to be done, and this has Ahithophel quite upset—far more than you might realize.

Let’s look at one more aspect that is missed by the commentators: who are Absalom’s followers? Who are the ones who are there? These are conspirators; these are men who are following Absalom. It is highly unlikely that he has the best soldiers on his side. It is very possible that these men have been washouts in Joab’s army. These are men who did not go with David. So, it is reasonable to suppose that these are not the greatest soldiers around and it is reasonable to suppose that these are not the most honorable men in Israel. Now, you may say, “But David committed adultery and had the woman’s husband killed;” and that he did, and some people have put two and two together and have come up with the conclusion. However, at the same time, Absalom is in the process of raping 10 innocent women. Therefore, even though there may be some self-righteous types who object to what David has done; they cannot be enamored of Absalom’s actions either.

What this leaves us with are men who are revolutionaries, criminals, who are anti-establishment, and want that which is newer and shinier, which is Absalom. Some of these are utopians, to some degree, who see a better kingdom being ushered in by this newer and shinier king. These men are arrogant. They think they know better than anyone else. Therefore, Absalom does not have the cream-of-the-crop by way of supporters.

Furthermore, arrogance cannot think or reason, especially when out of its depth. Absalom thinks he is smart enough to listen to Ahithophel and Hushai and decide between the two plans, but he is not that smart. He does

⁴⁷ Just a joke, derivation unknown.

not know tactics and logistics. He does not know anything about the military. He can think with emotion and with prejudice, but he cannot properly differentiate these two plans and know which was the better plan. How do we know this? He chooses the worst plan, and the Word of God tells us that it is the worst plan of the two (2Sam. 17:14).

Do you know what would have been brilliant on Absalom's part? He knows that Ahithophel supports him and he knows that Ahithophel is a brilliant military man. What he should have done was to say, "Listen, Ahithophel, whatever you want. If you think we should do A, then we will do A. If you think we should do B, then we will do B. You are my expert in this area and I trust you." But Absalom cannot do that. He is too arrogant. He does not want to give Ahithophel so much credit. He does not want everyone to know that all military decisions are made by Ahithophel.

Do you know who is not arrogant in this arena? David. Joab, his nephew, after a certain point in time, made all of the decisions on the field. David called people in for a report from time to time, but David did not try to undermine or second-guess Joab. And when Joab gave David orders, and said, "You personally must come out to battle;" David did. David listened to Joab, and agreed with him (2Sam. 12:27–29). When Joab told David that a full army was needed to fight the Aramæans, David went along with him (2Sam. 11:17). David never gets huffy and says, "Look, Joab, you're my nephew; I was fighting wars before you were even thought of. Give me the information and I will tell you what we're going to do." Timing is key in warfare, and when David's man for the job on the field told him what to do, David did it.

Absalom then proclaimed [lit., said]—with every man of Israel, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel." It appears that the elders around Absalom are *yes-men*, who like their position, and know enough not to cross Absalom (after all, do you want to disagree with a man who would kill his own father?). Therefore, when Hushai says, "Let's gather up thousands of additional soldiers;" that sounds good to them. Not everything is laid upon their shoulders anymore. All Israel will join them to go up against David. There is safety in numbers, and that must have had some affect on their agreement with Hushai's proposal.

Let me remind you again that Hushai is David's mole. Hushai is there with the expressed purpose of undermining Ahithophel's advice. Hushai has made false statements to Absalom. However, this is the plan of God; this is what God has ordained.

So far, we have: **Absalom then proclaimed [lit., said]—with every man of Israel, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel."** All of the men here who like Hushai's proposition are the close allies of Absalom, his inner circle. So, *every man of Israel* does not mean that polling was done throughout the land, and this is the 80% agreed to approach; it means that Ahithophel presented his plan; Hushai his; and the men in the room agreed with Absalom that Hushai's plan was superior.

You will notice that, originally Ahithophel's advice sounded good to Absalom (and then to the rest of the people) back in v. 4, and now Absalom proclaims that the counsel of Hushai is better than Ahithophel's. By the way that this verse is structured, it appears as if Absalom's men all chime in after Absalom does. This suggests that Absalom has surrounded himself by a lot of *yes-men*. We don't have two or three of these men saying, "Now, let's stop and think about this, and compare these two plans in detail." It is as if, "You like Ahithophel's plan? We do too. Oh, you like Hushai's plan better? We agree."

check out v. 11 as well

Now let's put these plans together, side-by-side, to see how brilliant Hushai is in selling his plan to Absalom.

Comparing the Plans

	Ahithophel's Plan	Hushai's Plan
The plan	<p>Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose right now 12,000 men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself. Allow me to then bring all of the people back to you, at which point everything will return to normal. Furthermore, I will bring back the body of the man you seek and all of the people will be at peace."</p>	<p>"For I advise you, King Absalom, that all Israel—from Dan to Beersheba—be assembled, so your army is as the sand by the sea, and that you go into battle with them. We will come upon him in the one place where he can be found, and we will be upon him like the dew falling upon the ground, so that there is no one that remains of him—nor of all the men who are with him—not even one."</p>
What is good about this plan	<p>Ahithophel is going to use a relatively small strike force which he could gather quickly and leave with that very night. He would be able to catch David before David had fully organized. Absalom is not there to muck things up.</p>	<p>Hushai's plan <i>sounds better</i> to Absalom. It may sound better to the elders who support Absalom (although they appear to be no more than <i>yes-men</i>).</p>
What is bad about this plan	<p>The possibility that David's army could have defeated Ahithophel's army—however, this is a generic problem with any plan: the other army might still win.</p>	<p>Absalom is involved, and he is not a man of war. Therefore, time would be wasted on his needs and whatever orders he might make.</p> <p>Time would be spent to gather up such a large army from all Israel. This would allow David to chose the battlefield, to be supplied, and to plan a strategy. This would also give David time to deal with the civilian population who have joined him.</p> <p>A huge army will be less disciplined, more difficult to maneuver, and more prone to panicking and retreating if the battle goes poorly.</p>
How Absalom views the plan	<p>Absalom likes Ahithophel's plan because it sounds plausible, but Ahithophel's plan has Ahithophel right in the middle of everything. Ahithophel came up with the plan and Ahithophel leads the army against David. Meanwhile, Absalom is raping David's mistresses.</p> <p>However, Absalom cannot say this; he cannot say, "I want more Absalom in your plan."</p>	<p>Hushai's plan appeals to Absalom's imagination. He can just see himself leading a great army into war against his father and emerging victorious. Absalom's arrogance blinds him to reality, and he sees the vision that Hushai wants him to see.</p> <p>Absalom is front and center in Hushai's plan.</p>

Comparing the Plans		
	Ahithophel's Plan	Hushai's Plan
Painting the picture for Absalom	<p>Ahithophel did not include Absalom in any of the action; he was not a part of Ahithophel's plan, so that he did not see himself as the glorious king leading his troops in victory.</p> <p>The Pulpit Commentary: <i>Like other king makers, Ahithophel had put himself too forward. He asked for twelve thousand men to be placed under his command, that he might strike down David, and so be, not only Absalom's chief counselor, but also his commander-in-chief. Amasa and the other commanders would be displeased at this, and Absalom would feel that he was himself placed in a very secondary position. Ahithophel may have asked for the command solely because no one's presence would so ensure success as his own, but he wounded the vanity both of Absalom and Amasa, and made them ready to listen to any other advice that might be offered.</i>⁴⁸</p>	<p>The Pulpit Commentary: <i>Absalom...saw himself, in fancy, marching forward with all Israel at his feet.</i>⁴⁹</p> <p>Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say that Hushai's plan is <i>extremely plausible [to Absalom], and expressed in the strong hyperbolic language suited to dazzle an Oriental imagination.</i>⁵⁰</p> <p>Hushai needs to push Absalom toward being ultra-cautious. Hushai also paints a more in-depth picture for Absalom to consider, and this picture included Absalom as the central character, appealing to his arrogance.</p> <p>Hushai's appeal to caution slows Absalom down, and makes Absalom think that Hushai is offering a <i>sure thing</i> when it comes to defeating David.</p>
The contingency plan	<p>None is given, although Ahithophel doubtlessly had a plan B and even a plan C. He did not want to over-complicate things for Absalom.</p>	<p style="color: blue;">If David withdraws to a city, then all of Israel will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it away stone by stone down to the river valley until not even a pebble remains."</p>

⁴⁸ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:14.

⁴⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:14.

⁵⁰ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 17:14.

Comparing the Plans		
	Ahithophel's Plan	Hushai's Plan
Criticism of the other plan	None given because Ahithophel was not aware that there would be another plan proposed.	Hushai answered Absalom, saying, "The counsel that Absalom gave is not good advice at this time." Hushai then added, "You know your father and his men—that they men are warriors and they are bitter right now, like a bear bereaved of her cubs in the field. Furthermore, your father is an experienced man of war and he knows not to spend the night in the midst of the people. Listen, even now, your father has certainly hidden himself in one of the pits or in some other place. And it will be when there is a surprise attack at first contact, then a messenger will announce, 'A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.' Even though your soldiers are men of great courage with hearts like a lions, their hearts will surely melt at hearing such a report. All Israel knows that your father is a great warrior along with the men of courage who are with him.
Summation	Ahithophel's plan was rejected because it was not detailed enough, did not have a contingency option, and did not include Absalom.	Hushai's plan was accepted because it seemed to be more detailed and included a contingency plan, and it included Absalom as taking part in the plan. Furthermore, Hushai had the opportunity to critique Ahithophel's plan, something that Ahithophel was not afforded the opportunity to do.

Two of the great problems with Absalom is, he is not a military man, so his presence in battle adds nothing to his own cause; and, further, he is not one to judge a military plan. Secondly, Absalom has surrounded himself with *yes-men*, so that, apart from Ahithophel and Hushai, he has no one to really guide him. Ahithophel would insure Absalom's reign as king; and Hushai was there as a mole from David to bring Absalom down.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Samuel 17:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
tsâvâh (צַוָּה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i>]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845

2Samuel 17:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pârar (פָּרַר) [pronounced paw-RAHR]	<i>to break, to make [or, declare] void, to make of no effect, to bring to nothing, to make ineffectual; to take away, to violate (a covenant), to frustrate</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #6565 BDB #830
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'êtsâh (אֵצֶה) [pronounced gay-TZAW]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6098 BDB #420
'Āchîythôphel (אֶחִי־תֹפֵל) [pronounced uhkh-ee-THOH-feh]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive; with the definite article	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

As a noun, this can mean *the good thing, that which is good [pleasing, approved, kind, upright, right]; goodness, uprightness, kindness, right; that which is fair [beautiful]*.

Translation: *Y^ehowah had ordained to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel;... God ordained that Hushai frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. It is called the good counsel of Ahithophel not because it squares with divine good, but because it would better help Absalom achieve his ends, which is to defeat his father David and to rule over all Israel. It is good for Absalom; but it is not divine good.*

In fact here, Ahithophel's counsel is called good, even though it was evil (it would result in the defeat of King David); and in the next portion of this verse, God will bring *evil* upon Absalom, which is good.

God ordained this from eternity past. God knew in eternity past what David would pray ascending the Mount of Olives. *A person told David, "Ahithophel is one of the people who made plans with Absalom." Then David prayed, "Lord, I ask you to make Ahithophel's advice useless."* (2Sam. 15:31; ESV). God, in time, began to answer that prayer by putting Hushai the Archite in David's path; and here, in this passage, Absalom and his yes-men have decided that Hushai's plan is superior to Ahithophel's. In this way, *Y^ehowah had ordained [in eternity past] to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel.*

Application: God advances His plan through people. Hushai is key in frustrating Ahithophel's plan. No one else could have pulled this off. This same thing is even more true today. I personally think that we, as believers in Jesus Christ, live in one of the most exciting time in United States history, because our nation and the American people are all going to crap, and it can be seen everywhere, in every state, in every city, in every realm of American life. But we, as believers in Jesus Christ, can affect history and even the direction of our country. This is not a call for political action, but for you to realize that God has placed a heavy burden on us believers, and it is up to us to take in the Word of God and to learn and to grow, and by this spiritual growth, turn our nation around.

Where you are, right now, at your school or in your business or in your military unit, you may even despair to some degree as to the direction our country is heading, and you may have yearned for some great leader to come along and become the president, but our leaders are reflections of us. God gives us the political leaders that we deserve. What is key is the doctrine in your soul and the application of Bible doctrine to your life. That is what turns a nation around and that is what preserves a country and even restores a nation to greatness.

Application: This is particularly true if you are a young person, say 30 or younger. The direction in which our nation goes depends upon what is in your soul; it depends upon your faithfulness to the Word of God (and you must hear the Word of God taught in order to have it in your soul). You might be working your way through school working as a janitor or flipping burgers at some hamburger stand—and you may think that your life is insignificant, but there, you would be wrong. In the Church Age, every believer's life is significant; and it takes only a very small group of believers to turn our country around.

Application: Let me give you an example: Berachah Church, throughout the 1970's was at its peak. R. B. Thieme, Jr. was teaching Bible doctrine 10x a week, and probably 3000–4000 attended (along with at least an equal number outside of Berachah). This one church I believe was responsible for the greatness of the United States in the 1980's, led by President Ronald Reagan at the time. Now, Reagan probably knew nothing about Berachah Church at that time, or of the few thousand believers who were in spiritual maturity or moving in that direction, but, for a time, the United States enjoyed some of its greatest prosperity, some of its greatest peacetime hand-in-hand with the spiritual momentum of these few thousand believers.

Application: Therefore, let me take this time to encourage you, whoever is reading this, to move forward, to get under a good pastor and take in the Word of God daily, soaking up and preserving divine viewpoint in your soul. You are the key and you will make a difference. R. B. Thieme, Jr. said the same thing to me,⁵¹ in many different ways, decades ago, I know without a doubt in my mind that I am a part of the plan of God, an important part due to the grace of God, standing on the shoulders of thousands of men in previous generations who have gone before me; and you will stand upon my shoulders and move God's plan forward. It is a great and exciting time to be alive in these United States, and there is nothing greater than to understand that God works through you to further His plan, just as He did through Hushai the Archite. R. B. Thieme, Jr. called this having a **personal sense of destiny**.

This is one of the many excellent doctrines taught from the pulpit of Berachah Church, and then spread abroad in the souls of others.

Links to the Doctrine of a Personal Sense of Destiny

Wenstom's [PDF document](#) of a personal sense of destiny.

Probably R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s [notes](#) on a personal sense of destiny.

Robert McLaughlin Bible Ministries on a personal sense of destiny (both [written notes](#) and a [sermon](#)).

Short [doctrine](#) from Grace and Truth Ministries, including the [characteristics](#). See also this [document](#).

Abbreviated [doctrine](#) from Mark Williams Ministries.

Possibly a [lesson](#) directed at a younger person from www.GraceDoctrine.org

From [Capitol Ministries](#) (yes, *that* Capitol).

This is certainly an important doctrine, and I offer these links under the concept of not always re-inventing the wheel. Besides, when God uses you, you want to be functioning in his plan with a personal sense of destiny, rather than as the pharaoh of Egypt, whom God used along with his negative volition (Ex. 9:16).

⁵¹ Not personally, but in several sermons.

What ought to be emphasized is, whatever God has planned for you is important and designed for you. If you are antisocial, that is not a problem; if you need to be around people all of the time, God takes that into account. We all have a tremendous potential impact upon the world. And, so that there is no confusion, this does not mean that you need to become some kind of a nutcase, where people hear your name and then think of a reason to be elsewhere.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Samuel 17:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ba'ăbûwr (רובע) [pronounced <i>bah-ġu^b-VOOR</i>]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bēyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
<p>Actually a combination of the bēyth preposition (<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i>) and 'ăbûwr (רובע) [pronounced <i>ġaw^v-BOOR</i>] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i>. Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.</p>			
<p>The lâmed preposition, the bēyth preposition and the word 'ăbûwr (רובע) [pronounced <i>ġaw^v-BOOR</i>] together appear to mean <i>to the intent that, with the intent that; for the intent that, to the end that; in order to</i>. That final definition came from BDB; the others came from the meanings of these words and the context of 2Sam. 17:14.</p>			
bôw' (אוב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to take in, to bring [near, against, upon], to come in with, to carry, to cause to come [in], to gather, to bring to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'el (לָא) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אבולשיבא) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
râ'âh (רַעַר) [pronounced <i>raw-ĠAW</i>]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7451 BDB #949

Translation: ...with the intent that Y^ehowah has brought disaster upon Absalom. God's intent here is to bring disaster (evil) upon Absalom. This advice of Hushai is designed to insure Absalom's defeat in battle. However, this advice is no good unless David knows what is going on. Hushai's advice buys time, because an army from all over Israel cannot be raised overnight. As Prov. 19:21 reads: **Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.**

Therefore, what is going on has to be relayed to David. Hushai will send the information to David via the spy network that David organized while on the run.

This verse reads: **Y^ehowah had ordained to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel** [which counsel would be bad for David and the plan of God]; **with the intent that Y^ehowah has brought disaster upon Absalom** [which result would be good for David and good for the plan of God]. I am not trying to call evil good, and good evil; but there are good things for those who are evil, which good things run contrary to the plan of God and therefore are bad. And there are evil things which might befall evil people, which evil things are good in the plan of God.

All of v. 14 reads: **Absalom then proclaimed** [lit., *said*]**—with every man of Israel, “The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel.”** **Y^ehowah had ordained to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel; with the intent that Y^ehowah has brought disaster upon Absalom.** You may recall from two chapters back, David was hiking up the Mount of Olives with his followers, and then **One made this known to David, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators who have thrown in with Absalom.”** Therefore, **David prayed to God, “Frustrate, O Jehovah, the counsel and advice of Ahithophel.”** (2Sam. 15:31). David prayed to God that He frustrate Ahithophel's counsel, and, a few minutes later, there is Hushai waiting for him, as the answer to his prayer.

On the fly, David had set up an intelligence network within Jerusalem. Information would be deposited with the high priests Zadok and Abiathar; they would pass this information on to their sons, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, who would then get this information to David. It appears as though this information from Hushai is not the only thing which was passed along through this network; however, the immediate plans of Absalom are particularly important to the narrative.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

David's Intelligence Network

In order for Hushai's information to get to David, there will have to be great teamwork among David's spy network, which includes one servant girl and a female patriot who lives on a ranch out on a little land.

And so says Hushai unto Zadok and Abiathar the priests, “As this and as that counseled Ahithophel Absalom and elders of Israel; and as this and as that, I—even I—counseled. 2Samuel 17:15

Hushai later told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, “Accordingly Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel; and accordingly, I counseled [them].

Hushai later told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests of Israel, “This is what Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel and this is what I advised them to do.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And Chusai said to Sadoc and Abiathar the priests: Thus and thus did Achitophel counsel Absalom, and the ancients of Israel: and thus and thus did I counsel them.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Hushai unto Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "As this and as that counseled Ahithophel Absalom and elders of Israel; and as this and as that, I—even I—counseled.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and all the men of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Hushai <u>the Archite</u> said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled.
Significant differences:	The Greek adds in the words <i>the Archite</i> .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Right away, Hushai went to Zadok and Abiathar. He told them what advice Ahithophel had given to Absalom and to the leaders of Israel. He also told them about the advice he had given.
Easy English	Hushai sends a message to David Hushai spoke to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. He told them what Ahithophel had advised Absalom. Then Hushai told them what he had advised Absalom.
Easy-to-Read Version	Hushai told those things to the priests, Zadok and Abiathar. Hushai told them about the things that Ahithophel suggested to Absalom and the leaders of Israel. Hushai also told Zadok and Abiathar about the things that he himself had suggested. {Hushai said},...
New Berkeley Version	Hushai informed Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Ahithophel counseled Absalom and all the elders of Israel in such and such a way, and then I gave my recommendation of so and so.
New Century Version	Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, what Ahithophel had suggested to Absalom and the elders of Israel. He also reported to them what he himself had suggested. A portion of v. 15 has been included with v. 16.
New Life Bible	Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the religious leaders, "This is what Ahithophel said that Absalom and the leaders of Israel should do. And this is what I have said they should do.
The Voice	After Hushai <i>advised Absalom</i> , he went to the priests Zadok and Abiathar. <i>He wasn't certain what Absalom would do</i> , so he told them Ahithophel's plan and his own.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then Hushai (the Arachite) went to Zadok and Abiathar (the Priests), and told them of the advice that Ahithophel gave Absalom and the elders of Israel.
God's Word™	Then Hushai told the priests Zadok and Abiathar, "Ahithophel advised Absalom and the leaders of Israel to do one thing, but I advised them to do something else.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>David Told of the Plan.</i> Then Hushai said to the priests Zadok and Abiathar: "This is the counsel Ahithophel gave Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is what I counseled.
NIRV	Hushai spoke to the priests Zadok and Abiathar. He said, "Ahithophel has given advice to Absalom and the elders of Israel. He suggested that they should do one thing. But I suggested something else.
Today's NIV	Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, "Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the elders of Israel to do such and such, but I have advised them to do so and so.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, This is the suggestion made by Ahithophel to Absalom and the responsible men of Israel, and this is what I said to them.
The Expanded Bible	Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, what Ahithophel had suggested [advised; counseled] to Absalom and the elders of Israel. He also reported to them what he himself had suggested [advised; counseled].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Hushai next informed Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Akhitophel had advised Absalom and the Nobles of Israel in this way; but I have advised him in that."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Then Chusai told the priests, Sadoc and Abiathar, what Achitophel's counsel had been, and what his own;...
NET Bible®	Then Hushai reported to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Here is what Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the leaders [Heb "elders."] of Israel to do, and here is what I have advised.
New Heart English Bible	Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, "Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel that way; and I have counseled this way.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then Hushai said to Tzadok and Evyatar the cohanim, "Achitofel gave such-and-such advice to Avshalom and the leaders of Isra'el, but I advised so and so.
exeGesés companion Bible	Then Hushay says to Sadoq and to Abi Athar the priests, Achiy Thophel counsels thus and thus and Abi Shalom and the elders of Yisra El; and I counsel thus and thus:...
Hebrew Names Version	Then said Chushai to Tzadok and to Avyatar the Kohanim, Thus and thus did Achitofel counsel Avshalom and the elders of Yisra'el; and thus and thus have I counseled.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "In thus and thus manner did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then said Chushai unto Tzadok and to Evyatar (Abiathar) the kohanim, Thus and thus did Achitophel counsel Avshalom and the Ziknei Yisroel; and thus and thus have I counselled.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so have I counseled.
Green's Literal Translation	And Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar, the priests, Ahithophel has counseled this and this to Absalom and the elders of Israel. And I have counseled this and this.
NASB	Hushai's Warning Saves David Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, "This is what [Lit Thus and thus] Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is what [Lit Thus and thus] I have counseled.
New King James Version	Hushai Warns David to Escape Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so I have advised.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 15-29: Victory of Clandestine Warfare} {Verse 15-16 Transmission of Intelligence Information} Then Hushai reported to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, "Ahithophel advised Absalom and the princes/leaders of Israel to do such and such . . ." and I advised thus and thus."

Young's Updated LT

And Hushai says unto Zadok and unto Abiathar the priests, "Thus and thus has Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and thus I have counseled.

The gist of this verse:

Hushai passes along to the priests the advice that he has given and the advice given by Ahithophel (these priests will get this message to David).

2Samuel 17:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Chûwshay (חושׁי) [pronounced <i>khoo-SHAH-ee</i>]	<i>to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צדק or צדק) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'Eb ^e yâthâr (אבִּי־יָתָר) [pronounced <i>eb^e-yaw-THAWR</i>]	<i>the Great One is father; my father is great; transliterated Abiathar</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #54 BDB #5
kôhên (כֹּהֵן) [pronounced <i>koh-HANE</i>]	<i>priest</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3548 BDB #463

Translation: Hushai later told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests,... Hushai was a mole in Absalom's organization; Hushai worked for David. Hushai was there to see that Absalom was brought down. He would therefore lie, cheat and do whatever else was necessary to bring Absalom down. Here, he is passing along information that endangers Absalom and his army; previously, Hushai sold Absalom on an inferior plan to conquer David.

Zadok and Abiathar were Hushai's contact persons (2Sam. 15:35), also loyal to David. Hushai would relay information to them and they would give this information to their sons, who then acted as couriers, and relayed the information to David. In the 2Sam. 15, Zadok and Abiathar came to David, as he was crossing over the Mount of Olives, and David sent them back to Jerusalem, to continue to minister to the people as priests, and to function as his eyes and ears in Jerusalem. David needed to know what was going on there and he needed to be kept informed, if at all possible, of all Absalom's movements and plans.

2Samuel 17:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
zô'th (זֹת) [pronounced zoth]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
zô'th (זֹת) [pronounced zoth]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260
<p>The kaph preposition and demonstrative feminine singular adjective zeh (ה ז) [pronounced zeh], which means <i>here, this</i>. According to BDB, together, they mean <i>the like of this, as follows, things such as this, as this; accordingly, to that effect; in like manner</i>.</p>			
<p>Repeating the zeh's is generally rendered <i>this...that; one another</i>. However, here we have a repetition of both the kaph prepositions. Although BDB suggests <i>thus and thus</i>, translators various render this phrase <i>one as well as another; now one and now another; one person as well as the next; one person as easily as another; in one manner or another; one way at one time and another way at another</i>.</p>			
yâ'ats (אָצַט) [pronounced yaw-GAHTS]	<i>to advise, to counsel; to take counsel; to decree; to consult for [anyone], to provide for; to predict, to declare future thing</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3289 BDB #419
ʾĀchîythôphel (אֲחִי־תֹפֵל) [pronounced uhkh-ee-THOH-fe]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִי־שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

2Samuel 17:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
z ^e qênîym (זקניִים) [pronounced zê-kay-NEEM]	<i>old men; elders; chiefs, respected ones</i>	masculine plural adjective; used as a substantive; construct form	Strong's #2205 BDB #278
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation:...“Accordingly Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel;... Hushai is explaining to Zadok and Abiathar where things stand. He first tells them what Ahithophel advised Absalom, because there is no telling; Absalom might go back and change his mind. Therefore, David needs to know what options have been on the table.

2Samuel 17:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
zô ^h th (זֹה) [pronounced zoth]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
zô ^h th (זֹה) [pronounced zoth]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260

The kaph preposition and demonstrative feminine singular adjective zeh (זֹה) [pronounced zeh], which means *here, this*. According to BDB, together, they mean *the like of this, as follows, things such as this, as this; accordingly, to that effect; in like manner*.

Repeating the zeh's is generally rendered *this...that; one another*. However, here we have a repetition of both the kaph prepositions. Although BDB suggests *thus and thus*, translators variously render this phrase *one as well as another; now one and now another; one person as well as the next; one person as easily as another; in one manner or another; one way at one time and another way at another*.

2Samuel 17:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâ'ats (אָט) [pronounced yaw- <i>ḤAHTS</i>]	<i>to advise, to counsel; to take counsel; to decree; to consult for [anyone], to provide for; to predict, to declare future thing</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3289 BDB #419
'ânîy (אָנִי) [pronounced aw- <i>NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun; pausal form	Strong's #589 BDB #58

Translation: ...and accordingly, I counseled [them]. Then Hushai tells the priests what he advised Absalom to do.

Why does Hushai need to tell David both plans? Why doesn't he say, "This is my plan, the one that Absalom has chosen to follow"? There are three possible reasons. The most likely reason is, even though Hushai was told to his face that Absalom was going to follow his plan; after he leaves the room, he does not know if there is a change that takes place or if Absalom called him in simply to shine him on. It would be exceedingly clever of Absalom to say that he is going to go with Hushai's plan, but then, once Hushai is out of the room say, "We go with Ahithophel's plan; saddle up and attack." Hushai is smart enough to realize that he might be being played. Therefore, both plans have to be revealed. Hushai gives all of the necessary details to Zadok and Abiathar.

There is a second possibility. Absalom might simply change his mind. Hushai does not know Absalom intimately, so he does not know what might happen later.

There is a third possibility as well. Absalom may have listened to Hushai's advice, thanked him for coming in, and then dismissed him. *Then* he tells everyone that he really liked Hushai's advice. Now, I don't think that Absalom is clever enough to do it that way, but possibly he is. The translation of The Voice suggests this particular approach: *After Hushai advised Absalom, he went to the priests Zadok and Abiathar. He wasn't certain what Absalom would do, so he told them Ahithophel's plan and his own.* The italics represent what they have added.

Apart from a reference in 1Chron. 27:33, this will be the last time that we see Hushai. Therefore, it would be good to review his life.

Hushai the Archite

- Hushai is an Archite, either a native of Archi or Erech, which is West of Bethel on the northern border of Benjamin and southern border of Joseph (Joshua 16:2).
- Hushai was one of David's most faithful and wise counselors. When David was fleeing from Jerusalem and Absalom, Hushai met him, having his coat rent and earth on his head.
- He appears to be an older man and a man who could not have kept up with David's forced march out of Jerusalem. 2Sam. 15:33
- The king persuaded him to return to Jerusalem, feign submission to Absalom, and try to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel (2Sam. 15:32–37).
- In fact, David had prayed for God to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel, and then, here is Hushai standing in front of him, and answer to David's prayer. 2Sam. 15:31–32
- Whatever Absalom decided on, Hushai was to send word to David through two young men, sons of the priests Zadok and Abiathar (2Sam. 15:34–36).
- Hushai obeyed, and succeeded in persuading Absalom to adopt his counsel rather than that of Ahithophel (2 Sam 16:16–17:14).
- He sent word to David of the nature of Ahithophel's counsel, and the king made good his escape that

Hushai the Archite

night across the Jordan.

9. The result was the suicide of Ahithophel and the ultimate defeat and death of Absalom.

With Hushai, we learn a great deal about clandestine warfare, a topic which confuses many believers.

Most of this doctrine was taken from *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Hushai.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And now send quickly and make known to David to say, 'You will not lodge the night in plains of the wilderness, and passing over, you will pass over lest is swallowed up to the king and to all the people who [are] with him.' ”

2Samuel
17:16

Now, send quickly [a message] and make known to David, saying, 'Do not lodge the night in the plains of the wilderness, but definitely pass over so that the king is not swallowed up along with all the people who [are] with him.' ”

Quickly send a message to David, telling him, 'Do not lodge the night in the plains of the wilderness, but cross over the Jordan, so that the king is not swallowed up—along with the people with him—by the forces of Absalom.' ”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying: Tarry not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but without delay pass over: lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that is with him.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And now send quickly and make known to David to say, 'You will not lodge the night in plains of the wilderness, and passing over, you will pass over lest is swallowed up to the king and to all the people who [are] with him.'
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now therefore send quickly and tell David, saying, Do not spend the night in the plain of the wilderness, but pass over, lest you and all the people who are with you be destroyed.
Septuagint (Greek)	And now send quickly and report to David, saying, Lodge not this night in Araboth of the wilderness: but go and make haste, lest one swallow up the king, and all the people with him.

Significant differences: Even though there are some slightly different words, they are legitimate translations from the original Hebrew. When we have the doubling of a verb, for instance, the intention can be to *quickly* or *without fail* do whatever the action of the verb is.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible Now send word immediately to David and tell him, 'Don't spend the night in the desert plains. You must cross over immediately. Otherwise, the king and all the troops who are with him will be swallowed up whole.'

Contemporary English V.	Then he said, "Hurry! Send someone to warn David not to spend the night on this side of the river. He must get across the river, so he and the others won't be wiped out!"
Easy English	Hushai said, 'Send a message to David immediately. Tell him, "Tonight, do not stay in the desert where people cross the shallow river. You must go across the river. If you do not, you and all your army will die." '
Easy-to-Read Version	"Quickly! Send {a message} to David. Tell him not to stay tonight at the places where people cross into the desert. Tell him to go across the Jordan River at once. If he crosses the river, then the king and all his people will not be caught."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Hushai added, "Quick, now! Send a message to David not to spend the night at the river crossings in the wilderness, but to cross the Jordan at once, so that he and his men won't all be caught and killed."
<i>The Message</i>	Now send this message as quickly as possible to David: 'Don't spend the night on this side of the river; cross immediately or the king and everyone with him will be swallowed up alive.'
New Century Version	Hushai said, ¹⁶ "Quickly! Send a message to David. Tell him not to stay tonight at the crossings into the desert but to cross over the Jordan River at once. If he crosses the river, he and all his people won't be destroyed."
New Life Bible	So be quick to send someone to tell David, 'Do not stay the night in the desert beside the place where the Jordan is crossed. But cross over, or the king and all the people with him will be destroyed.' "
New Living Translation	"Quick!" he told them. "Find David and urge him not to stay at the shallows of the Jordan River[b] tonight. He must go across at once into the wilderness beyond. Otherwise he will die and his entire army with him."
The Voice	Hushai: ¹⁶ Quickly now, send a messenger to David. Tell the king to move deeper into the wilderness, across the river but away from the fords! If he remains where he is tonight, then he and all his followers will be swallowed by Absalom's forces.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then HushAi (the Arachite) went to ZaDok and AbiAthar (the Priests), and told them of the advice that AhiThophel gave AbSalom and the elders of IsraEl. ¹⁶ And he said, 'Now, send a message to David quickly, so the king and his people aren't caught!'
Christian Community Bible	Therefore send word to David quickly, 'Do not lodge tonight at the desert fords. Go beyond them lest the King and all the men with him be trapped!'
<i>God's Word</i> TM	Now send messengers quickly to tell David, 'Don't rest tonight in the river crossings in the desert, but make sure you cross the river, or Your Majesty and all the troops with him will be wiped out.'
New American Bible (R.E.)	So send a warning to David immediately: 'Do not spend the night at the fords near the wilderness, but cross over without fail. Otherwise the king and all the people with him will be destroyed.'
NIRV	"Send a message right away. Tell David, 'Don't spend the night at the place in the desert where people can go across the Jordan River. Make sure you go on across. If you don't, you and all of the people who are with you will be swallowed up.'"
New Jerusalem Bible	Send with all speed to David and say, "Do not camp in the desert passes tonight, but get through them as fast as you can, or the king and his whole army may be annihilated." '
New Simplified Bible	»Quickly send messengers to tell David: 'Do not rest tonight in the river crossings in the desert. Make sure you cross the river. Otherwise Your Majesty and all the troops with him will be wiped out.'«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Now send in haste and tell David, saying, 'Do not lodge tonight in the plains of the wilderness. Also pass otherwise the king <i>will be</i> devoured, and all the people with him."
Bible in Basic English	So now send the news quickly to David, and say, Do not take your night's rest by the way across the river to the waste land, but be certain to go over; or the king and all the people with him will come to destruction.
The Expanded Bible	Hushai said, ¹⁶ "Quickly! Send a message to David. Tell him not to stay tonight at the crossings into the desert [fords in the wilderness] but to cross over the Jordan River at once. If he crosses the river, he and all his people won't be destroyed [Otherwise the king and everyone with him will be swallowed up]." A portion of v. 15 was included for context.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So now be quick and inform David saying, 'Do not stay to-night at the ford of the desert, but pass over it, for fear the king should be destroyed, and all his forces with him.' "
HCSB	Now send someone quickly and tell David, 'Don't spend the night at the wilderness ford of the Jordan, but be sure to cross over, or the king and all the people with him will be destroyed.'
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Send a message to David, said he, with all speed, telling him not to linger in the desert plain this night, but cross Jordan without delay; else he and all that are with him may be overwhelmed.
NET Bible®	Now send word quickly to David and warn him [Heb "send quickly and tell David saying."], "Don't spend the night at the fords of the desert [Or "wilderness" (so KJV, NASB, NRSV, TEV).] tonight. Instead, be sure you cross over [That is, "cross over the Jordan River."], or else the king and everyone who is with him may be overwhelmed [Heb "swallowed up."]."
NIV, ©2011	Now send a message at once and tell David, 'Do not spend the night at the fords in the wilderness; cross over without fail, or the king and all the people with him will be swallowed up.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Now therefore send quickly and tell David, "Don't stay tonight in the desert plains; but, whatever it takes, move on from there! Otherwise, the king and all the people with him will be engulfed."
exeGesés companion Bible	and now send quickly and tell David, saying, Stay not overnight this night in the plains of the wilderness, but in passing, pass over; lest the sovereign and all the people with him be swallowed.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Now therefore send quickly, and tell Dovid, saying, Spend not halailah (this night) in the plains of the midbar, but speedily cross over; lest HaMelech be swallowed up, and kol haAm that are with him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now send quickly and tell David, Lodge not this night at the fords [at the Jordan] of the wilderness, but by all means pass over, lest the king be swallowed up and all the people with him.
Concordant Literal Version	...and now, send hastily, and declare to David, saying, Lodge not to-night in the plains of the wilderness, and also, certainly pass over, lest there be a swallowing up of the king and of all the people who are with him.

English Standard Version	Now therefore send quickly and tell David, 'Do not stay tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.'"
New King James Version	Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, `Do not spend this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily cross over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.'"
Syndein/Thieme	Now therefore send couriers immediately and make this report to David the advise as follows, "Do not spend the night at the fords of the desert, but rather cross over {the river} without delay; lest the king and all the people who are with him be destroyed." {Note: Absalom is unstable so Hushai is taking no chances that he will change his mind. So he is advising David to keep the Jordan between him and Absalom.}.
World English Bible	Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Don't lodge this night at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people who are with him.
Young's Updated LT	And now, send hastily, and declare to David, saying, Lodge not tonight in the plains of the wilderness, and also, certainly pass over, lest there be a swallowing up of the king and of all the people who are with him."

The gist of this verse: Hushai sends word for David to quickly cross over the Jordan, so that they are not "swallowed up."

2Samuel 17:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘attâh (הַתַּע) [pronounced <i>gâht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w ^e + the adverb ‘attâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>send, send for [forth, away], dismiss, deploy, put forth, stretch out, reach out</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
m ^e hêrâh (מְהֵרָה) [pronounced <i>m^e-hay-RAW</i>]	<i>quickly, hastily, speedily</i>	adverb (this is also used as a feminine noun)	Strong's #4120 BDB #555

Translation: *Now, send quickly [a message]...* This is Hushai the Archite speaking to Zadok and Abiathar, the two priests. This should not seem unusual for him to speak with them, as they are the high priests to Israel and Hushai is a man of stature in Israel, as well as a believer in the Revealed God (which would help to explain David's great trust in him).

David has already set up this spy network, and it appears that intelligence was valued even at this time. In other words, there will be men loyal to Absalom who have an eye out for this or that. They will pay attention to who comes and goes from Jerusalem, and which direction in which they go.

2Samuel 17:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i>]	<i>tell, make conspicuous, make known, expound, explain, declare, inform, confess, make it pitifully obvious that</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: ...and make known to David,... David is the man to speak to, and the intelligence will be given to him. You may recall that the sons of the priests would be used as couriers. This is because they would come and go from Jerusalem and perform various tasks and coordination throughout Israel. However, they have to be careful as to where they are seen going.

As we will find out, there will be an additional contact who goes between Zadok and Abiathar, and their two sons.

2Samuel 17:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'al (אֲלֵ) [pronounced <i>al</i>]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
lîyn (לִּיַן) [pronounced <i>leen</i>]	<i>to lodge, to pass the night, to spend the night, to lodge for the night, to abide</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated	Strong's #3885 BDB #533

The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with *let* or *may*; in the plural, this can be *let us*. The cohortative is designed for the 1st person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this. This might be called *apocopated* in Owen's *Analytical Keys to the Old Testament*.

2Samuel 17:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lay ^e lâh (הַלַּיְלָה) [pronounced LAY-Jaw]	<i>night; that night, this night, the night</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3915 BDB #538
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿĂrâbâh (or, ʿărâbâh) (הַבְּרָעָה) [pronounced guh-raw ^b -VAW]	<i>plain; arid, sterile region; a desert; transliterated Arabah with the definite article</i>	sometimes a proper noun; feminine plural construct	Strong's #6160 BDB #787
mid ^e bâr (הַבְּדָמָה) [pronounced mid ^e -BAWR]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

Translation: ...saying, 'Do not lodge the night in the plains of the wilderness,...' There are two plans on the table, both of which involve an attack upon David. David is not to stay right there at the River Jordan. He told Zadok and Abiathar that he would wait right there for word from them in 2Sam. 15:28. He does not want to have his back against the Jordan River with nowhere to go.

You may ask, "Well, what other kind of possibility is there? Of course David needs to cross the Jordan and get to the other side." Not necessarily so. Absalom, having free reign in Jerusalem, may have chosen to just let sleeping dogs lay, and just begin his rulership over Israel. He may have chosen not to pursue David, which means, David would gather his troops and attack Absalom.

It makes no sense for David to cross over the Jordan and go into east Israel if no one is pursuing him.

As previously discussed, there is the plan of Ahithophel, which is for him to gather 12,000 men and strike David that very night. The plan of Hushai calls for a gathering of the men from all over Israel to pursue David, and for that very large army to be led by Absalom. Although Absalom chose the latter plan of attack, Hushai realizes that Absalom may have changed his mind or even pretended to like Hushai's plan, and then went with Ahithophel's after Hushai was gone. So, Hushai has to hope that Absalom will follow his advice, but he has to advise David as if the attack will be immediate, just in case.

Or, as Barnes observed: *Hushai, like a wise and prudent man, knowing, too, Absalom's weak and fickle character, would not depend upon the resolution, taken at his instigation, not to pursue the king, but took instant measures to advertise David of his danger.*⁵² Gill agrees: *Absalom and the elders of Israel might change their minds, and Ahithophel might, by the strength of his oratory, prevail upon them after all to follow his advice; and therefore, to guard against the worst, he judged it most prudential in David to make all the haste he could from that place where he was, and not continue a night longer in it; for, if Ahithophel's counsel should take place, he would be in pursuit of him that very night.*⁵³ At least 5 commentators came to this conclusion, as did I.

⁵² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:16.

⁵³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:16.

2Samuel 17:16d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gam (גם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
‘âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>ġaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
<p>The infinitive absolute has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add <i>ing</i> to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form.⁵⁴</p>			
‘âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>ġaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i>]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
bâla‘ (עָלַב) [pronounced <i>baw-LAHĠ</i>]	<i>to be swallowed up; to be destroyed, to perish</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Pual imperfect	Strong's #1104 BDB #118
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

⁵⁴ *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

2Samuel 17:16d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
’āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
’ēth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: ...but definitely pass over so that the king is not swallowed up along with all the people who [are] with him.’ ” David is told to definitely pass over the Jordan River, otherwise that he and those with him might perish in an attack that left them with their backs to the Jordan River. This indicates that Hushai is certain that David will be attacked by Absalom. However, from the previous verse, it is also clear that he does not know which plan Absalom will follow. Therefore, David must be prepared for either attack—either Absalom not coming himself but sending Ahithophel almost immediately, who would be leading 12,000 troops; or Absalom leading a much larger army against David.

V. 16 reads: Quickly send a message to David, telling him, ‘Do not lodge the night in the plains of the wilderness, but cross over the Jordan, so that the king is not swallowed up—along with the people with him—by the forces of Absalom.’ ” Hushai is speaking to Zadok and Abiathar, probably privately, as one might speak to a Catholic priest today (which are not correctly a specialized priesthood⁵⁵).

And Jonathan and Ahimaaz are standing in En-rogel and went the maidservant and she made known to them and they [even] they go and make known to the King David (for they are not able to be seen to enter the city-ward).

2Samuel
17:17

Meanwhile [lit., and], Jonathan and Ahimaaz are waiting in En-rogel. A maidservant would go and tell them [wartime intelligence], and then they would go and tell King David (for they could not be seen entering into the city [of Jerusalem]).

Meanwhile, Jonathan and Ahimaaz would wait in En-rogel. When intelligence was gathered, a maidservant would go and tell them, then they would go and inform King David. They could not be seen entering into Jerusalem.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

⁵⁵ All believers are priests. A priest represents man to God, and we are able to represent ourselves to God (1Peter 2:9–10). In the Old Testament, there was a specialized priesthood descended from Aaron (it is more legitimately called the Aaronic priesthood rather than the Levitical priesthood); and the high priest represented Jesus Christ, our High Priest (Heb. 4:14–16).

Latin Vulgate	And Jonathan and Achimaas stayed by the fountain Rogel: and there went a maid and told them: and they went forward, to carry the message to king David, <u>for they might not be seen, nor enter into the city.</u>
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Jonathan and Ahimaaz are standing in En-rogel and went the maidservant and she made known to them and they [even] they go and make known to the King David (for they are not able to be seen to enter the city-ward).
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now Nathan and Ahimaaz were standing by the side of the fountain of the palace, so they might not be seen to enter the city; and a maidservant went and told them; and they went and told King David.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Jonathan and Ahimaaz stood by the Well of Rogel, and a maidservant went and reported to them, and they went to tell King David; so that they might not be seen entering into the city.

Significant differences: The Latin takes the final phrase and breaks it into two separate ideas.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were standing by at En-rogel. A female servant would come and report to them, and they would then travel and report to King David because they couldn't risk being seen entering the city.
Contemporary English V.	Jonathan and Ahimaaz had been waiting at Rogel Spring because they did not want to be seen in Jerusalem. A servant girl went to the spring and gave them the message for David.
Easy English	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En Rogel. They did not want anyone to see them go into that town. So, a servant girl went out from the town and she gave them messages. Then Jonathan and Ahimaaz went to tell King David.
Easy-to-Read Version	{The priests' sons,} Jonathan and Ahimaaz, waited at En Rogel. They did not want to be seen going into the town, so a servant girl came out to them. She gave them the message. Then Jonathan and Ahimaaz went and told those things to King David.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Abiathar's son Jonathan and Zadok's son Ahimaaz were waiting at the spring of Enrogel, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, because they did not dare be seen entering the city. A servant woman would regularly go and tell them what was happening, and then they would go and tell King David.
<i>The Message</i>	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting around at En Rogel. A servant girl would come and give them messages and then they would go and tell King David, for it wasn't safe to be seen coming into the city.
New Century Version	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En Rogel. They did not want to be seen going into the city, so a servant girl would go out to them and give them messages. Then Jonathan and Ahimaaz would go and tell King David.
New Life Bible	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at Enrogel. And a woman servant would go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David. For they could not be seen coming into the city.
New Living Translation	Jonathan and Ahimaaz had been staying at En-rogel so as not to be seen entering and leaving the city. Arrangements had been made for a servant girl to bring them the message they were to take to King David.
The Voice	<i>The priests' sons</i> , Jonathan and Ahimaaz, were waiting at En-rogel <i>for news</i> . A servant girl would bring them messages because they couldn't risk being seen entering the city. <i>When they had something to report</i> , they would go tell King David.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, JoNathan and AhiMaAz had stopped at Rogel Springs. And a young female servant came to them there and gave them the message; so, they went to report it to King David. However, they didn't want to be seen entering the city.
Christian Community Bible	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at Enrogel where a maidservant regularly went to report to them so they could go and tell king David, for they themselves must not be seen in the city.
New American Bible	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En-rogel, since they could not risk being seen entering the city. A maidservant was to come with information for them, and they in turn were to go and report to King David.
NIRV	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En Rogel just outside Jerusalem. They knew they would be in danger if anyone saw them entering the city. A female servant was supposed to go and tell them what had happened. Then they were supposed to go and tell King David.
New Jerusalem Bible	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were posted at the Fuller's Spring; a servant-girl was to go and warn them and they in turn were to warn King David, since they could not give themselves away by coming into the city themselves.
Revised English Bible	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel, and a servant-girl sued to go and tell them what happened and they would pass it on to King David; for they dared not risk being seen entering the city.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Jonathan and Ahimaaz stood by En-Rogel. A handmaid went and told them, and they went and told King David, for they could not <i>be</i> seen coming to the city.
Bible in Basic English	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting by En-rogel; and a servant-girl went from time to time and gave them news and they went with the news to King David, for it was not wise for them to let themselves be seen coming into the town.
The Expanded Bible	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En Rogel. They did not want to ·be [risk being] seen going into the city, so a servant girl would go out to them and give them messages. Then Jonathan and Ahimaaz would go and tell King David.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Now Jonathan and Akhimatz were posted at Ain-rogel, and a girl was sent to inform them, and they went to inform King David, so that none might be able to see them leaving the city.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Jonathan and Achimaas stood at their post by the spring of Rogel, and a maid-servant must go and give them the message before they could take it to king David; they did not dare shew themselves in the city.
NET Bible®	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying in En Rogel. A female servant would go and inform them, and they would then go and inform King David. It was not advisable for them to be seen going into the city.
New Heart English Bible	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying by En Rogel; and a female servant used to go and tell them; and they went and told king David. For they might not be seen to come into the city.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Y'honatan and Achima'atz were staying at 'Ein-Rogel; a female servant was to go and tell them, and they in turn were to go and tell King David - for it would not do to have them seen entering the city.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yah Nathan and Achiy Maas stay by En Rogel; for they cannot be seen to come into the city; and a maid goes and tells them; and they go and tell sovereign David:...

Judaica Press Complete T.	And Jonathan and Ahimaaz were standing by En-rogel; and the maidservant went and she told them that they should go notify King David; for they were not to be seen coming into the city.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Now Yonatan and Achima'atz stayed by Ein-Rogel; for they dared not be seen to come into the Ir; and a shifchah went and told them; and they went and told Dovid HaMelech.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Yehonathan and Ahima'ats were stationed at Ĕn Roḡēl, and a female servant would come and inform them, and they would go and inform Sovereign Dawid, for they could not be seen entering the city.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now [the youths] Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed at En-rogel, for they must not be seen coming into the city. But a maidservant went and told them, and they went and told King David.
English Standard Version	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel. A female servant was to go and tell them, and they were to go and tell King David, for they were not to be seen entering the city.
The Geneva Bible	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 [Meaning, the message from their fathers.]; and they went and told king David.
Green's Literal Translation	And Jonathan and Ahimaaz were standing at En-rogel, for they were not able to be seen going into the city. And a slave-girl went and told them. And they went and told <i>it</i> to King David.
New RSV	Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel; a servant-girl used to go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David; for they could not risk being seen entering the city.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 17-29: Hospitality Passage} {Intelligence Link- Priests to David} Because they could not risk being seen entering the city, Jonathan and Ahimaaz were standing by at Enrogel where a young female domestic was supposed to go and inform them. Consequently, they in turn would go and inform king David.
Third Millennium Bible	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel, for they dared not be seen to come into the city; and a maidservant went and told them, and they went and told King David.
A Voice in the Wilderness	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed at En Rogel, for they dared not be seen coming into the city; so a slave girl came and reported to them, and they went and reported to King David.
World English Bible	Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying by En Rogel; and a maid-servant used to go and tell them; and they went and told king David: for they might not be seen to come into the city.
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan and Ahimaaz are standing at En-Rogel, and the maid-servant has gone and declared to them—and they go and have declared it to king David—for they are not able to be seen to go in to the city.

The gist of this verse: Jonathan and Ahimaaz, the sons of the priests, would wait for intelligence to be passed to them in En-rogel. Then they would surreptitiously pass along this information to King David.

2Samuel 17:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>]	<i>Jehovah has given, whom Jehovah gave, a gift of Jehovah; alternate spelling; transliterated Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀchîymaʿats (אֶחָיִמָּאֵץ) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-ǵahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
ʿâmad (עֹמֵד) [pronounced <i>ǵaw-MAHD</i>]	<i>those taking a stand, the ones standing [nearby], remaining ones; attendants; are standing, are remaining, are waiting, are enduring</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿĒyn (עַיִן) [pronounced <i>ǵayn</i>]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine singular noun	from Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Rôgêl (רֹגֵל) [pronounced <i>row-GAYL</i>]	<i>From the verb which means, to move the feet, to foot it, to tread, to go about</i>	similar to the 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	from Strong's #7270 BDB #920

Together ʿĒyn Rôgêl (עַיִן-רֹגֵל) [pronounced *ǵayn-row-GAYL*], which means *fountain of the traveler*. Strong's #5883 BDB #744 & #920). This is called the *Fuller's Fountain* in the targum.⁵⁶ There was *probably a fountain [there] where fullers cleansed their clothes; and was called Rogel, as Jarchi and Kimchi say, because they used to tread them with their feet when they washed them.*⁵⁷

Translation: *Meanwhile* [lit., *and*], *Jonathan and Ahimaaz are waiting in En-rogel*. In this verse, we have the nuts and bolts of the intelligence operation that David set up. The two priests, Zadok and Abiathar are in Jerusalem, ministering to the people. Therefore, interaction with them among the people would be expected. So, Hushai going to them would not be considered an unusual event. However, anyone thought to be sympathetic to David would be watched. So, at the same time, it would not be unusual for men belonging to Absalom to interact with these priests, not necessarily for spiritual refreshment, but so that they can watch the priests.

⁵⁶ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:17.

⁵⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Joshua 15:7.

So, we cannot have the priests speak directly to their sons, and then their sons suddenly leave Jerusalem, traveling along the same route as David. That would have caused immediate suspicion. So, the two fathers, Zadok and Abiathar ministered in Jerusalem. Their sons, Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed in En-rogel.

Smith writes⁵⁸ that Enrogel is *a spring which formed one of the landmarks on the boundary line between Judah (Joshua 15:7) and Benjamin (Joshua 18:16)*. Later, Adonijah will kill sheep and oxen as offerings here, *by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel*, anticipating his father David's death. He did this in a manner which proclaimed him as king. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown writes *[This is] the fuller's well in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with that of Jehoshaphat.*⁵⁹ There are two modern sites proposed for the location of this spring, which ISBE⁶⁰ goes into great detail on.

What needs to happen is what appears on the surface as normal interaction between a number of parties. By this time, these sons are adults. Therefore, their lives would be led separate from their parents.

What appears to be the case in En-rogel was, it was a place where clothes were taken to be washed by treading on them with one's feet.⁶¹ In this case, a slave girl might lead a burrow who is carrying a large but light load of clothing. So, this may have simply been the Laundromat of the ancient world where one might go with a heavy load of clothes. There might be a steady stream of water over rocks, where the clothing could be placed and stepped upon and cleaned thoroughly. This may have even occurred at a particular time of the year. Therefore, this would be routine to see a slave woman carrying a load of clothing to be washed, even though this is over a little bit of a distance. So the one person carrying a message to eventually go to David, the one person who is walking out of Jerusalem with a message that means life or death for David, is the one person that no one sees, that no one notices. "What's her name?" "I don't know." "She's the slave girl who serves at the Jerusalem tabernacle, I think." But even this misrepresents the situation. She is not even noticed enough to have a conversation about. She is such an unknown that Guzik⁶² fails to even mention her in his commentary on this chapter; and she is barely mentioned in Matthew Henry's commentary⁶³ on this chapter (several commentators, in fact, do not even mention her—this is how unnoticeable this woman is). I suspect that this is an older woman, not that attractive, and just not noticed; and yet, the success or failure of the revolution depends upon her getting this message to the sons of the priests.

Also, this is not a situation which occurs one time with this particular situation with Hushai. This is not the only time that intelligence was gotten to David. This appears to be a regular thing. The Qal active participle even suggests that this is their vocation (temporary as it may be). This is why the sons were in En-rogel—they were waiting, and they did this regularly. Now, they had normal day-to-day activities that they participated in, but they were ready here to be informed, which information they would pass along to David.

Apparently they set all of this up in a very organized fashion, attempting to have a network of informants, but without looking as though they have disrupted their own personal daily lives. Where they are is probably typical of their lives. No one ought to be remarking, "Isn't that odd? Jonathan and Ahimaaz are now living in En-rogel. When did they move there?" When it comes to the movement of intelligence, things need to appear to be normal. In fact, their cover is nearly blown near the end of this chapter because they are seen and thought to be out of place.

⁵⁸ Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: En-Rogel. Also information from ISBE has been added.

⁵⁹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 17:17.

⁶⁰ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: En-Rogel.

⁶¹ See Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:17.

⁶² *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 17:17–22.

⁶³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:15–21.

We do not know how many messages have been passed at this point. Probably one or two, telling David what was occurring in Jerusalem (“Absalom entered into Jerusalem today; he was accompanied by approximately this many soldiers;” “Your mistresses are being raped by Absalom;” “Absalom has met with his counsel of elders today.”) However, we ought to also bear in mind that all of this is happening quite suddenly. This could be the first day of the rapes, and a message has to be gotten to David immediately, just in case Ahithophel’s plan A is put into action. If that is the case then this could be the first message to travel through this particular network.

This is not the only network of communication. In fact, even before this network was set up, you may recall that David was still getting intelligence reports. When David was still in Jerusalem, [a messenger came to David, saying, “The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom.”](#) (2Sam. 15:13). David then acted on that intelligence report and left Jerusalem (2Sam. 15:14). Then, when ascending the Mount of Olives, you will recall that David received a second intelligence report: [And one told David, saying, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.” And David said, “O Jehovah, I pray You, frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel.”](#) (2Sam. 15:31). This is also interesting to note David’s reaction to each report: in the first report, David acted, because he could; in the second report, David went to God to ask God to act.

Application: This is very much how a mature believer acts. There are times when the mature believer acts and there are times when the mature believer prays. And there are times when the mature believer prays and then he acts (which David would do later on in 2Sam. 15). How do you know when to do which one? Spiritual maturity. How do you become spiritually mature? You spend as much time as possible in fellowship and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, which comes through the teaching of the Word of God.

This is very much **the serenity prayer**, also known as the Alcoholics Anonymous prayer: *God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.* The only problem with the *serenity prayer* is, where does this *wisdom* come from? Prov. 1:1–7 tells us: [\[These are\] the proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: \[given, for the hearer\] To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth. Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Y^ehowah is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. The beginning of true knowledge is the fear of Y^ehowah, which means salvation comes first \(faith in Christ\). Then we build knowledge upon the gospel. We don’t pray for it to suddenly come to us out of nowhere; it comes through the teaching of the Word of God. We may pray for our understanding to be strengthened and we may pray for our concentration to be focused, but this wisdom comes from learning the Word of God and then applying the Word of God.](#)

od grant me
 the erenity
 to accept the things
 I cannot change
ourage to
 change the things I can
 and the isdom
 to know the difference

From [WordPress](#). Accessed April 19, 2013.

God the Holy Spirit, by the text here ([Meanwhile, Jonathan and Ahimaaz would wait in En-rogel...](#)), indicates that this network was set up; but He conveys only the most important message to us, the one sent by Hushai. It is the only message that we will concern ourselves with.

2Samuel 17:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

2Samuel 17:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bôw' (בֹּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
shiph ^e châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgad (נִגַּד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: [A maidservant would go and tell them \[wartime intelligence\],...](#) In the English, this translation sounds better calling this woman *a maidservant*, rather than *the maidservant*, but we are speaking of a specific maidservant here. One particular woman was entrusted with this job. This tells us that it would be typical to send servants and maidservants out to do a variety of chores, which included traveling from place to place with specific duties to be performed. Abraham sent out his servant to find a wife for his son Isaac.

A maidservant is going to be one of the least-noticed women in the ancient world. They went from here to there to accomplish this or that task. Perhaps to go to a neighboring city to deliver something or to pick up something. She would not be seen as a key player in a spy network. People knew the priests and most knew their sons; but they might not even take any notice of a slave girl (there were a number of them which served at the tabernacle—1Sam. 2:22). We do not even know this unknown woman was. Her name is not given here, not because she is unimportant, but to emphasize her anonymity. She is so unknown that her name is not even known here. Someone has to travel out of Jerusalem; and they cannot travel far; and they have to be someone that no one suspects. Absalom will have his eyes and ears out, but they will not see this woman. She will slip past them underneath the radar. She probably has a load of clothes to wash, and who would suspect a washwoman?

We tend to examine history and historical events in terms of particular people who stand out—a president, a general, a great soldier. But that is not what we have here, and I suspect, there have been many major historical events whose outcome depended upon someone whose name we do not know, whose face we have never seen. What they have done might have been quite intentional, like the act of this slave woman; and sometimes, their actions may have been quite arbitrary, and yet, their actions changed history. Here are **6 people** whose images are iconic, yet we do not know who they are. There are **10 scientists** who change the world, but whom most of us do not know. And there is this one woman, the link between Zadok and Abiathar and their two sons, this connection which changed the tide of the Absalom revolution.

It is interesting that the Bible often names individuals who are a part of the narrative—and in fact, tells us more than we are interested in, like Amasa in v. 25—but in the next few verses, there will be 4 people who are not specifically named. In fact, the outcome of the revolution will depend upon these 4 people. The first is this slave girl.

Application: In the Church Age, every believer has the empowerment of the Holy Spirit; and every believer can have an eternal impact upon history. When it comes to the major impact of a Christian, many of us think of Bill Graham, who evangelized millions of people. But every believer in Jesus Christ has that same potential—not necessarily in terms of human recognition, but in terms of impact. All of this goes back to a **personal sense of destiny**.

2Samuel 17:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hêm (הֵם) [pronounced <i>haym</i>]	<i>they, those; themselves; these</i> [with the definite article]	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i>]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: ...and then they would go and tell King David... Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar; they told this unnamed maidservant, and she told Jonathan and Ahimaaz. Then Jonathan and Ahimaaz were close enough to David to go to him and relay whatever intelligence had been gathered, and generally, they could travel to David without being detected.

The addition of the personal pronoun here indicates that these young men told David directly; there were no other intermediaries.

2Samuel 17:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

2Samuel 17:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lō' (לוֹ' or לוֹ') [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yākōl (יָכוֹל) [also yākōwl (יָכוֹל)] [pronounced yaw-COAL]	<i>to be able, can, to have the ability, to have the power to; to be able to bear; to be able to bring oneself [to do anything]; to be lawful, to be permitted; to be powerful, to prevail</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3201 BDB #407
With the negative, this means <i>cannot, to be unable to, to lack the ability to, to be powerless to, to lack permission to, to lack the power to.</i>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to be seen, to be visible; to let oneself be seen, to appear; to present oneself; to be provided [cared] for (i.e., looked after)</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bōw' (בָּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'îyr (עִיר) [pronounced geer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article; with the directional hê	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

The directional hê is the *âh* (ה) ending to a noun, usually found after a verb of motion. This is called the *directive hê* or the *he locale*, which often indicates direction and puts somewhat of an adverbial spin on the noun. Essentially, it answers the question *where?* The pronunciation of the word does not change. The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun *heaven* and the most literal rendering in the English would be *heavenward*. We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions *to* or *toward*.

Translation:...[\(for they could not be seen entering into the city \[of Jerusalem\]\)](#). What we could not have is a link of someone going from Jerusalem to David. This is why these men could not be seen going into Jerusalem. As we will find out later on, there were eyes out for anyone going to David. There were eyes out for anyone who appeared to be out of place. So Absalom had his own network of informants set up. He had his own slogans throughout Jerusalem: "If you see anything, tell someone." Absalom's network could operate more freely, as Absalom was the one in charge. It was very likely that there were a number of people who were under watch, or who were known about, so that any unusual activity would be noticed. These two sons of the two priests could not be allowed to be seen going in and out of Jerusalem. They knew that they were being monitored to some degree. However, what was most carefully monitored was anyone who went in and out of Jerusalem. We do not know if Ahithophel or Absalom instituted that policy, but, for them, it was a wise policy.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Jonathan and Ahimaaz, David's Intelligence Couriers, Avoid Capture

And so sees them a youth and so he makes [this] known to Absalom. And depart two of them quickly. And so they come unto a house of a man in Bahurim and to him a well in his courtyard; and so they go down there.

2Samuel
17:18

A youth saw them and made this known to Absalom. Both of them departed quickly. They came to the house of a man in Bahurim and he had a well in his courtyard. Therefore, they went down there [into the well].

A young man saw them and made this information known to Absalom. Both of them, when they realized they had been spotted, departed from there quickly. When they came to a man's house in Bahurim who had a well in his courtyard, they descended into the well.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	But a certain boy saw them, and told Absalom: but they making haste went into the house of a certain man in Bahurim, who had a well in his court, and they went down into it.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sees them a youth and so he makes [this] known to Absalom. And depart two of them quickly. And so they come unto a house of a man in Bahurim and to him a well in his courtyard; and so they go down there.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom; but they both went away, and came into the house of a man of Beth-hurim who had a well in his courtyard; and they went down into it.
Septuagint (Greek)	But a young man saw them and told Absalom: and the two went quickly, and entered into the house of a man in Bahurim; and he had a well in his court, and they went down into it.
Significant differences:	No serious differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	But a young man saw them and went to tell Absalom. So Jonathan and Ahimaaz left and hurried to the house of a man who lived in Bahurim. Then they climbed down into a well in the courtyard.
Easy English	But a young man saw them. He went and told Absalom. So, Jonathan and Ahimaaz left quickly. They went to a man's house in the town of Bahurim. He had a well in his garden. Jonathan and Ahimaaz climbed down into the well.
Good News Bible (TEV)	But one day a boy happened to see them, and he told Absalom; so they hurried off to hide in the house of a certain man in Bahurim. He had a well near his house, and they got down in it.
New Berkeley Version	But a boy observed them and reported it to Absalom; so they both traveled rapidly and got to the house of a man in Bahurim who had a well in his courtyard; and down into it they went.
New Life Bible	But a boy saw them, and told Absalom. So the two of them left in a hurry and came to the house of a man in Bahurim. He had a well in the open space in the center of his house. And they went down into it.
New Living Translation	But a boy spotted them at En-rogel, and he told Absalom about it. So they quickly escaped to Bahurim, where a man hid them down inside a well in his courtyard.

The Voice But this time *they were careless, and* a boy saw them and reported it to Absalom. So the two men fled to the house of a man in Bahurim. There was a well in the courtyard, and they lowered themselves into it.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible But a young man had noticed them and sent a report to AbSalom. So, the two ran to the house of a man [they knew] in BaUrim and hid in a cistern in his courtyard.

Christian Community Bible But a lad saw them and reported to Absalom. The two hurriedly left the place and entered the house of a man of Ba-hurim who had a well in his courtyard, and they got down into it.

God's Word™ But a young man saw Jonathan and Ahimaaz and told Absalom. So both of them left quickly and came to the home of a man in Bahurim who had a cistern in his courtyard, and they went down into it.

New American Bible (R.E.) but an attendant did see them and informed Absalom. They hurried on their way and reached the house of a man in Bahurim who had a cistern in his courtyard. They let themselves down into it, and the woman took the cover and spread it over the mouth of the cistern, strewing crushed grain on the cover so that nothing could be noticed. V. 19 was included for context.

New Jerusalem Bible A young man saw them nonetheless and told Absalom. The pair of them, however, made off quickly, reaching the house of a man in Bahurim. In his courtyard was a storage-well and they got down into it.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear But a lad saw them and told Absalom. The two went in haste, and came into a man's house in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard, and they descended there.

Bible in Basic English But a boy saw them, and gave word of it to Absalom: so the two of them went away quickly, and came to the house of a man in Bahurim who had a water-hole in his garden, and they went down into it.

The Expanded Bible But a boy [lad; young man] saw Jonathan and Ahimaaz and told Absalom. So Jonathan and Ahimaaz left quickly and went to a man's house in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard, and they climbed down into it.

Ferar-Fenton Bible A young man, however, saw them and reported to Absalom. The two, however, ran quickly and came to the house of a man in Bak-hurim, who had a well in his courtyard, and they went down into it.

New Advent (Knox) Bible Even so a lad saw them, and told Absalom, and they must turn aside with all speed into the house of a man at Bahurim, that had a well by the porch of it, and climb down into this for safety.

NET Bible® But a young man saw them on one occasion and informed Absalom. So the two of them quickly departed and went to the house of a man in Bahurim. There was a well in his courtyard, and they got down in it.

NIV – UK But a young man saw them and told Absalom. So the two of them left at once and went to the house of a man in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard, and they climbed down into it.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible ...and a lad sees them and tells Abi Shalom:
and both of them go away quickly
and come to a house of the man in Bachurim
which has a well in his court
- wherein they descend:...

Orthodox Jewish Bible Nevertheless a na'ar saw them, and told Avshalom; but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a bais ish in Bachurim, which had a be'er (well) in his khatzer; to where they went down.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And a youth sees them, and declares to Absalom; and they go on both of them hastily, and come in unto the house of a man in Bahurim, and he has a well in his court, and they go down there,...
English Standard Version	But a young man saw them and told Absalom. So both of them went away quickly and came to the house of a man at Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard. And they went down into it.
NASB	But a lad did see them and told Absalom; so the two of them departed quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard, and they went down into it [Lit there].
Syndein/Thieme	Nevertheless a teenager/hippy observed saw them, and betrayed on them to Absalom. However, both of them departed quickly, and came to a man's chateau in Bahurim, and 'he had a great cistern in a courtyard' {idiom: literally: 'an unto him . . . a well in the courtyard' this was a cry cistern where he kept supplies and could hide people if necessary - now it was empty because Azmaveth had taken his supplies and men out to help David} whither they went down. {Note: RBT says that the man here is Azmaveth (see I Chronicles 27:25).}
Webster's Bible Translation	Nevertheless, a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; into which they descended.
World English Bible	But a boy saw them, and told Absalom: and they went both of them away quickly, and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; and they went down there.
Young's Updated LT	And a youth sees them, and declares to Absalom; and they go on both of them hastily, and come in unto the house of a man in Bahurim, and he has a well in his court, and they go down there.

The gist of this verse: On this particular occasion, a young men sees them, and they know that they are seen. The young man reports this to Absalom, and the sons of the priest hide out in a well.

In this verse, we have an interesting sprinkling of wâw consecutive and wâw conjunctions. This may help to see how time is revealed by the use of wâw consecutives and imperfect verbs.

2Samuel 17:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (הָאָר) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

2Samuel 17:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them</i> ; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
na'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced NAH-gahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654

Translation: A youth saw them... The first thing that happens is, a young man sees them. As we will later see, the youth knows their identities, which is not unusual, as they are the sons of the priests; and they are, apparently, out of place.

Now, it is quite normal for the youth to follow revolutionaries, or to follow people that they see as being revolutionary. Revolutionary movements often go after the youth—even to the point of brainwashing them—because of their enthusiasm, dedication and lack of historical perspective. It is easy to sell a young person on a utopian vision of the world, to be brought in by the revolution.

Exactly what was said or how this all happened, we are not told. The age of this youth is up for grabs—is he 12, 16, 22? But this verse suggests that the sons of the priests knew that they were being observed. The youth will run to Absalom and they will run to hide. My guess is, the young man had to be old enough to know who these men were and why they were out of place. For that reason, I would place him in his 20's.

Revolutionary movements often go after the youth—even to the point of brainwashing them—because of their enthusiasm, dedication and lack of historical perspective. It is easy to sell a young person on a utopian vision of the world, to be brought in by the revolution.

The youth is not named, but he stands for the principle of youth in a revolution. They are very pliable and it is easy to get them to do evil things. A leader needs to be able to speak to him, much as candidate Obama **spoke** to the youth of America. Young people are superficial, so they like their leaders to be handsome and charismatic. They like for them to sound intelligent and to sound concerned, all of the things which Absalom is (and which President Obama is). They want *new and improved*. They want a leader who can speak to and for their generation.

For the young person, they don't see real-life long term. They do not have a realistic vision of the world long-term. You can, for instance, convince affluent young people that they can bring peace to this world. I even know Christians who believe this, even though they know that Jesus said, **"You will have wars and rumors of wars until I return."** It is quite easy to blind a young person with propaganda, with promises of change and hope and a great future. A skilled politician can sell such a vision, but, at the same time, be ruining the future for the same young people who adore him.

Application: I write this in the year 2013, and President Obama is adding mountains of debt to the United States. This not only slows our economy in the short term, but it places a great burden on the backs of the young people who adore him. They will grow up; they will get decent-paying jobs; and they will suddenly find themselves faces with an almost unimaginable weight of debt. Whatever all of that spending was supposed to have provided will not be there; they won't be able to say, "I know, as an American citizen, I am greatly in debt, but I have all of these tangible assets and wealth all around me which this debt purchased." That won't be the case. There won't be anything that they can point to and say, "We may be in debt, but that debt got us this and that." There will still be large segments of government saying, "The rich are not paying their fair share; corporations are getting away with

murder on their tax obligation; we [the government] need more money.” And because the word *investment* sounded so good, 20 years from now, unless this word is exposed for what it really is (profligate government spending), government officials will be telling them, the government needs to make more investments for the future. And, at that point, some of them will realize, “Holy crap, I was so duped!”

My point in this is, youth are easy for certain leaders to capture. Slogans, utopian visions, class warfare, etc. are all effective tools. They have a rebelliousness toward their parents; they have very little by way of personal assets, and yet, they look around and see people who have money and success (older people). They can be convinced that is unfair. And these tools work even better if the child has been exposed to a lifelong education of socialism and the need for the welfare state, as occurs in the United States, Europe, and the many socialist countries throughout the world.

Application: I recall at age 18 hearing for the first time ever a conservative point of view espoused by my political science teacher at American River College. Quite frankly, I was surprised. He made it seem reasonable and logical, something which, as a young liberal who had heard no other viewpoint, interested me. He did not convert me, but I remembered that profession for many decades to come and took 2 more classes from him. However, for most young people today, they don’t hear any of this. They hear a liberal view of history in high school, and liberal interpretation of history and economics in college, and it never occurs to them that they are brainwashed. They see their opinions backed up by both television programs and news programs, so how can they be wrong?

This man looks at Absalom, and he is a leader for his generation; he is slick, he is cool, he is handsome and he is brilliant. He is not stodgy like his father David. He is not this hypocrite like his father David. He is not so caught up in religion like his father David. It is a new time and a new age; this new world demands Absalom; David had his day and that day is gone. Such are the thoughts of this young person. If you understand this, then you understand why this young man was so quick to run to Absalom with this information. Now you understand how Absalom has captured the imagination, if you will, of the youth of his country.

Application: This is why, in the 2008 election, young people could view this vibrant, energetic, intelligent-sounding and handsome Barack Obama and conclude that he was so much better than that old stodgy McCain fellow. No contest.

We do not know exactly how the youth sees the priests’ sons, or how he knows that there is something wrong, but something is out of place. Jonathan and Ahimaaz are moderately well-known throughout the kingdom; they are recognizable, much as Hollywood celebrities are recognizable in the United States (and elsewhere). This young man sees them, and either they are acting suspiciously, or he does not expect to see them here—much like you standing in line at the local HEB, and you look behind you, and Justin Beiber is there with a cart full of groceries.

2Samuel 17:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong’s #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le’]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510

2Samuel 17:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...and made this known to Absalom. This youth, in some way, makes this information known to Absalom. We do not know the formality of the palace, or even if there was any sort of protocol, because Absalom is new at this. I would guess that direct contact was established between the youth and Absalom. Whether any of Absalom's staff was there, like Hushai or Ahithophel, we do not know.

2Samuel 17:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
sh ^e nêy (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>sh^en-Ā</i>]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of; both of</i>	dual numeral with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
m ^e hêrâh (מְהֵרָה) [pronounced <i>m^e-hay-RAW</i>]	<i>quickly, hastily, speedily</i>	adverb (this is also used as a feminine noun)	Strong's #4120 BDB #555

Translation: Both of them departed quickly. Jonathan and Ahimaaz recognized that they had been recognized, so they quickly departed from wherever they were. What seems to be the case is, they are out of place there, wherever they were seen. When they were observed, they knew this was problematic, and left that area quickly.

You will note that there are two wâw consecutives above; and then, in v. 18c, a wâw conjunction. This means that the events in v. 18a–b are consecutive events; however, what occurs here in v. 18c is not. It occurs actually in between 18a and 18b. However, we follow the action of the youth first, then we go back and look at what Jonathan and Ahimaaz did after they were discovered.

There is no indication of there being any interaction between this youth and the sons of the priests. Whether the young man said, "Aren't you the priests' sons? What are you doing here? What would King Absalom think about this?" Apparently, it is not unusual for them to be in En-rogel; but where they are seen is out of place.

It is also possible that this young man may have seen them, and then ran off, making them nervous, and causing them to move out quickly.

2Samuel 17:18d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (לָא) [pronounced <i>eh]</i>	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
bayith (תֵּיב) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
'îysh (שִׂיא) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Bachûrîym (בִּירוֹחַב) [pronounced <i>bahk-oo-REEM</i>]	<i>young men; young men's village; and is transliterated Bahurim</i>	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #980 BDB #104

Translation: [They came to the house of a man in Bahurim...](#) Bahurim, a city you may not have known anything about, has come into focus more and more in the past couple of chapters. In the previous chapter, some man comes out of Bahurim swearing and yelling at David. In this chapter, the two couriers, the priests' sons, go to find a hiding place in Bahurim.

I would suspect that this man was known to be a supporter of David's—perhaps he was a friend of David's. Along the route to David, there may have been certain places staked out as safehouses. After all, remember the maidservant who was an integral part of this spy network; if she had been recruited, why not some sympathetic people along the way?

Keep in mind the time frame—it appears that all of this took place within a few days of Absalom coming into Jerusalem. The plan of Ahithophel and the alternate place of Hushai, may have been given as early as on day 1 or on days 2 and 3. Time is of the essence here.

2Samuel 17:18e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 17:18e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Many times, the phrase <i>to him</i> is translated <i>he has...</i>			
b ^o êr (בְּעַיִן) [pronounced b ^o -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #875 BDB #91
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
châtsêr (חֲצֵר) [pronounced khaw-TZAR]	<i>courtyard, enclosure, area enclosed by a fence; court; castle; settled abode; settlement, village, town</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2691 & #2699 BDB #346

Translation: ...and he had a well in his courtyard. This man sympathetic to David has an enclosed yard—perhaps good sized, and in this enclosed area is his well. So, this is apparently a fairly well-to-do man who lives somewhat out in the country, and has his own private well which is protected. It is actually a luxury in the ancient world for a person to have his own well.

Given that these young men will hide in here suggests that this is probably a dry well and used for storage now (it holds foods at a steady temperature).

2Samuel 17:18f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced yaw-RAHD]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

Translation: Therefore, they went down there [into the well]. This helps to explain wells in the ancient world. I have a well on a piece of property, and, if memory serves, they had to drill down 240 feet to strike a good source of water that can be used regularly. I have talked to some people who recently bought some land out in the country and they can find water fairly close to the surface; they can even dig down themselves to find it.

So, we know that this well is probably not necessarily hugely deep—one might guess 10–30 ft. Furthermore, it is large enough to fit two men in it and that they can be hidden. Now, are they standing in water? That is possibly the case, although we do not know if this is a well which has gone dry (wells can go temporarily or permanently

dry). The word for *well* here could refer to a well that has gone dry. I do not know if such a separate word exists in the Hebrew.

And so takes the woman and so she spread the covering upon faces of the well. And so she spreads across him the grain and is not known a word.

2Samuel
17:19

The woman took and spread a covering over the surface of the well. Then she scattered grain over it, so the matter is not known.

The woman took and spread a covering over the opening of the well. Then she scattered grain over that, so that the well itself could not be seen or discerned.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And a woman took, and spread a covering over the mouth of the well, as it were to dry sodden barley and so the thing was not known.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so takes the woman and so she spread the covering upon faces of the well. And so she spreads across him the grain and is not known a word.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and put barley upon it; and the thing was not known.
Septuagint (Greek)	And a woman took a covering, and spread it over the mouth of the well, and spread out ground grain upon it to dry, and the thing was not known.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	The man's wife put the cover on the well and poured grain on top of it, so the well could not be seen.
Easy English	The man's wife put a sheet over the top of the well. And she put grain all over it. Nobody knew anything about it.
Easy-to-Read Version	The man's wife spread a sheet over the well. Then she covered the well with grain. {The well looked like a pile of grain,} so no person could know {that Jonathan and Ahimaaz were hiding there}..
Good News Bible (TEV)	The man's wife took a covering, spread it over the opening of the well and scattered grain over it, so that no one would notice anything.
<i>The Message</i>	The wife took a rug and covered the well, then spread grain on it so no one would notice anything out of the ordinary.
New Berkeley Version	His wife took a covering and spread it over the well's mouth, then spread grain on it, which prevented discovery.
New Century Version	The man's wife spread a sheet over the opening of the well and covered it with grain. No one could tell that anyone was hiding there.
New Living Translation	The man's wife put a cloth over the top of the well and scattered grain on it to dry in the sun; so no one suspected they were there.
The Voice	The man's wife put the cover over the well and spread out grain on top of it, so no one could see it was there.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But then a woman came and took the cover off the cistern to allow the desert [winds] to cool the water. However, she didn't notice them.
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Beck's American Translation	The woman took a cover and spread it over the top of the cistern and spread hulled barley over it so that nobody could tell what was there.
God's Word™	The man's wife took a cover, spread it over the top of the cistern, and scattered some grain over it so that no one could tell it was there.
New American Bible (R.E.)	...and the woman took the cover and spread it over the mouth of the cistern, strewing crushed grain on the cover so that nothing could be noticed.
NIRV	The man's wife got a covering and spread it out over the opening of the well. Then she scattered grain on the covering. So no one knew that the men were hiding in the well.
New Jerusalem Bible	The woman took a piece of canvas and, spreading it over the mouth of the storage-well, scattered crushed grain on it so that nothing showed.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	A woman took and spread an awning over the well's face, and distributed cornmeal over it. The word was never known.
Bible in Basic English	And a woman put a cover over the hole, and put crushed grain on top of it, and no one had any knowledge of it.
The Expanded Bible	The man's wife spread a sheet [covering] over the opening of the well and covered [scattered] it with grain. No one could tell that anyone was hiding there [Nothing was known].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then the man took and closed the lid over the top of the well, and spread thrashing corn over it so that it was not seen.
HCSB	Then his wife took the cover, placed it over the mouth of the well, and scattered grain on it so nobody would know anything.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Nor was their hiding-place discovered; a woman came and spread a cloth over the mouth of the well, as if she would dry her barley-groats there...
NET Bible®	His wife then took the covering and spread it over the top of the well and scattered some grain over it. No one was aware of what she had done.
NIV – UK	His wife took a covering and spread it out over the opening of the well and scattered corn over it. No one knew anything about it.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	His wife spread a covering over the cistern's opening and scattered drying grain on it, so that nothing showed.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and the woman takes a covering and spreads it over the face of the well; and spreads grits thereon; and the word is not known.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the woman took and spread the covering over the mouth of the well and she spread groats upon it, and nothing was known.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the isha took and spread a masakh (covering, curtain) over the mouth of the be'er, and spread hulled grain thereon; and the thing was not known.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And the woman spread a covering over the well's mouth and spread ground corn on it; and the thing was not discovered.
Concordant Literal Version	...and the woman takes and spreads the covering over the face of the well, and spreads on it the ground corn, and the thing has not been known.
Context Group Version	And the woman took and spread the covering over the well's mouth, and strewed bruised grain on it; and nothing was known.

Emphasized Bible	...and the woman took and spread the cover over the face of the well, and spread thereon her pounded corn,—so nothing was known.
English Standard Version	And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth and scattered grain on it, and nothing was known of it.
The Geneva Bible	And the woman took and spread a covering over the wells mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known. Thus God sends help to his, in their greatest dangers.
Green's Literal Translation	And the woman took and spread the covering over the well, and spread ground grain on it. And the thing was not known.
New RSV	The man's wife took a covering, stretched it over the well's mouth, and spread out grain on it; and nothing was known of it.
Syndein/Thieme	Then his wife/woman rapidly seized a covering and spread it over the mouth of the 'dry cistern', and spread 'drying barley' over it . . . so that nothing was noticed {by the pursuers}.
World English Bible	The woman took and spread the covering over the well's mouth, and strewed bruised grain thereon; and nothing was known.
Young's Updated LT	And the woman takes and spreads the covering over the face of the well, and spreads on it the ground corn, and the thing has not been known.

The gist of this verse: The wife hides the men by putting a covering over the well and spreading grain over it.

2Samuel 17:19a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: *The woman took...* The woman here would be the lady of the house. So, the husband and wife here are both supporters of David and they oppose Absalom's revolution. What she takes is revealed in the next portion of this verse.

It is interesting that the man is mentioned in the previous verse and the wife is named here. Although the wife appears to do everything, it is possible that the husband does some things not spoken of in this passage (which will be suggested later).

We do not know where the husband is, in all of this. R. B. Thieme, Jr. suggests⁶⁴ that he is with David right now and says that his name is Azmaveth (2Sam. 23:31 1Chron. 11:33), as he is one of David's mighty men from Bahurim. That may or may not be true.

I will suggest a different scenario for this husband, but both are conjecture. There is not enough evidence to tie the husband here to Azmaveth of David's mighty men.

⁶⁴ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0452 (and elsewhere).

2Samuel 17:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâras (פָּרַשׁ) [pronounced <i>paw-RAHS</i>]	<i>to break, to break into pieces; to expand; to spread [out, over], to disperse; to display</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6566 BDB #831
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mâçâk ^e (מָצַק) [pronounced <i>maw-SAWK^E</i>]	<i>a covering; a screen; a veil</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4539 BDB #697
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah!</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence; person; surface</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
b ^e êr (בְּעַר) [pronounced <i>b^e-AIR</i>]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #875 BDB #91

Translation: ...and spread a covering over the surface of the well. This woman took some kind of a covering—very likely something which was used for grain—and it is spread out over the opening of the well. Bear in mind that the well has to be large enough for at least one man to crawl into, and for two to fit in. However, unlike the wells that we see in storybooks, there is no brick enclosure around it with a bucket and a rope on a wheel. It is just a hole in the ground. When this covering is laid on it, then the well itself cannot be seen. My guess is that the covering was quite large. Furthermore, whatever the covering was made of, it had to be stiff enough so that it did not conform to the hole it was laid over. One should be able to walk past this and not notice that it is over a hole.

2Samuel 17:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâṭach (שָׁטַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-TAHKH</i>]	<i>to spread, to spread abroad, to expand; possibly to scatter, to cover over</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7849 BDB #1008
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah!</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

2Samuel 17:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
rîyphâh (רִיפְיָהּ) [pronounced <i>ree-FAW</i>]; also spelled without the yôhd (י)	<i>wheat (or corn) grain or fruit</i> [which is spread out to dry or to pound]	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #7383 BDB #937

Translation: *Then she scattered grain over it,...* Although the word for wheat or corn grain is said to be dubious by BDB, something of that sort is what is being used here. It is possible that this is fruit laid out to dry. It is likely that this is a common practice, whatever it is (drying the grain, separating the grain); and the fact that this woman, at another time, might be on the covering turning the grain or whatever, causes even less suspicion when this is seen. R. B. Thieme, Jr. says⁶⁵ that she is drying out barley.

Furthermore, because this is food sitting on top over the covering, no one is going to walk on it. So no one can accidentally discover that there is a well under this covering. These soldiers, who might even be trying to intimidate her, do not suspect anything about the well. All they see is a normal scene found all over Israel, where various grains are left out to dry or to be separated.

2Samuel 17:19d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when;</i> <i>since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (אֵל or אֵל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâda' (עִדָּי) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHṬ</i>]	<i>to be known, to become known;</i> <i>to be instructed, to be taught by</i> <i>experience, to be punished</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAWR</i>]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing,</i> <i>matter, command; business,</i> <i>occupation; case; something;</i> <i>manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

Translation: *...so the matter is not known.* We do not know if these people had another well, or if this is their only well. It is very possible that there is a community well, as we saw back with Rebekah's family in Genesis; or another source of water (the stream nearby). In any case, this was done in such a way that, the casual observer would see something which was very normal in the ancient world; grain or fruit being laid out on a large covering. It is probably not be apparent to the casual observer that there is lacking a well on that property.

So, if someone comes by their home, and looks around, there is nothing to suggest that anything is amiss. A person who does not know them or their property personally sees this area, but does not see the well, but does not suspect anything either. Everything looks normal.

⁶⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0452.

And so come servants of Absalom unto the woman the house-ward, and so they say, "Where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" And so says to them the woman, "They went over a streamlet of the waters." And so they search and did not find [them]. And so they return [to] Jerusalem.

2Samuel
17:20

The servants of Absalom came to the woman [at] the house, and they asked, "Where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman answered them [saying], "They went over [that] streamlet of water." So they searched [for them] but did not find [them]. Therefore, they returned [to] Jerusalem.

The servants of Absalom came to the woman at the house, and they asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman answered them saying, "They went over that streamlet of water." So they searched for them but did not find them. Therefore, they returned to Jerusalem.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And when Absalom's servants were come into the house, they said to the <u>woman</u> : Where is Achimaas and Jonathan? and the woman answered them: They passed on in haste, <u>after they had tasted a little water</u> . But they that sought them, when they found them not, returned into Jerusalem.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so come servants of Absalom unto the woman the house-ward, and so they say, "Where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" And so says to them the woman, "They went over a streamlet of the waters." And so they search and did not find [them]. And so they return [to] Jerusalem.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And when Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, Where are Ahimaaz and Nathan? And the woman said to them, They have gone from here, <u>for they wanted water</u> ; but when they could not find any, they returned to Jerusalem.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the servants of Absalom came to the woman into the house, and said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said to them, They have gone a little way beyond the water. And they sought and found them not, and returned to Jerusalem.
Significant differences:	The English translation from the Latin moves the woman from the first to the second phrase. The Hebrew has the men going to a stream of waters; the English translation of the Latin said they just had a sip of water (as does the Syriac).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house they demanded, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman told them, "They crossed over the stream." [c] They looked for them but found nothing, so they returned to Jerusalem.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom's soldiers came to the woman and demanded, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman answered, "They went across the stream." The soldiers went off to look for the two men. But when they did not find the men, they went back to Jerusalem.
Easy English	Absalom's men came to the woman at the house. They said, 'Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?' The woman said, 'They went across the stream.' Absalom's men searched for Ahimaaz and Jonathan, but they did not find them. Then Absalom's men returned to Jerusalem.

<i>The Message</i>	Shortly, Absalom's servants came to the woman's house and asked her, "Have you seen Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman said, "They were headed toward the river." They looked but didn't find them, and then went back to Jerusalem.
New Berkeley Version	Absalom's officers came to the woman at the house and demanded, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" She told them, "They crossed the water brook." They went to look, but when they found nothing, they had to return to Jerusalem.
New Living Translation	When Absalom's men arrived, they asked her, "Have you seen Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman replied, "They were here, but they crossed over the brook." Absalom's men looked for them without success and returned to Jerusalem.
The Voice	When Absalom's soldiers arrived, they questioned her. Soldiers: Where are the traitors Ahimaaz and Jonathan? Wife: Oh, they've crossed to the other side of the stream. The soldiers looked for them, but when they couldn't find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And when AbSalom's men came to the house and saw the woman, they asked her, 'Where are AhiMaAz and JoNathan?' And she told them, 'They went for a little water.' Well, they looked around, but couldn't find them, so they returned to JeruSalem.
New American Bible (R.E.)	When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman replied, "They went by a short while ago toward the water." They searched, but found no one, and so returned to Jerusalem.
NIRV	Absalom's men came to the house. They asked the woman, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" She answered, "They went across the brook." When the men looked around, they didn't find anyone. So they returned to Jerusalem.
New Jerusalem Bible	When Absalom's servants reached the woman at the house, they said, 'Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?' The woman said, 'They have gone further on, towards the water.' They searched but, having found nothing, went back to Jerusalem.
New Simplified Bible	Absalom's officials came to the house and asked the woman: »Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?« She answered: »They crossed the river. The men looked for them but could not find them. So they returned to Jerusalem.«
Revised English Bible	Absalom's servants came to the house and asked the woman, 'Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?' She answered, 'They went past the pool.' The men searched, but not finding them they returned to Jerusalem.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom's servants came to the woman in the house, saying, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman said to them, "They passed to the water lagoon." They sought and but never found them and returned to Jerusalem.
Bible in Basic English	And Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house and said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said to them, They have gone from here to the stream. And after searching for them, and seeing nothing of them, they went back to Jerusalem.
The Expanded Bible	Absalom's ·servants [men] came to the woman at the house and asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" She said to them, "They have already crossed the brook." Absalom's ·servants [men] then went to ·look [search] for Jonathan and Ahimaaz, but they could not find them. So they went back to Jerusalem.

Ferar-Fenton Bible	So when the officers of Absalom came to the man's house and asked, "Where are Jonathan and Ahimaaz?" the man replied to them, "They have passed the brook of water." They therefore sought for them, but not finding, they returned to Jerusalem.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	...and when Absalom's men reached the house, asking her where were Jonathan and Achimaas, she said they had gone quickly on their way, only stopping for a mouthful of water; so their pursuers returned baffled to Jerusalem.
NET Bible®	When the servants of Absalom approached the woman at her home, they asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman replied to them, "They crossed over the stream." Absalom's men [Heb "they"; the referents (Absalom's men) have been specified in the translation for clarity] searched but did not find them, so they returned to Jerusalem.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Avshalom's servants came to the woman at the house and asked, "Where are Achima'atz and Y'honatan?"The woman answered them, "They've crossed the stream."After searching and not finding them, they returned to Yerushalayim.
exeGesés companion Bible	And when the servants of Abi Shalom come to the house of the woman, they say, Where are Achiy Maas and Yah Nathan? And the woman says to them, They pass over the streamlet of water. - and they seek and cannot find them and they return to Yeru Shalem.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house and asked where Ahimaaz and Jonathan were, the woman told them that they had crossed a bit beyond the water. They searched, but found nothing; and the returned to Jerusalem.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Absalom's servants came to the woman in the house, and they said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" And the woman said to them, "They have forded the river." And they sought but could not find them; and they returned to Jerusalem.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And when the avadim of Avshalom came to the bais to the isha, they said, Where is Achima'atz and Yonatan? And the isha said unto them, They are gone over the brook of mayim. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Yerushalayim.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And the servants of Aḇshalom came to the woman at the house and said, "Where are Aḥima'ats and Yehonathan?" And the woman said to them, "They have passed over the stream of water." And they looked and did not find them, and returned to Yerushalayim.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	And Absalom's slaves came to the woman to the house; and they said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said to them, They have gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.
The Geneva Bible	And when Absaloms 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 [The Chaldee text reads: Now they have passed the Jordan.]. And when they had sought and could not find [them], they returned to Jerusalem.
Green's Literal Translation	And the servants of Absalom came in to the woman, to the house, and said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said to them, They passed over the river of water. And <i>they</i> looked and did not find <i>them</i> . And they returned to Jerusalem.

Syndein/Thieme

And when Absalom's patrol came to the woman to the château, they 'interrogated saying', "Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" Then she {the woman} replied {lied} to them, "They have gone over the stream of water." And when they had searched and could not find them, they {the revolutionary patrol} returned to Jerusalem. {Note: This mature believer changed from her prosperity scale of values to her disaster scale of values. She understood from doctrine, that to turn these representatives of the legitimate authority would be a sin. To lie in this circumstance (as with Rahab the prostitute) to lie is the honorable thing to do, and, in this case, is NOT a sin.}. And Absalom's slaves came to the woman to the house; and they said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said to them, They have gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

Updated Bible Version 2.11

World English Bible

Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house; and they said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? The woman said to them, They have gone over the brook of water. When they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

Young's Updated LT

And the servants of Absalom come in unto the woman to the house, and say, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" and the woman says to them, "They passed over the brook of water;" and they seek, and have not found, and turn back to Jerusalem.

The gist of this verse:

Absalom sends his men out to investigate Jonathan and Ahimaaz, who are spotted earlier; but when they come to this particular place, they are told that they passed over. The servants of Absalom then return home.

2Samuel 17:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced <i>GE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eh</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to, against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the directional hê	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

2Samuel 17:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>The directional hê is the <i>âh</i> (ה) ending to a noun, usually found after a verb of motion. This is called the <i>directive hê</i> or the <i>he locale</i>, which often indicates direction and puts somewhat of an adverbial spin on the noun. Essentially, it answers the question <i>where?</i> The pronunciation of the word does not change. The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun <i>heaven</i> and the most literal rendering in the English would be <i>heavenward</i>. We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions <i>to</i> or <i>toward</i>.</p>			

Translation: *The servants of Absalom came to the woman [at] the house, and they asked,...* There are a lot of interesting details found throughout this verse—minor things which add a bit of color to this narrative. The servants of Absalom are making a sweep of the area. These are probably not the only men out searching, but there might have been a small unit of 20 men who searched the area of Bahurim. They first go to where the young man said he saw the sons of the priests, and that seemed suspicious to him (and to Absalom). So a search party was sent out. Now, they come to this woman's home—for some reason, her husband is not involved in any of this—and I suspect that she is either a better liar than he is or she appears to be more innocent. And I will later suggest something that he might be up to.

Maybe 3 or 4 of this search party see their home, and it is not too far from where the sons of the priests had been seen (perhaps they had been directed in this way, from others who had seen the priests' sons). So, they eventually got to this house, and they ask this woman. They have no idea that she has a well or that these spies are in this well—or even if the spies had gone by their home. This is simply the next place on their search.

2Samuel 17:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'ayyêh (איה) [pronounced <i>ahy-YAY</i>]	<i>where</i>	interrogative adverb (the verb <i>to be</i> is sometimes implied)	Strong's #346 BDB #32
'Ăchîyma'ats (אחימאז) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-gahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y ^e hōwnâthân (יהונתן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>]	<i>Jehovah has given, whom Jehovah gave, a gift of Jehovah; alternate spelling; transliterated Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

Translation:...“Where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?” This search party knows who they are searching for, and asking for them by name suggests that these two young men are well-known. A description is not given, but their names are given.

You may notice how the names of Jonathan and Ahimaaz have been switched around. This may simply be random; but it may have to do with these two young men. To God, Jonathan is chief among these sons; to this search party, Ahimaaz is chief among the sons.

Men like David, Absalom, Zadok and Abiathar were celebrities of that era, in the sense that, nearly everyone in Israel knew who they were. Similarly, the sons of the priests—Jonathan and Ahimaaz—would also be relatively well-known.

There was probably a greater discussion than we find here (e.g., “Where is your husband? Is there anyone else here who may have seen this?” etc., etc.).

However, they are not there to make conversation; they are looking for are the sons of Zadok and Abiathar.

2Samuel 17:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾishshâh (אשה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Translation: *The woman answered them [saying],...* Here is a little tidbit; when the woman answers them, it is without giving them personal respect. Now, there might not have been anything in the tone of her voice to suggest this, but she did not give a rip for these men. She had to talk to them, so she did; but she did not have to like them. The lack of the formal preposition can simply mean that she does not recognize them as being proper authorities.

2Samuel 17:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘ābar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
mīykāl (מֵיכַל) [pronounced <i>me-KAWL</i>]	<i>brook, stream, streamlet; container; meaning dubious, by BDB; word occurs only here</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4323 BDB #568
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced <i>mah-YIHM</i>]	<i>water (s)</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #4325 BDB #565

Translation:...“They went over [that] streamlet of water.” Apparently, these is a small stream of water nearby, and she explains where it is (it may be well-known to anyone in that area); and she tells them that they crossed over that water. This is a lie. And this is a lie probably told by a believer. She does not say, “Look, I can’t lie to you about this; those men you are after are over there in my side yard, the fenced-in area; and they are in the well which I covered up.” She instead says, “They crossed over the stream of water.” And, so there is no mistake about this, **it was right for her to lie.**⁶⁶ Because Y^ehowah had ordained [in eternity past] to defeat the clever counsel of Ahithophel, so that the He might bring harm upon Absalom (2Sam. 17:14b). Now, this does not give you carte blanc to lie to everyone you know because you believe that your lies will further God’s plan. But in a national revolution, it is allowable for you to lie to the revolutionaries.

So far, this verse reads: The servants of Absalom came to the woman [at] the house, and they asked, “Where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?” The woman answered them [saying], “They went over [that] streamlet of water.” This woman is courageous before these soldiers and she has a dual set of values. Most of us as believers will not have to face a situation like this. However, her country is in revolt and she is looking the enemy straight in the face. Notice, she does not tell them the truth; nor does she charge out her front door with a sword, screaming, “You bloody bastards, I will take you both with me when I die!” She is cool and calm, and she does what she ought to do in this situation. She lies right to their faces; she probably looks concerned, looks involved, and perhaps even gives them a description of exactly which way the men went. There are several ways to get to this stream, and she would be very specific with them, lying right to their faces.

She does not act as if she has never seen the men. That would have been suspicious, as others have directed these soldiers in this direction. For all she knows, some actually saw the two men on her property, and pointed out her house. So, it is smarter to claim to have seen these men rather than to deny seeing them.

To these men, this woman appears to be helpful. We do not know what other words were exchanged. There is nothing in their behavior which suggests that they are suspicious. This woman does not appear to be nervous or afraid; these soldiers do not look her over and think that she is hiding something. She has her emotions under control. And this woman saves David and his army just as much as Hushai does.

This is a great woman; she is a woman who can think under pressure. She knows when to lie; she knows what kind of a lie to tell. She knows how to appear to these soldiers. She is not helpless, she is not a victim, she is not tongue-tied, she is not all caught up in an emotional fervor. This is a woman who is not easily intimidated. It is the woman that all smart men need to find and latch onto.

⁶⁶ At least two commentators which I read had problems with her lie.

These men have probably been led to this country home, after speaking to this and that person. And the trail continues. Each household told them, “They went that way.” “They went down that trail.” “I saw them go that back route and head over those hills through the forest.” But now they come to this woman and she tells them the way that they have gone, and the trail goes cold at that point.

This brings us to a short, but important doctrine. This needs to be covered because at least 2 commentators seriously struggled⁶⁷ with this woman lying to Absalom’s soldiers.

Legitimate Lies in Scripture

1. Egyptian midwives would not murder Hebrew babies; they lied to their own government officials about them being born before they even arrived on the scene. God clearly approved of this. Ex. 1:20–21 reads: *And God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became exceedingly strong. And it was, because the midwives feared God, He made houses for them.* Ex. 1:16–21
2. Rahab the Prostitute allied herself with the Hebrews when they scouted out the city of Jericho, and she lied to the messengers of the king of Jericho. She allied herself with the people of God against her own people. Joshua 2:1–22 6:17, 25
3. Michal lied to her father Saul’s messengers about David so that he could escape. They were sent to kill David. She later lied to her father. 1Sam. 19:14–17
4. Hushai lies to Absalom in this chapter about what is his best option on an attack upon David. David represented a legitimate government; Absalom represented a revolutionary government. 1Sam. 17:14b: *And Jehovah had ordained to break down the good counsel of Ahithophel, for the sake of bringing the evil of Jehovah to Absalom.* 2Sam. 15:34 17:7–14
5. And in our context, this woman lies to the servants of Absalom in order to protect the messengers who are going to David. 2Sam. 17:20
6. We need to append this with David’s *illegitimate* lie to the priest at Nob. He lied about why he was there in Nob, and gave them no warning of the danger of associating with him. Saul later ordered the killing all of the priests at Nob. 1Sam. 21:2 22:18–20
7. Another *illegitimate* lie is when David lied to Achish, the King of Gath, about the raids he was leading in 1Sam. 27:10–12. This ended up putting David in a very difficult situation.

The general principle is, when you are allied to the people of God or to the forces of establishment, then you may lie to those who are looking to bring them down. When your government is going to do something which is clearly a sin (killing the Hebrew babies; killing David), it is legitimate to lie to government officials.⁶⁸ However, David should not have lied to the priests of Nob in order to preserve himself. He should have given them fair warning of what was going on.

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: “There is a scale of values for life and a different one for counterinsurgency.”⁶⁹

And just as R. B. Thieme, Jr. warned his 1% nutballs, *you are not in counterinsurgency right now.* When you are questioned by the police or the military or in court, you give honest, forthright answers.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Application: This woman knew when she needed to have a different set of values. She had enough wisdom in her soul to make this call. You may be semi-smart about this and think, “Well, of course, this is what she ought to do.” However, there are several commentators who came to this passage and they were stymied. They did not know what to do. Some actually said that this woman’s actions could not be excused. These are men who study the Word of God for their life, and they do not understand that what this woman does here is noble and right.

⁶⁷ See, for instance, Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:15–21.

⁶⁸ It was *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 17:20; that led me to this doctrine by their excellent list of references.

⁶⁹ From the 1972 David series, lesson #631_0440; probably not an exact quote.

Application: I recently had a discussion with another believer about establishment forces or an establishment government. She did not like the British Empire and thought that its spread throughout the world was some sort of evil thing. She had trouble with the British government and their imperialism. An establishment government maintains law and order and it allows for the teaching of the Word of God. The British government brought law and order and an organized government to dozens of countries throughout the world, and then British missionaries teaching Jesus Christ were brought in. This was a good thing. In fact, this was of God. The British Empire was one of the great things in this world, and it is why **the sun never set on the Union Jack**, because God blessed the Great Britain and her territories. We should of course expect liberal schools and liberal professors to teach that Great Britain was evil to **conquer so much of the world**. The principle is, imperialism by an establishment government is a good thing.

Application: There is so much confusion out there among believers. Many, like myself, were brought up under liberalism, hearing it at home, in the media, in the movies, on television, and just thinking that it is right. However, the Word of God teaches very different values.

2Samuel 17:20e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bâqash (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced <i>baw-KAHSH</i>]	<i>to seek, to search, to desire, to strive after, to attempt to get, to require, to demand, to ask, to seek with desire and diligence</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i>]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #4672 BDB #592

Translation: **So they searched [for them] but did not find [them].** The trackers, believing that they were on to something now, went to the stream of water, but they found nothing.

Now were the foot prints made toward this little stream? Possibly. We have no idea, but it would have been a very slick trick. This might even be where the husband was—he may have walked toward the stream, got into it, with the intention of leading these revolutionary soldiers off the track.

These men, some of whom were good at tracking, got to this point and *knew* it was a dead end. You see, once they get to this water, the priests's sons could go up or downstream, maybe 2 miles, walking in the stream; and then exit a safe distance down, and the water covers up their footprints. They can pick a place to exit the stream where it is impossible to tell that they exited at this point.

Obviously, they cannot find Ahimaaz and Jonathan, because they are back at that ranch house in the well, hiding. That the woman's husband walked to the stream and then went up or down stream from there is not found here

in the text, but it is a possible scenario. This would explain how the men could get this far in their search and then just give up. If the men go up or downstream and exit where an exit cannot be tracked, then there is no way that they can be found. This would also explain why the woman is dealing with Absalom's servants rather than her husband. In any case, for whatever reason, the servants of Absalom do not spend any time, insofar as we know, harassing this woman.

There is another bit of information I need to throw in here. This is the land of milk and honey. It was heavily forested for the most part. There was a reasonable amount of rain in this area. This was not a dry, arid desert as we see on all of the Bible movies. Given this, there are no large areas of barren land where people could be easily seen from a distance and then set upon.

So, to the dismay of Absalom's trackers, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, once they got to this stream, were able to get away.

Let me tie up one slight loose end here. If there is a stream nearby, why do these people have a well? Two reasons—this is a small stream (insofar as we can tell) and therefore might dry up from time to time; therefore, a more dependable source of water was necessary. Furthermore, this stream may have been a mile away, but the well might have been 20 yards from the house. This explains why no one in the search party looked around and said, "Hey, these people do not have a well." Since they were going to a stream of water, it would no occur to them that a well was necessary. Furthermore, as we know from Abraham on the desert wilderness, digging more than one well was not unusual for an encampment. Finally, a well might not be easily seen anyway. If they are just a hole in the ground, the search party could walk by a house and not see its well without going right up to it.

Let me tie up another loose end. Why weren't the men simply hidden in the house of this woman? We do not know if Absalom's soldiers searched her house, but they certainly could have if they so chose. Although this is not found in the text, let me propose the two likely scenarios: (1) the soldiers do a quick search of her house and find nothing; and leave; or (2) the soldiers see signs of men having walked toward the stream to which the woman refers (these footprints or signs being laid down by her husband), who then went into the stream and walked up or downstream until he found a good place to exit. These are both conjectures, but they help to explain why these men would be so ready to give up their search.

2Samuel 17:20f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (בוש) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
Y ^e rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced <i>y'roo-shaw-LAH-yim</i>]	possibly means <i>founded upon peace</i> or <i>city of the Jebusites</i> (or both); it is transliterated <i>Jerusalem</i>	proper singular noun, location; pausal form	Strong's #3389 BDB #436

Translation: *Therefore, they returned [to] Jerusalem.* The stream marked the place where the trail went cold. The men had followed the trail of Jonathan and Ahimaaz right to that place, which suggests that several people—not just the young man—may have helped them along with their search. However, it became clear, at

the stream, that these men were not to be found. The men who were tracking the priests' sons were obviously good at what they did, as they followed these men all the way to the house where they were hiding. So, Absalom's soldiers were good at their job; however, they came to a dead stop here, and turned back. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that, when they got to the stream, it was obvious that they could track the young men no further.

Apparently, no one suspected that this sweet little lady lied right to their faces.

The entire verse reads: [The servants of Absalom came to the woman \[at\] the house, and they asked, "Where \[are\] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman answered them \[saying\], "They went over \[that\] streamlet of water." So they searched \[for them\] but did not find \[them\]. Therefore, they returned \[to\] Jerusalem.](#) No doubt the servants of Absalom did a thorough job searching, but, since they were unaware of the well, then they had no idea that the priests' sons were in the well.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

David Crosses over the Jordan

And so he is to their departure and so they come up from out of the well and so they go. And so they make known to the King David; and so they say unto David, "[You all] rise up and go over quickly the waters, for thus has counseled against you Ahithophel."

2Samuel
17:21

And it is regarding their departure when they came up out of the well and went. They made [what they knew] known to King David, saying unto him [lit., *David*], "Rise up [all of you] and quickly cross over the water, for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you."

And it came to pass, after the men left, that they came up out of the well and departed. They informed King David about what they knew about Absalom's plans, saying, "Rise up, all of you, and quickly cross over the River Jordan, for Ahithophel has given the following advice."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And when they were gone, they came up out of the well, and going on told king David, and said: Arise, and pass quickly over the river: for this manner of counsel has Achitophel given against you.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so he is to their departure and so they come up from out of the well and so they go. And so they make known to the King David; and so they say unto David, "[You all] rise up and go over quickly the waters, for thus has counseled against you Ahithophel."

Peshitta (Syriac)

And after Absalom's servants had gone, they came up out of the well and went and told King David, and said to him, Arise and cross quickly over the water; for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you.

Septuagint (Greek)

And it came to pass after they were gone, that they came up out of the pit, and went on their way; and reported to King David, and said to David, Arise, and go quickly over the water, for thus has Ahithophel counseled concerning you.

Significant differences:

The Latin appears to leave out the second time David's name is found. Other than that, these translations all match up reasonably well.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	After they had left, Jonathan and Ahimaaz climbed out of the well. They went and reported to King David, "Get up! Cross the water immediately because Ahithophel has made plans against you!"
Contemporary English V.	After the soldiers had gone, Jonathan and Ahimaaz climbed out of the well. They went to David and said, "Hurry! Get ready to cross the river!" Then they told him about Ahithophel's plan.
Easy English	When Absalom's men had gone, Ahimaaz and Jonathan climbed out of the well. They went to give the message to David. They said, 'Hurry. Cross over the river. Ahithophel has given this advice against you.'
<i>The Message</i>	When the coast was clear, Ahimaaz and Jonathan climbed out of the well and went on to make their report to King David, "Get up and cross the river quickly; Ahithophel has given counsel against you!"
New Century Version	After Absalom's servants left, Jonathan and Ahimaaz climbed out of the well and went to tell King David. They said, "Hurry, cross over the river! Ahithophel has said these things against you!"
New Life Bible	When they had left, Ahimaaz and Jonathan came up out of the well and went and told King David. They said to David, "Be quick to get ready and cross over the water. For Ahithophel has told them to come against you.
New Living Translation	Then the two men crawled out of the well and hurried on to King David. "Quick!" they told him, "cross the Jordan tonight!" And they told him how Ahithophel had advised that he be captured and killed.
The Voice	After the soldiers left, they climbed out of the well and went to speak to King David. Ahimaaz and Jonathan: Get ready to cross over the river <i>into the wilderness</i> quickly, because here is Ahithophel's plan of action.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then after they left, [AhiMaAz and JoNathan] climbed out of the cistern and went to give the report to King David. They said to him: 'Quickly. get up and cross the river; for, AhiThophel has [planned a trap] for you!'
<i>God's Word</i> ™	After Absalom's servants left, both men came out of the cistern and went and told King David. "Leave right away," they told David. "Cross the river quickly because this is what Ahithophel has advised against you...."
New American Bible (R.E.)	As soon as they left, Ahimaaz and Jonathan came up out of the cistern and went on to report to King David. They said to him: "Leave! Cross the water at once, for Ahithophel has given such and such counsel in regard to you."
NIRV	After the men had gone, Jonathan and Ahimaaz climbed out of the well. They went to tell King David what they had found out. They said to him, "Go across the river right away. Ahithophel has told Absalom how to come after you and strike you down."
New Jerusalem Bible	When they had gone, the men climbed out of the storage-well and went to warn King David. 'Set out!' they told David. 'Cross the water quickly, for Ahithophel has given such and such advice against you!'
New Simplified Bible	After they left, Ahimaaz and Jonathan came up out of the cistern. Then they reported to King David. They told him what Ahithophel planned against him. They said: »Hurry up and cross the river.«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	After they had gone, they ascended from the well and went and told King David. They said to David, "Rise and pass! Pass the water in haste, for Ahithophel advised thus toward you."
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Bible in Basic English	Then after the servants had gone away, they came up out of the water-hole and went to give King David the news; and they said, Get up and go quickly over the water, for such and such are Ahithophel's designs against you.
The Expanded Bible	After Absalom's servants [they] left, Jonathan and Ahimaaz climbed out of the well and went to tell King David. They said, "Hurry, cross over the river [water]! Ahithophel has said [advised; counseled] these things against you!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But after they had gone, then those came up from the well and proceeded and informed David and said to David, "Start, and pass quickly over the water, for Akhitophel has advised thus against you."
HCSB	After they had gone, Ahimaaz and Jonathan climbed out of the well and went and informed King David. They told him, "Get up and immediately ford the river, for Ahithophel has given this advice against you."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	These gone, Jonathan and Achimaas climbed up out of the well, and brought king David word; Bestir yourselves, they said, and cross the river without more ado; and told what advice Achitophel had given.
NET Bible®	After the men had left, Ahimaaz and Jonathan [Heb "they"; the referents (Ahimaaz and Jonathan) have been specified in the translation for clarity.] climbed out of the well. Then they left and informed King David. They advised David, "Get up and cross the stream [Heb "the water."] quickly, for Ahithophel has devised a plan to catch you [Heb "for thus Ahithophel has devised against you." The expression "thus" is narrative shorthand, referring to the plan outlined by Ahithophel (see vv. 1-3). The men would surely have outlined the plan in as much detail as they had been given by the messenger.]."
NIV – UK	After they had gone, the two climbed out of the well and went to inform King David. They said to him, 'Set out and cross the river at once; Ahithophel has advised such and such against you.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	After they had left, the two climbed out of the cistern and went and told King David, "Get up and cross the river, because Achitofel has given such-and-such advice against you."
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, after they go, they ascend from the well and go and tell sovereign David, and say to David, Rise and pass quickly over the water: for Achiy Thophel counsels against you thus.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they climbed up out of the be'er (well), and went and told Dovid HaMelech, and said unto Dovid, Arise, and cross quickly over the mayim; for thus hath Achitophel counselled against you.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And it comes to pass, after their going on, that they come up out of the well, and go and declare to king David, and say unto David, 'Rise you, and pass over hastily the waters, for thus has Ahithophel counselled against you.
Context Group Version	After they departed, they came up out of the well, and went and told king David; and they said to David, Arise { pl }, and pass quickly over the water; for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you { pl }.
English Standard Version	After they had gone, the men came up out of the well, and went and told King David. They said to David, "Arise, and go quickly over the water, for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you."

The Geneva Bible	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 k thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.
Green's Literal Translation	And it happened after they left, they came up out of the well and went and told King David. And they said to David, Rise up and quickly pass over the waters, for Ahithophel has counseled this against you.
Syndein/Thieme	Now it came to pass, {advance of historical narrative} after they {the revolutionary patrol} had 'marched on'/'moved out', that they {the couriers} ascended out of the dry cistern. Then they went and reported {gave a detailed report} to king David, and they said to David, "Move out quickly, and ford/cross the river. For thus . . . has Ahithophel advised/counseled against you." {we previously had the details so no need to re-record them here}.
World English Bible	It happened, after they had departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David; and they said to David, Arise you, and pass quickly over the water; for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you.
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass, after their going on, that they come up out of the well, and go and declare to king David, and say unto David, "Rise ye, and pass over hastily the waters, for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you."

The gist of this verse: After the servants of Absalom left, the two servants of David come out of the well, go to David and tell him what plans have been made against him, and recommend that he immediately cross over the Jordan River.

2Samuel 17:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הַיָּאָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

2Samuel 17:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i>.⁷⁰ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall</i> or <i>must</i>.⁷¹</p>			

Translation: *And it is regarding their departure...* The verb *to be* is simply used to describe a series of events which took place immediately after the scouts for Absalom returned. The priests' sons were continuing to move northeast to get to David, to tell him what was going on. The *departure* simply refers to them in their leaving this ranch to get to David.

2Samuel 17:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
b ^e ēr (בְּעַיִר) [pronounced <i>b^e-AIR</i>]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #875 BDB #91

Translation: *...when they came up out of the well...* When they know that Absalom's scouts have gone, they know that they need to act fast. First, they exit the well. The fact that these soldiers came looking for them indicates some amount of organization on the part of Absalom. That is, Absalom is not simply hanging out at the palace having a party. Therefore, Jonathan and Ahimaaz must act quickly.

2Samuel 17:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

⁷⁰ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar-Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

⁷¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

2Samuel 17:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

Translation: ...and went. Then Jonathan and Ahimaaz leave the ranch house, going toward where they expect to find David.

2Samuel 17:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נגד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: They made [what they knew] known to King David,... Obviously, they reach David and they tell him about all that they know. They know both plans submitted, one by Hushai and one by Ahithophel. So far, it is the plan that Hushai, David's mole, has submitted that Absalom will follow. However, as previously discussed, Hushai is not 100% sure that will be Absalom's approach.

2Samuel 17:21e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

2Samuel 17:21e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
qûwm (קוּמ) [pronounced koom]	<i>stand, rise up, get up</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #6965 BDB #877

Translation: ...saying unto him [lit., David], "Rise up [all of you]... These sons of the priests, at this point, actually tell David what he needs to do. *Rise up* is a masculine plural, so they are referring to David and everyone with him. This particular verb does not mean that everyone is sitting around, and then Jonathan and Ahimaaz tell them to get up, and so they all get up out of their chairs. It is a word which indicates movement and purpose. David and his army will be on the move again, with some specific objectives.

The fact that Jonathan and Ahimaaz say this is indicative of the short time frame they believe themselves to be working under. For all they know, within 12 hours, there could be Absalom coming this way with an army.

2Samuel 17:21f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHR]	<i>pass over, pass through, pass on, pass, go over [beyond], cross, cross over; go away, depart; violate [a law]</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
m ^e hêrâh (מְהֵרָה) [pronounced m ^e -hay-RAW]	<i>quickly, hastily, speedily</i>	adverb (this is also used as a feminine noun)	Strong's #4120 BDB #555
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced mah-YIHM]	<i>water (s)</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4325 BDB #565

Translation: ...and quickly cross over the water,... No matter which plan Absalom, chooses to follow, in all cases it will involve and attack on David. Therefore, David cannot stay there with his back to the water. It gives him no direction to go in. So he is advised to cross over the water, and to take everyone with him.

Again, this is a masculine plural, imperative mood, indicating to David that action must be taken immediately. It may be slightly presumptuous of them, but they obviously respect David and his men.

2Samuel 17:21g

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
kâkâh (כַּכֵּן) [pronounced <i>KAW-kaw</i>]	<i>like this; thus, so</i>	adverb	Strong's #3602 BDB #462
yâ'ats (יָצַט) [pronounced <i>yaw-GAHTS</i>]	<i>to advise, to counsel; to take counsel; to decree; to consult for [anyone], to provide for; to predict, to declare future thing</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3289 BDB #419
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
'Āchîythôphel (אֲחִיתוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27

Translation: ...for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you.” Here, in the narrative, what Ahithophel has counseled is not reiterated, but this suggests that this young priest sons lay out all that went on, who said what, and how Absalom appears to be leaning. Worst case scenario is, Ahithophel will lead 12,000 soldiers against David within a matter of hours. It is certainly likely that they relayed Hushai's plan as well, which would mean 50,000 or more soldiers crossing over the Jordan in a week. In any case, Absalom is planning on an attack; that is clear—and this attack is, at worst, hours away; and, at best, days away.

David, therefore, must choose the battlefield, must have his men at the ready, and employ surprise as well as aggressive force, to defeat Absalom. These are all things which Joab, as David's general, has done before. So, even though David's army is smaller (I would estimate 500–5000 in total), these would be his most loyal and elite troops, men who would rather die than serve Absalom.

V. 21 reads: [And it came to pass, after the men left, that they came up out of the well and departed. They informed King David about what they knew about Absalom's plans, saying, "Rise up, all of you, and quickly cross over the River Jordan, for Ahithophel has given the following advice."](#) David is actually quite familiar with the east side of the Jordan. He fought both the Ammonites and the Syrians in Transjordan. David is going to have supply lines coming from 3 different directions (as we will find out at the end of this chapter). Absalom, who may or may not have set up a sufficient supply line, is going to find that line stretched out further and further, which is going to mean that his troops will not get sufficient supplies. In fact, David will suck Absalom deep into Gilead, where David will have all of the advantages except for numbers. Hushai, as we have already discussed, will not be going along with Absalom. He is not going to be there telling Absalom what to do. Ahithophel quietly left Jerusalem for his hometown, so he will not be there telling Absalom what to do. Absalom is going to have General Amasa in charge, but he chose Amasa for his name and bloodline, as we will soon find out. Since Absalom has such a large army, he may not think he needs anyone else. He will give the orders to Amasa, Amasa will carry them out, and that is all there will be needed.

And so arises David and all the people who [are] with him, and so they cross over the Jordan as far as a light of the morning. As far as one did not remain who did not cross over the Jordan.

2Samuel
17:22

David got up, along with the people who [are] with him, and they cross over the Jordan until the morning light. [There was] not even one remaining [behind] who did not cross over the Jordan.

David then arose along with the people around him, and they all crossed over the Jordan until the morning light. No one remained behind.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	So David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over the Jordan, until it grew light, and not one of them was left that was not gone ever the river.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so arises David and all the people who [are] with him, and so they cross over the Jordan as far as a light of the morning. As far as one did not remain who did not cross over the Jordan.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then David arose and all the people who were with him and they crossed the Jordan; by early morning there was not one left who had not crossed the Jordan.
Septuagint (Greek)	And David rose up and all the people with him, and they passed over the Jordan till the morning light; there was not one missing who did not pass over the Jordan.

Significant differences:

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So David and all the troops who were with him got up and crossed the Jordan River. By daybreak there was no one left who hadn't crossed the Jordan.
Contemporary English V.	David and the others got ready and started crossing the Jordan River. By sunrise all of them were on the other side.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then David and all his people crossed over the Jordan River. Before the sun came up, all of David's people had already crossed the Jordan River.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So David and his men started crossing the Jordan, and by daybreak they had all gone across.
<i>The Message</i>	David and his whole army were soon up and moving and crossed the Jordan. As morning broke there was not a single person who had not made it across the Jordan.
New Berkeley Version	So David and all the people with him arose and crossed the Jordan, until by daybreak there was not one who had failed to get across the Jordan.
New Century Version	So David and all his people crossed the Jordan River. By dawn, everyone had crossed the Jordan.
The Voice	<i>And knowing about the danger,</i> David and everyone with him crossed over the Jordan River and moved deep into the wilderness. By daybreak not a single man loyal to David was left on the near side of the Jordan.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, David and his people got up and crossed the JorDan before daylight, so no one would know that they [had gone].
New American Bible (R.E.)	So David and all his people moved on and crossed the Jordan. By daybreak, there was no one left who had not crossed.

NIRV	So David and all of the people who were with him started out. They went across the Jordan River. By sunrise, everyone had crossed over.
New Simplified Bible	So David and his men crossed the Jordan. By daybreak they had all gone across.
Revised English Bible	So David and all his company began at once to cross the Jordan, by daybreak there was not one who had not reached the other bank.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	So David and all the people who were with him went up over Jordan: when dawn came, every one of them had gone over Jordan.
The Expanded Bible	So David and all his people crossed the Jordan River. By dawn, everyone had crossed the Jordan.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Consequently, David and all the people with him arose and were crossing the Jordan until daybreak, until there were none left to pass the Jordan.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So king David and all that bore him company took the road, and were across Jordan before ever dawn broke; not a man was left west of the river.
NET Bible®	So David and all the people who were with him got up and crossed the Jordan River [The word "River" is not in the Hebrew text here or in v. 24, but has been supplied in the translation for clarity.]. By dawn there was not one person left who had not crossed the Jordan.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	David and all the people with him got up and crossed the Yarden; by dawn every one of them had crossed the Yarden.
exeGesés companion Bible	And David and all the people with him rise and pass over Yarden until the morning light; until not one lacks who passes not over Yarden.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they crossed the Jordan. By the morning light not one of them was missing that had not crossed the Jordan.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Dovid arose, and kol haAm that were with him, and they crossed over Yarden; by the ohr haboker there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Yarden.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Dawid and all the people who were with him rose up and passed over the Yardēn. And by morning light not even one remained who had not gone over the Yardēn.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Then David arose, and all the people who were with him, and they crossed the Jordan. By daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.
The Geneva Bible	Then David arose, and all the people that [were] with him, and they passed over Jordan: I by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan. They travelled all night, and by morning had all their company passed over.
Green's Literal Translation	And David and all the people with him rose up, and they passed over the Jordan until the light of the morning, until there was not one lacking who had not crossed the Jordan.
New RSV	So David and all the people who were with him set out and crossed the Jordan; by daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.
Syndein/Thieme	Then David moved out {rapidly}, and all the people {army and civilians} who were with him, and they crossed over the Jordan {River}. By dawn/'the morning light' there was not one who had not crossed over the Jordan. {means this was a night crossing and all made it fine}.

World English Bible

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

Young's Updated LT

And David rises, and all the people who are with him, and they pass over the Jordan, till the light of the morning, till one has not been lacking who has not passed over the Jordan.

The gist of this verse:

David and those loyal to him cross over the Jordan at night.

2Samuel 17:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קום) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: David got up, along with the people who [are] with him,... We again have a masculine singular verb, indicating that David is the clear leader, and he acts on the information which he receives. Those who are with him follow his lead.

The verb qûwm (קום) [pronounced *koom*] (which means *to stand, to rise up, to get up*) is used to indicate that David is going to take action. It does not mean that he is just sitting around and suddenly stands up.

Strong's #6965 BDB #877. David has purpose and direction. This is not David jumping up and saying, "Run for your lives; every man for himself!" This is organized and purposeful.

You notice what David has done. He has listened to good advice, he recognizes it as good advice, and he acts immediately. He does not stop to haul in Charley Brown to hear Charley Brown's opinion on this matter. Unlike his son, David is able to follow good advice, and he recognizes the importance of timing and position in warfare. David, had he dug in right there, and waited for Absalom, would probably have lost the war, even if Absalom follows Hushai's plan (which he will do). Being able to listen to another person and to their advice is crucial for a leader, and shows great humility.

David knows that he must get to a safer area, deal with the civilians who are with him, and then choose the time and the place of his battle against his son.

Application: I received some of the best advice on my writing from a very unlikely source, in my opinion. At that point in time, I mixed in the Hebrew exegesis with the narrative, and, as a result, some people got lost in the Hebrew exegesis, and often I did not go from the exegesis to describe what was important to know about the passage. A friend of mine, who was generally negative toward doctrine, and was very liberal, pointed this out (I forget exactly what he said); and this resulted in the Hebrew exegesis tables (above and below). They allow for a person to quickly and easily bypass all of the Hebrew, but to go back and look at specific words or grammatical nuances, when one needs that to understand why this or that position is taken. Personally, I believed his criticism to be valid, and I acted on that. A believer with humility must be able to recognize good advice when it is given.

2Samuel 17:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
ʿêth (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yâr ^e dên (יַרְדֵּן) [pronounced <i>yar^e-DAYN</i>]	transliterated <i>Jordan</i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #3383 BDB #434
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
ʾôwr (אוֹר) [pronounced <i>ohr</i>]	<i>light [of the moon, of stars]; morning light, day-break, dawn; light [of life; of one's face]; light [of prosperity, of Bible doctrine, of Jehovah]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #216 BDB #21
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced <i>BOH-ker</i>]	<i>morning, daybreak, dawn; the next morning</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133

Translation: ...and they cross over the Jordan until the morning light. Everyone crosses over the Jordan River, and it appears that they are crossing at night and continue crossing over until the first light of day. The masculine plural verb here indicates unity. In v. 22a, the masculine singular verb indicates that David is the leader and everyone follows suit; v. 22b indicates that this is a unified effort.

2Samuel 17:22c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘ad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
’echâd (אחד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25
lô’ (לא or לול) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
‘âdar (עדד) [pronounced <i>gaw-DAHR</i>]	<i>to be left behind, to remain; to be wanting [lacking]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #5737 BDB #727
’âsher (אשר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lô’ (לא or לול) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
‘âbar (עבר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
’êth (את) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yâr ^e dên (יַרְדֵּן) [pronounced <i>yar^e-DAYN</i>]	transliterated <i>Jordan</i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #3383 BDB #434

Translation: [There was] not even one remaining [behind] who did not cross over the Jordan. V. 22c emphasizes the united nature of those with David. They know that there are two plans on the table before Absalom, and either plan means that armies will come and pursue them. Anyone could have re-thought their position here, deciding not to go with David. But no one stayed behind. Everyone crossed over the Jordan. Furthermore, this suggests the organized nature of David and his army.

No one is accidentally left behind. In fact, this evokes messianic images. **This was to fulfill the words He [Jesus] had said: "I have not lost one of those You have given Me."** (John 18:9; HCSB).

The entire verse reads: David got up, along with the people who [are] with him, and they cross over the Jordan until the morning light. [There was] not even one remaining [behind] who did not cross over the Jordan. Or, as it stands written in Prov. 27:12 A clever (or, wise) man foresees calamity, and hides himself (or, takes shelter); The simple shall go on, they suffer because of this. Jonathan and Ahimaaz foresee trouble for David; David concurs with their assessment. Therefore, David takes his army and moves far northeast. What appears to be part of his strategy is to pull Absalom's army a long distance from Jerusalem, and hope that they have a limited supply line set up. David will be well supplied, from several different places (vv. 27–29), while Absalom is led by a general who is not chosen for his competence but for his name (v. 25).

David knew what to do because of his intelligence network. In order for his intelligence network to function, men and woman had to **lie and deceive** the revolutionary forces. Again, it is legitimate for those who support and establishment government to lie and deceive revolutionary forces. See the **Laws of Divine Establishment** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Ahithophel Hangs Himself

And Ahithophel saw that was not done his counsel, and so he saddles his donkey and so he rises up and so he goes unto his house unto his city. And so he gives instructs unto his house and so he hangs [himself] and so he dies and so he is buried in a tomb of his father.

2Samuel
17:23

When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not used, he saddled up his donkey, rose up, and went to his house in his city. He gave [thorough] instructions concerning his household and then he hanged himself and died. He was buried in the tomb of his father.

When Ahithophel realized that his advice had been rejected, he saddled up his donkey and rode to his house in his city. He gave thorough instructions concerning the function and deposition of his household, and then hanged himself until dead. He was buried in the tomb of his father.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

But Achitophel seeing that his counsel was not followed, saddled his ass, and arose and went home to his house and to his city, and putting his house in order, hanged himself, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And Ahithophel saw that was not done his counsel, and so he saddles his donkey and so he rises up and so he goes unto his house unto his city. And so he gives instructs unto his house and so he hangs [himself] and so he dies and so he is buried in a tomb of his father.

Peshitta (Syriac)

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

Septuagint (Greek)

And Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, and he saddled his donkey, and rose and departed to his house into his city; and he gave orders to his household, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the tomb of his father.

Significant differences:

No serious differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	When Ahithophel saw that Absalom and the leaders of Israel were not going to follow his advice, he saddled his donkey and rode back to his home in Gilo. He told his family and servants what to do. Then he hanged himself, and they buried him in his family's burial place.
Easy English	Ahithophel saw that the *Israelites did not follow his advice. So he put a saddle on his *donkey. He went to his house in his home town. He dealt with all his family affairs. Then he hanged himself and he died. They buried him next to his father's grave.
New Berkeley Version	When Ahithophel saw that his recommendation had not been followed, he saddled his donkey, got up and went to his house in his own city, made arrangements for his household, and strangled himself [He realized that the delay, which enabled David to consolidate his forces, would prove fatal for Absalom's cause.]. So he died, and they buried him in his father's tomb.
New Century Version	When Ahithophel saw that the Israelites did not accept his advice, he saddled his donkey and went to his hometown. He left orders for his family and property, and then he hanged himself. He died and was buried in his father's tomb.
New Life Bible	When Ahithophel saw that his words were not followed, he got onto his donkey and went home to his city. He told those of his family what they must do, and he hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's grave.
The Voice	When Ahithophel saw that his plan was ignored, <i>he knew the best hope for victory was lost</i> . He saddled his donkey and went home; and after setting his affairs in order, he hanged himself and died. He was buried within his father's tomb.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	In the meantime, when AhiThophel realized that his counsel had been rejected, he saddled his burro and went back to his home; then he discharged his staff and hung himself. And they buried him in the tomb of his father.
God's Word™	When Ahithophel saw that his advice hadn't been followed, he saddled his donkey, left, and went home to his own city. He gave instructions to his family. Then he hanged himself, died, and was buried in his father's tomb.
New American Bible (R.E.)	When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not acted upon, he saddled his donkey and departed, going to his home in his own city. Then, having left orders concerning his household, he hanged himself. And so he died and was buried in his father's tomb. 2Ssm. 15:31; 16:23.
NIRV	Ahithophel saw that his advice wasn't being followed. So he put a saddle on his donkey. He started out for his house in his hometown. When he got there, he put everything in order. He made out his will. Then he killed himself. So he died, and his body was buried in his father's tomb.
Revised English Bible	When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been taken he saddled his donkey, went straight home to his own town, gave his last instructions to his household, and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's grave.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not done. He bound his ass and rose, and went to his house in his city. He commanded his house to strangle him. He died, and buried in the grave of his father.
Bible in Basic English	Now when Ahithophel saw that his suggestion was not acted on, he got his ass ready, and went back to his house, to the town where he came from, and having put his house in order, he put himself to death by hanging; so he came to his end and was put in the resting-place of his father.
The Expanded Bible	When Ahithophel saw that the Israelites did not accept his advice [follow his counsel], he saddled his donkey and went to his hometown. He left orders for his

	family and property [set his affairs/house in order], and then he hanged himself. He died and was buried in his father's tomb.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But when Akhitophel saw that his advice was not being acted upon, he saddled his ass, and started, and went to his own home, at his village, and arranged his affairs; —then hung himself and died, and they buried him in the tomb of his father.
HCSB	When Ahithophel realized that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He set his affairs in order and hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.
NET Bible®	When Ahithophel realized that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and returned to his house in his hometown. After setting his household in order, he hanged himself. So he died and was buried in the grave [The Greek recensions of Origen and Lucian have here "house" for "grave."] of his father.
NIV, ©2011	When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And Achiy Thophel sees that his counsel works not, he harnesses his he burro and rises and goes to his house - to his city and misvahs concerning his house; and strangles himself and dies: and is entombed in the tomb of his father.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not done, and he saddled his ass, and he arose, and he went to his house, to his city, and he gave charge to his household and he strangled himself, and he died, and was buried in the sephulcre of his father.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And when Achitophel saw that his etza (counsel, advice) was not followed, he saddled his chamor, and arose, and went home to his bais, to his town, and put his bais (household) in order, vayyekhanak (and he strangled, hanged himself), and died, and was buried in the kever aviv (tomb of his father).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And Ahithophel has seen that his counsel was not done, and he saddles the ass, and rises and goes unto his house, unto his city, and gives charge unto his household, and strangles himself, and dies, and he is buried in the burying-place of his father.
The Geneva Bible	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. Gods just vengeance even in this life is poured on them who are enemies, traitors, or persecutors of his Church.
Green's Literal Translation	And Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not done. And he saddled the ass and rose up and went to his house, to his city. And <i>he</i> gave command to his household, then hanged himself, and died. And he was buried in the burying place of his father.
Syndein/Thieme	{Final Result of Clandestine Warfare} And when Ahithophel saw/'made an estimate of the situation' that his plan/advice/counsel was not adopted/executed, he saddled his ass, and went to his chateau . . . to his hometown/city . . . and when he had put his 'affairs in order' {Idiom: literally: 'household in order' - means he updated his will, and made arraignments for his death - very rational unto the end} he hanged himself, and died/'committed suicide'. Then he was buried in the 'Family Mausoleum'/sepulcher of his father'.

Webster's Bible Translation	And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled [his] ass, and arose, and went home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died. and was buried in the sepulcher of his father.
World English Bible	When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey, and arose, and got him home, to his city, and set his house in order, and hanged himself; and he died, and was buried in the tomb of his father.
Young's Updated LT	And Ahithophel has seen that his counsel was not done, and he saddles the ass, and rises and goes unto his house, unto his city, and gives charge unto his household, and strangles himself, and dies, and he is buried in the burying-place of his father.

The gist of this verse: Ahithophel, despondent over his advice not being followed, returns to his home and commits suicide.

2Samuel 17:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀchîythôphel (אֲחִיתוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to be done [made, produced]; to be offered, to be observed, to be used; was made [constructed, fashioned], to be formed, to be prepared</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿêtsâh (עֵצָה) [pronounced <i>gay-TZAW</i>]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6098 BDB #420

Translation: When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not used,... Ahithophel was in a bit of a shock. He considered his situation, he realized that he was the brains in Absalom's organization and that he was the man behind the man. He had formulated a wonderful initial plan that kept Absalom busy and out of his hair (he was raping his father's mistresses), while Ahithophel could evaluate the situation and formulate a plan which would destroy David. After evaluating the situation, Ahithophel gave, quite frankly, brilliant advice to Absalom. Had he saddled up and took 12,000 men after David, it is likely that David would have gotten no intelligence, and that his back would have been to the River Jordan, and that he would have had nowhere to go. Even if David escaped

to the other side, Ahithophel would have been right behind him in hot pursuit. Ahithophel's force was probably numerically stronger and more enthusiastic, and the plan of Ahithophel, to strike them in such a way as to separate David out, was brilliant. You kill David and there is no more revolution. Eliminate David or Absalom and the revolution is over. That was not Ahithophel's only option, as we have discussed, but it is how he presented his plan to Absalom. Ahithophel was casting pearls before swine.

However, Ahithophel's advice was rejected by Absalom, and by the other elders who were present, which was both a humiliation to Ahithophel, as well as an emotional blow to him. He was so filled with anger and resentment toward David that he wanted, with every fibre of his being, to be the man to kill David, to be the man to give the order. This revenge is what had driven him. O, to give the order, "You found David? Kill him, now!"

Furthermore, Ahithophel would have been second in command and the brains of Absalom's revolution; and everyone would have known that. He was right there. Absalom took his advice on what to do next; and it appeared that Absalom was about to let him attack David with 12,000 men. Everything that he desired was right within his grasp, and then that idiot Absalom, not being able to think his way out of a paper bag when it comes to military tactics, chooses Hushai's approach instead, which would have been too time consuming and would have allowed David to pick the battlefield and possibly have the surprise.

2Samuel 17:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châbash (שָׁבַשׁ) [pronounced <i>khaw-BAHSH</i>]	<i>to bind, to bind on [around, up]; to wrap [a turban, scarf] around; to bind [by allegiance; law, rule]; to join; to restrain; to saddle [up]; to bandage; to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2280 BDB #289
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chămôwr (חֲמֹר) [pronounced <i>khuh-MOHR</i>]	<i>ass, male donkey, he-ass, burrow</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2543 BDB #331

Translation: ...he saddled up his donkey,... Ahithophel is not a team player. He does not join in with the rest saying, "Okay, then, let's follow Hushai's plan. David will die anyway." He knows that Hushai's plan is flawed, and he can see how he has been edged out as the 2nd man in command. It is as if his world had suddenly come crashing down upon him. He is now one of two advisors, and who knows how many more Absalom would call upon in the future?

Even more disturbingly to Ahithophel, his plan would have succeeded while Hushai's plan may not, and if Hushai is wrong, then everyone associated with Absalom's plan will be tried for treason. In 2 or 3 weeks, there may be soldiers knocking on Ahithophel's door, arresting him for crimes against the state.

We have no idea what Ahithophel said or how he did this, but I suspect, while everyone was celebrating Hushai's plan, that Ahithophel quietly slipped out of the room and saddled up his donkey, not saying a word to anyone. He was so eaten up inside with mental attitude sins toward David; and he was so close to getting his revenge against David, and then it all suddenly disappeared, as a whiff of smoke. The same was true of his great position of

power; minutes ago, before Hushai was called for, that power was right there, in his hands, and now, suddenly, it is gone. He is no longer the brains behind Absalom.

2Samuel 17:23c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קום) [pronounced koom]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
'el (ל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
bayith (בית) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
'el (ל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'yr (עיר) [pronounced geer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: ...rose up, and went to his house in his city. Ahithophel rising up means that he sets into motion a plan. That plan meant that he was going to his home in his home city. Ahithophel does not stick around to see how well Hushai's plan works out. He apparently does not expect it to.

Ahithophel's home city is Giloh (2Sam. 15:12).

2Samuel 17:23d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 17:23d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsâvâh (צַוָּה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'îyr (עִיר) [pronounced géer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: He gave [thorough] instructions concerning his household... When he returned, he appeared to take charge again, but this time, his instructions of what had to be done seemed to be a little more thorough this time around. Whether those in his household realized what he was doing is unknown to us. He apparently took care to take stock of his possessions and his assets, and determined how they should be dealt with in order to provide those of his household continued support. This tells us that Ahithophel is a methodical man.

However, despite his being calm and meticulous, once Ahithophel had seen to his family's affairs, he kills himself. This is the ultimate in **compartmentalization arrogance** (see **2Sam. 11** for the **Doctrine of Compartmentalization Arrogance**). Ahithophel takes the time to carefully provide for his family and loved ones, and to set his affairs in order, but then leaves them by means of suicide. He has the calmness of forethought to see to the needs of his family, but then takes away from them the most important person in their life, himself.

2Samuel 17:23e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chânaq (חָנַק) [pronounced khaw-NAHK]	<i>to strangle [throttle] oneself, to choke oneself [with a rope]; to hang oneself</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #2614 BDB #338

The Niphal can be passive or reflexive.

According to the Pulpit Commentary, even though this was probably not the first hanging in human history, it is the first one which was recorded.⁷² Therefore, there may not have been a term for *hanging* at this time.

Translation: ...and then he hanged himself... The verb says that he strangled himself, which allows for him to hang himself with a rope. Whether anyone suspected that this was his plan or not, we do not know. But Ahithophel was a very efficient man. He did one thing after another, with this end in mind.

⁷² *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:23. They are quoting Kitto for this.

This seems pretty extreme, so let's go through this.

Why Ahithophel Killed Himself

1. Ahithophel appears to be the grandfather of Bathsheba, the woman that David committed adultery with and had a child by.
2. David later had her husband killed.
3. Ahithophel, as a military man, was quite disgusted with David's actions, which were the epitome of low class for a military man.
4. Ahithophel's son, Bathsheba's father, remained loyal to David in all of this.
5. Despite David marrying Bathsheba, and, apparently remaining faithful to her, Ahithophel appeared to never forgive David.
6. Therefore, this was a great opportunity for Ahithophel to get his vengeance on David.
7. Ahithophel's plan to Absalom was to go kill David; that was the key to his plan, which reveals Ahithophel's mental attitude toward David, even though this would have been a good plan for Absalom to follow.
8. This would allow Ahithophel to kill David himself or to give the order for David to be killed, something that Ahithophel has desired to do for a very long time.
9. This would also have secured his position as the brains behind Absalom, where he would become the man behind the man. In many areas, the policies enacted would have been from Ahithophel.
10. However, right out of left field, Absalom suggests that Hushai be brought in to listen to, and he is.
11. When Absalom chose to go with Hushai's plan, Ahithophel was no longer the dominant advisor and he would not be able to personally order the killing of David.
12. Ahithophel's mental attitude sins toward David were eating him up. He so wanted to kill David, and he so had a great desire for power.
13. Furthermore, by ignoring his advice, Absalom was sealing his own fate. Ahithophel probably believed that the Absalom revolt would fail and that he, along with many others, would be arrested and tried as traitors. So he pictured his own fall as being, ultimately, very great.
14. Recall that it was Ahithophel that suggested that Absalom rape David's mistresses. For this reason alone, he would certainly be executed by David.
15. Ahithophel was an older man, and, he was a few days away from accomplishing two of the greatest goals in his life, but now, suddenly, these are snatched away from him.
16. Because of his mental attitude sins and because he can see himself as going nowhere else in the future, Ahithophel takes his own life.

See also the [Doctrine of Suicide \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

There are some Jewish accounts⁷³ which have Ahithophel as being 33 years old. This makes little sense. He cannot be David's former counselor and he cannot be Bathsheba's grandfather at that age. Furthermore, it would make little sense that David would fear his counseling this much at age 33 nor would he have had much of an estate to deal with at age 33 either (remember, he puts his house in order). Finally, would all of the elders deferred to his counsel if he were only 33? He is a man old enough to be a grandfather of an adult woman, and young enough to lead a brigade into battle. I would place him between ages 60 and 75.

This does leave us with Psalm 55:23 to sort out. It reads: **But You, O God, will bring them down into the pit of ruin; bloody and deceitful men shall not live half their days; but I will trust in You.** (MKJV). Although many agree that this psalm was written with Ahithophel in mind, this final statement of this psalm is merely a principle. Does this mean that every bloody and deceitful man will live to be exactly half his age? Of course not! It simply means that they will not live a full and satisfying life. Part of their lives will be in ruin, and death will cut them off short.

⁷³ See T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 69. 2. & 106. 2. & Gloss. in Pirke Abot, c. 5. s. 19. These references are taken from Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:23.

Furthermore, some people enter into a time of their lives when they become reversionistic. They might not be that way all of their lives. Therefore, we cannot expect their lives to be cut exactly in half either.

So far, this is what we have: [When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not used, he saddled up his donkey, rose up, and went to his house in his city. He gave \[thorough\] instructions concerning his household and then he hanged himself and died.](#) Although the Bible does not discuss Ahithophel's motivation here, I have suggested three motives in Ahithophel's suicide: he hated David and was torn apart with mental attitude sins. He desired to kill David and this was taken from him, which caused him to become despondent. Also, Ahithophel was clearly Absalom's #1 man, the man behind the man, and his advice reigned supreme, until Absalom called for Hushai. Then, within an hour, Ahithophel went from behind the #2 man in all of Israel to being one of several advisors that Absalom looked to. Thirdly, Ahithophel did not see Hushai's plan as working, meaning that he would be soon executed for being a part of Absalom's revolution.

Spurgeon comments: *Thousands set their houses in order, but destroy their souls; they look well to their flocks and their herds, but not to their hearts' best interests. They gather broken shells with continuous industry, but they throw away priceless diamonds. They exercise forethought, prudence, care, everywhere but where they are most required. They save their money, but squander their happiness; they are guardians of their estates, but suicides of their souls.*⁷⁴

2Samuel 17:23f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: ...and died. Ahithophel was successful in carrying out his plan of suicide. He died by strangulation.

Many think that Psalm 7 is rightly applied to Shimei, but this portion seems reasonable to apply to Ahithophel: [God is a fair judge, a God who is angered by injustice every day. If a person does not change, God sharpens his sword. By bending his bow, he makes it ready to shoot. He prepares his deadly weapons and turns them into flaming arrows. See how that person conceives evil, is pregnant with harm, and gives birth to lies. He digs a pit and shovels it out. Then he falls into the hole that he made for others. His mischief lands back on his own head. His violence comes down on top of him \(Psalm 7:11–16; God's Word™\).](#)

One might see Ahithophel as the ultimate in human wisdom, but lacking in godly wisdom (Bible doctrine). A man who is brilliant and deliberate, but ultimately lacking the calm of a soul guided by God. By one of the psalms, it is possible that Ahithophel is the man who attended Bible class with David, and yet, later, betrayed David (Psalm 55:12–14—[If an enemy had insulted me, then I could bear it. If someone who hated me had attacked me, then I could hide from him. But it is you, my equal, my best friend, one I knew so well! We used to talk to each other in complete confidence and walk into God's house with the festival crowds. God's Word™.](#))

⁷⁴ David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 17:23.

2Samuel 17:23g

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced <i>kaw-BAHR</i>]	<i>to be buried</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qeber (קֶבֶר) [pronounced <i>KEH^b-VEHR</i>]	<i>grave, sepulcher, tomb; burial place</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6913 BDB #868
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw^bv</i>]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: He was buried in the tomb of his father. It is unknown whether he gave instructions concerning where he was to be buried, but given Ahithophel's careful, methodical actions, it is likely that he gave written or instructions for that as well. No doubt, being buried in the tomb of his father is the normal course of things.

Ahithophel was unable to control the events in the revolution. He went from being the #2 man, and the brains of the Absalom organization, to being a man who had been suddenly edged out; a man whose outstanding advice was suddenly rejected. His mental attitude sins and his lust for revenge had come to a sudden roadblock, and here he was, unable to have any say in his own future except for his death. He could give the orders related to his suicide and he could carry those orders out. And so ends Ahithophel's miserable life. I say miserable, because he committed suicide.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It is possible that Ahithophel's betrayal of David foreshadows the betrayal of Jesus by Judas.

Ahithophel's Betrayal of David is a Type of Judas's Betrayal of Jesus

1. Ahithophel and Judas were close associates of David and Jesus, respectively. David suggests that in Psalm 55.
2. Although it appeared that Ahithophel was upset that David had sex with his married granddaughter, this ended up being hypocritical, as he suggested that Absalom rape David's mistresses. Judas was also hypocritical, when he called for money spent on perfume to be spend on the poor. John 12:5-6
3. Ahithophel apparently looked for a long time to take revenge against David. Judas watched for a long time looking for the chance to betray Jesus. Mark 14:11 Luke 22:6
4. Ahithophel betrayed David; Judas betrayed Jesus. Matt. 27:3 Mark 3:19 14:10
5. Ahithophel had intimate knowledge about David, and was therefore able to come up with a plan to defeat him; Judas had intimate knowledge of the Lord, and therefore able to come up with a plan to betray Him. John 18:2
6. Ahithophel wanted to lead a battalion of soldiers against David; Judas led a troop of soldiers and guard to take Jesus. John 18:3 Acts 1:16

Ahithophel's Betrayal of David is a Type of Judas's Betrayal of Jesus

7. Ahithophel and Judas both betrayed innocent blood. Matt. 27:4
8. In his betrayal of David, Ahithophel abandoned his position as friend and confidant of David; and when Judas betrayed Jesus, he abandoned his position as friend and confidant of the Lord. Acts 1:25
9. The rewards for betrayal were not enough for Ahithophel or Judas. Matt. 27:3–5
10. Ahithophel and Judas both committed suicide by hanging after betraying innocent blood. Matt. 27:4–5
11. When Ahithophel was gone, David became preeminent again; when Judas was gone, Jesus was glorified. John 13:31.

Generally speaking, *types* are related the Jesus Christ and to His work on our behalf on the cross. However, in this case, our actual focus is on the betrayal of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Troop Movements of David and Absalom's Armies

And David has come Mahanaim-ward and Absalom crossed over the Jordan—he and every man of Israel with him.

²Samuel
17:24

David had come to Mahanaim when Absalom crossed over the Jordan [River]—he and every man of Israel with him.

David had come to Mahanaim at the same time that Absalom crossed over the Jordan River along with all the men of Israel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	But David came to the <u>camp</u> , and Absalom passed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And David has come Mahanaim-ward and Absalom crossed over the Jordan—he and every man of Israel with him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And David passed over to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

Significant differences: Although the Latin appears to be different by having *camp* rather than *Mahanaim*, *Mahanaim* means *two camps*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	David had reached Mahanaim by the time Absalom and all the Israelites who were with him crossed the Jordan River.
Contemporary English V.	David went to the town of Mahanaim, and Absalom crossed the Jordan River with the army of Israel.
Easy English	David went to the town called Mahanaim. And Absalom and all the *Israelites crossed over the river Jordan.
Easy-to-Read Version	David arrived at Mahanaim.
Good News Bible (TEV)	David had reached the town of Mahanaim by the time Absalom and the Israelites had crossed the Jordan.

<i>The Message</i>	About the time David arrived at Mahanaim, Absalom crossed the Jordan, and the whole army of Israel with him.
New Century Version	War Between David and Absalom David arrived at Mahanaim. And Absalom and all his Israelites crossed over the Jordan River.
New Living Translation	David soon arrived at Mahanaim. By now, Absalom had mobilized the entire army of Israel and was leading his troops across the Jordan River.
The Voice	Meanwhile David went on to Mahanaim as Absalom was crossing over the Jordan with all of the men of Israel.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, David had traveled all the way to Manaim. But then AbSalom and all his men crossed the JorDan [in pursuit].
Beck's American Translation	<i>David at Mahanaim</i> David came to Mahanaim, and Absalom and all the men of Israel with him also crossed the Jordan.
Christian Community Bible	David had already entered Mahanaim when Absalom crossed over the Jordan with all the Israelites.
<i>God's Word™</i>	David had already come to Mahanaim by the time Absalom and all the men of Israel with him crossed the Jordan River.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Now David had arrived at Mahanaim while Absalom crossed the Jordan accompanied by all the Israelites.
NIRV	David went to Mahanaim. Absalom went across the Jordan River with all of the men of Israel.
Revised English Bible	By the time that Absalom had crossed the Jordan with the Israelites, David was already at Mahanaim.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David came to Mahanaim. Absalom passed the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.
Bible in Basic English	And David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom, with all the men of Israel, went over Jordan.
The Expanded Bible	War Between David and Absalom David arrived at Mahanaim. And Absalom and all his Israelites [^L the men/army of Israel] crossed over the Jordan River.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Meantime David went to Makhanaim; so Absalom crossed the Jordan, and all the army of Israel with him.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	David made his way to the Encampment; and now Absalom crossed the Jordan after him, with all Israel at his back.
NET Bible®	Meanwhile David had gone to Mahanaim, while Absalom and all the men of Israel had crossed the Jordan River.
NIV – UK	Absalom's death David went to Mahanaim, and Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	David had reached Machanayim by the time Avshalom and all the men of Isra'el crossed the Yarden.
exeGesés companion Bible	And David comes to Machanayim: and Abi Shalom passes over Yarden - he and all the men of Yisra El with him.

Hebrew Names Version	Then David came to Machanayim. Avshalom passed over the Yarden, he and all the men of Yisra'el with him.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Dovid came to Machanayim. And Avshalom passed over Yarden, he and all the Ish Yisroel with him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel.
Syndein/Thieme	{David's Headquarters and Absalom's first Move} Then David went to Mahanaim. {Note: David marched his column with the Jordan to his left and the Mountains to his right. Then he turned left and went to Mahanaim which he made his headquarters for the upcoming battle.} And Absalom crossed the Jordan {River} . . . he and 'his entire army/'all the men of Israel' with him. {Note: This phrase indicates that the majority of the professional Jewish army aligned themselves with Absalom. From Josephus and other extra-biblical sources, we can trace how Absalom delayed by going to Shechem to gather together an army of about 250,000 men which gave David the time to prepare for the fight (as was Hushai's plan).}
Young's Literal Translation	And David came to Mahanaim, and Absalom passed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

The gist of this verse: David arrives at Mahanaim with his army, the same time that Absalom crosses over the Jordan with his army.

2Samuel 17:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Machănayim (מַחְנַיִם) [pronounced <i>makh-uh-AH-yim</i>]	<i>two camps; transliterated Mahanaim</i>	proper singular noun; location with the locale hê	Strong's #4266 BDB #334

The directional hê is the *âh* (ה) ending to a noun, usually found after a verb of motion. This is called the *directive hê* or the *he locale*, which often indicates direction and puts somewhat of an adverbial spin on the noun. Essentially, it answers the question *where?* The pronunciation of the word does not change. The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun *heaven* and the most literal rendering in the English would be *heavenward*. We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions *to* or *toward*.

Translation: [David had come to Mahanaim...](#) The plan of Hushai, which was deemed to be better than the plan of Ahithophel, was for Absalom to gather up men from all over Israel, and then to go into battle with all of these men against David.

Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that a week or as much as 3 weeks have passed. Absalom will be crossing over the Jordan River probably down near Jerusalem, while, at the same time, David is going into the city of Mahanaim, which is in red on the map to the right.

The **Map of Mahanaim** is from [Bible-history.com](#). Most references have Mahanaim as being closer to the Jabbok River.



[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

We know that Absalom followed Hushai's plan for two reasons: (1) the previous verse tells us that Ahithophel committed suicide when he found that his plan would not be followed; and (2) David got quite clear of the Jordan River before Absalom got to the Jordan River. This means that David will have a fair amount of time to pick a battlefield and to be ready for Absalom.

Nave gives us a nice summary of this city:

This is taken from the [Doctrine of Mahanaim \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Nave's Topical Bible Summarizes the City of Mahanaim

The place where Jacob had the vision of angels. Gen. 32:2

The town of Mahanaim was allotted to Gad. Joshua 13:26, 30

One of the Levitical cities. Joshua 21:38

Ishbosheth establishes himself at Mahanaim, when made king over Israel. 2Sam. 2:8–12

David lodges at Mahanaim, at the time of Absalom's rebellion. 2Sam. 17:27–29 1Kings 2:8

Nave's Topical Bible Summarizes the City of Mahanaim

However, there is one point which is ignored by the sources I checked, and that is the issue of the meaning of the name of Mahanaim and the circumstances as to why it was given that name. From this doctrine: As Jacob was leaving his Uncle Laban's ranch in Padan Aram, taking with him Laban's two daughters as his wives, Jacob traveled along the Jabbok River, which is perpendicular to the Jordan River, intersecting it about midway between the seas. His eventual destination was the land of Canaan. Along this way, Jacob met with angels of God and called the place where he was, *the camp of God*; and he gave it the name *Mahanaim*, which means *two camps*. It is unclear whether the name refers to *two angels*, to the *two camps* that Jacob divided his company into, or to his *two wives*. Fausset suggests that Jacob divided his company into two camps and that there were two groups of angels, one guarding each camp.⁷⁵ One might suggest that the key to the name is a conflict between two things: the human and the divine; the visible and the invisible agencies involved in Jacob's life. There would always be that constant conflict between Jacob's two wives. There might even be a connection here with Jacob about to meet his twin brother Esau. In any case, throughout the Biblical history of this city, again and again, we see a conflict between two things, often one good and one evil.

All but the final paragraph are taken from *Nave's Topical Bible*; originally produced by Orville J. Nave (1841-1917), A.M., D.D., LL.D.; originally published in the early 1900's; from E-Sword; Topic: Mahanaim.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Barnes tells us: *Mahanaim...was a strong city, in a well-provisioned country, with a mountainous district for retreat in case of need, and with a warlike and friendly population.*⁷⁶

And the Pulpit Commentary sums it up thus: *Mahanaim...was now a fortified city, with walls and gates, (2Sam. 18:24) and its strength of position, which had made it a safe capital for Ishbosheth, who had probably added to its defenses, made it also a safe retreat for David while gathering his forces.*⁷⁷

So David is now encamped in a city which is easy to defend, which is probably on higher ground than that which is all around, with limited access to the city from the outside (due to forests, or whatever). The idea that Absalom and his forces are going to be able to lasso the stones of the city one-by-one and drag them down to the Jabbok River—not going to happen.

2Samuel 17:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

⁷⁵ Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Mahanaim.

⁷⁶ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:24.

⁷⁷ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:24.

2Samuel 17:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ābar (אָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
'ēth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yâr ^e dên (יַרְדֵּן) [pronounced <i>yar^e-DAYN</i>]	transliterated <i>Jordan</i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #3383 BDB #434

Translation: ...when Absalom crossed over the Jordan [River]... A week or more has passed. Absalom is leading his troops into battle against David and they are just now getting into position. David has found the place where he wants to make a stand.

2Samuel 17:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hûw' (אוּהוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; himself</i> as a demonstrative pronoun: <i>that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation:...—he and every man of Israel with him. This does not mean that every single person in Israel has joined up with Absalom. He got who he got, which I suspect is not as large an army as one would expect.

Gill: *Absalom passed over Jordan [and],...according to the counsel of Hushai, had gathered all the warlike men of Israel to him that he could, and with this army pursued his father; not content to drive him to the other side Jordan, sought to seize his person, and take away his life, and so secure the crown and kingdom to him, of which he made no doubt, having such a numerous army, on which he relied.*⁷⁸

R. B. Thieme, Jr. asked about this verse: "What is it all about? Who are these people; who is related to whom? What, is the Bible a social registry?"⁷⁹

And Amasa placed Absalom instead of Joab over the army. And Amasa [was] a son of a man (his name [is] Ithra the Israelite), who had come unto Abigail daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, mother of Joab.

2Samuel
17:25

Absalom placed Amasa over the army in lieu of Joab. Amasa [was] the son of a man [whose] name was Ithra the Israelite [possibly, *Jezeelite, Ishmaelite*], who had relations with [lit., *come unto*] Abigail, the daughter of Nahash, the sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab.

Absalom placed Amasa over his army as a substitute for Joab. Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Ithra (he was an Israelite [possibly, *Jezeelite, Ishmaelite*]), who had relations with Abigail, who was also the daughter of Nahash, who was the sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Now Absalom appointed Amasa in Joab's stead over the army: and Amasa was the son of a man who was called Jethra, of <u>Jezeel</u> , who went in to Abigail the daughter of Naas, the sister of Sarvia who was the mother of Joab.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Amasa placed Absalom instead of Joab over the army. And Amasa [was] a son of a man (his name [is] Ithra the Israelite), who had come unto Abigail daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, mother of Joab.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Absalom had appointed Amasa over the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of an Israelite whose name was Ithra, who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zoriah Joabs mother.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom appointed Amasa over the army, in the place of Joab. And Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Jether of <u>Jezeel</u> : he went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, the sister of Zeruiah the mother of Joab.
Brenton's Septuagint	And Abessalom appointed Amessai in the room of Joab over the host. And Amessai was the son of a man whose name was Jether of <u>Jezeel</u> : he went in to Abigaia the daughter of Naas, the sister of Saruia the mother of Joab.
Significant differences:	Rather than an Israelite, most of the other ancient texts have Ithra (Jethra) as being of Jezeel. This does make more sense. Most of the time when we have only a name in Scripture, not associated with a country, we assume they are Israelites.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Absalom had put Amasa in charge of the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra, an Ishmaelite [LXX^A and 1 Chron 2:17; MT an Israelite; LXX^M
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⁷⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:24 (slightly edited).

⁷⁹ R. B. Thieme, Jr. 1972 David Series, Lesson #631_0442 (probably not an exact quote).

	a Jezreelite] who had married Abigail, who was Nahash's daughter and the sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom put Amasa in Joab's place as commander of the army. Amasa's father was Ithra from the family of Ishmael, and his mother was Abigal, the daughter of Nahash and the sister of Joab's mother Zeruiah.
Easy English	Now Absalom had made Amasa the leader of the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of Jether, who came from Ishmael's family. Jether had married Abigail. She was the daughter of Nahash and the sister of Zeruiah. Zeruiah was the mother of Joab.
Easy-to-Read Version	Absalom had made Amasa the new captain of the army. Amasa took Joab's place [Joab still supported David. Joab was one of the three captains in David's army when David was running away from Absalom. See 2Sam. 18:2.]. Amasa was the son of Ithra the Ishmaelite [The Hebrew has "Israelite," but see 1Chron. 2:17 and the ancient Greek translation.]. Amasa's mother was Abigail, the daughter of Nahash sister of Zeruiah [Literally, "Ithra had sexual relations with Abigail, the daughter of Nahash sister of Zeruiah."]. (Zeruiah was Joab's mother.)
<i>The Message</i>	Absalom had made Amasa head of the army, replacing Joab. (Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra, an Ishmaelite who had married Abigail, daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab.)
New Berkeley Version	Absalom had appointed Amasa in Joab's place over the army. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite [As in 1Chron. 2:17, "Jether the Ishmaelite." Amasa was thus Joab's cousin; their mothers were half sisters of David.], who had gone in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, who was the sister of Joab's mother Zeruiah.
New Century Version	Absalom had made Amasa captain of the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether the Ishmaelite. Amasa's mother was Abigail daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
New Living Translation	Absalom had appointed Amasa as commander of his army, replacing Joab, who had been commander under David. (Amasa was Joab's cousin. His father was Jether [Hebrew Ithra, a variant spelling of Jether.], an Ishmaelite [As in some Greek manuscripts (see also 1 Chr 2:17); Hebrew reads an Israelite.]. His mother, Abigail daughter of Nahash, was the sister of Joab's mother, Zeruiah.)
The Voice	Absalom had made Amasa commander of the army, which used to be Joab's office. <i>Amasa was a nephew of David: his father was Ithra the Israelite [Some manuscripts read, "Ishmaelite" or "Jezreelite."]</i> who had married Abigail, Nahash's daughter and also a sister of <i>David and Zeruiah</i> , Joab's mother.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Now, AbSalom had put Amasa in charge of his army (in place of JoAb). Amasa was the son of Jether, an IsraElite from JezreEl. ²⁶ And he went to see AbiGail, the daughter of JesSe and the sister of ZeruJah, who was the mother of JoAb.
Christian Community Bible	Absalom had put Amasa in charge of the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of Ithra, an Ishmaelite who had married Abi gail the daughter of Isai, sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	Absalom appointed Amasa to take Joab's place as commander of the army. (Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra, a descendant of Ishmael. His mother was Abigail, the daughter of Nahash and sister of Joab's mother Zeruiah.)
New American Bible (R.E.)	Absalom had put Amasa in command of the army in Joab's place. Amasa was the son of an Ishmaelite named Ithra, who had married Abigail, daughter of Jesse and sister of Joab's mother Zeruiah. 2Sam. 19:14; 20:4-13.
NIRV	Absalom had made Amasa commander of the army in place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether. Jether belonged to the family line of Ishmael. He

had gotten married to Abigail. She was the daughter of Nahash and the sister of Zeruiah. Zeruiah was the mother of Joab.

Revised English Bible Absalom had appointed Amasa as commander-in-chief in Joab's place; he was the son of a man named Ithra, an Ishmaelite, by Abigail daughter of Nahash and sister to Joab's mother Zeruiah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English And Absalom put Amasa at the head of the army in place of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite, who had been the lover of Abigail, the daughter of Jesse, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

The Expanded Bible Absalom had made Amasa captain [commander; head] of the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether [or Ithra] the Ishmaelite [This is in agreement with 1 Chr. 2:17. Hebrew copies read "Israelite."]. Amasa's mother was Abigail daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

New Advent (Knox) Bible In Joab's place, Absalom gave the command of his army to Amasa, that was son to a man called Jethra, of Jezrahel; he had mated with Abigail, daughter of Naas, that was sister to Joab's mother Sarvia.

NET Bible® Absalom had made Amasa general in command of the army in place of Joab. (Now Amasa was the son of an Israelite man named Jether, who had married [Heb "come to."] Abigail the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.)

NIV – UK Absalom had appointed Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Amasa was the son of Jether [Hebrew Ithra, a variant of Jether], an Ishmaelite [Some Septuagint manuscripts (see also 1 Chron. 2:17); Hebrew and other Septuagint manuscripts Israelite] who had married Abigail [Hebrew Abigal, a variant of Abigail], the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah the mother of Joab.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Avshalom had put 'Amasa in charge of the army in place of Yo'av. 'Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Yitra the Isra'eli, who had had sexual relations with Avigal the daughter of Nachash, Tz'ruiyah's sister and Yo'av's mother.

exeGesés companion Bible And Abi Shalom sets Amasa captain of the host in the stead of Yah Ab:
Amasa is a son of a man; his name is Yithra:
an Yisra Eliy who goes in to Abi Gail
the daughter of Nachash
sister to Seruyah the mother of Yah Ab.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Avshalom appointed Amasa over the tzava (army) instead of Yoav; now Amasa was ben ish shmo Yitra a Yisroeli, that went in to Avigal Bat Nachash Achet Tzeruyah Em Yoav.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Absalom made Amasa captain of the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of an [Ishmaelite] named Ithra, who married Abigail daughter of Nahash, [half sister of David and] sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

English Standard Version Now Absalom had set Amasa over the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite [Compare 1 Chronicles 2:17; Hebrew Israelite], who had married Abigal the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

The Geneva Bible And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa [was] a mans son, whose name [was] Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash [Who was also called Jesse, Davids father.], sister to Zeruiah Joabs mother.

NASB	Absalom set Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Ithra the Israelite [In 1Chr 2:17, Jether the Ishmaelite], who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
New King James Version	And Absalom made Amasa captain of the army instead of Joab. This Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Jithra [Spelled Jether in 1 Chronicles 2:17 and elsewhere], an Israelite [Following Masoretic Text, some manuscripts of the Septuagint, and Targum; some manuscripts of the Septuagint read Ishmaelite (compare 1Chronicles 2:17); Vulgate reads of Jezrael.], who had gone in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
New RSV	Now Absalom had set Amasa over the army in the place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite [1Chr 2.17: Heb Israelite], who had married Abigal daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
Syndein/Thieme	{Amasa made Field Commander of Revolutionary Forces} In the mean time, Absalom had appointed Amasa commander of the army to replace Joab {who stayed loyal to David}. Now Amasa was a bastard/'son of a man' {Amasa's name means 'people of Jesse' - so his line would be associated with David's father - though he is an Ammonite and an Ishmaelite} whose {father's} name was Ithra/Jether the Ishmaelite . . . {Jether was a passing Arab who seduced Abigail who gave birth to the bastard son Amasa} who {Jether} seduced Abigail, daughter of Nahash {daughter of the king of Amnon when he was the husband of David's mother as we will see}, {half} sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother {Zeruiah and David were full brother and sister having Jesse as their father}. {Note: David's father Jesse was the second husband of David's mother. Originally she was the first wife of King Nahash of Amnon. She apparently gave King Nahash only a daughter, Abigail, so he divorced her (apparently a friendly divorce and that explains why King Nahash was such a good friend of David). So, David's mother came to Israel and married Jesse. She had 8 sons with Jesse, David being the youngest. Apparently, it was her dowry that gave them so many sheep for David to watch. So, Abigail is the half-sister of David and Zeruiah (David's full sister). Amasa is David's illegitimate nephew. Joab and Amasa and Absalom are all first cousins. See also I Chronicles 2:17 on Amasa's birth.}.
World English Bible	Absalom set Amasa over the host instead of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man, whose name was Ithra the Israelite, who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
Young's Updated LT	And Amasa has Absalom set instead of Joab over the host, and Amasa is a man's son whose name is Ithra the Israelite who has gone in unto Abigail, daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, mother of Joab.

The gist of this verse: Amasa was the counterpart to Joab and was put over Absalom's army primarily because of his heritage.

When right in the middle of everything, we stop and lay out the lineage of a person, there is a reason for that.

2Samuel 17:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally to, toward	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

2Samuel 17:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿĂmāsâ' (עַמָּאָסָא) [pronounced <i>gum-aw-SAW</i>],	<i>burden; the people of Jesse; transliterated Amasa</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6021 BDB #771
sîym (שׂוּם) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]; also spelled sūwm (שׁוּם) [pronounced <i>soom</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced <i>TAH-khahth</i>]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
Yôw'âb (יֹאבִי) [pronounced <i>YOH-aw^bv</i>]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
tsâbâ' (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tsaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>that which goes forth, army, war, warfare, host; army, host; host (of organized army); host (of angels); of sun, moon, and stars; of whole creation; war, warfare, service, go out to war; service</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6635 BDB #838

Translation: Absalom placed Amasa over the army in lieu of Joab. Joab is over David's army, and Joab is with David (2Sam. 18:2). Absalom has a chance here to pick the man best for the job, or to pick a man who is Joab's symbolic equal. Absalom goes with the latter choice.

Application: People are nominated to various positions or picked to head this or that; and sometimes they are chosen because they are the best person for the job; but many times they are chosen for the color of their skin, some bit of background which is appealing, or because they have the right last name. Absalom chose Amasa for very superficial reasons.

Now, you may ask, *doesn't Absalom want to win this war against his father?* Of course he does. However, insofar as Absalom is concerned, he gives the orders and people do what he tells them to do. All Amasa is going to do is carry out Absalom's orders. He will listen to what Amasa has to say, and then he will give Amasa an order to do whatever. Absalom assumes that the soldiers on the ground are going to do all of the actual fighting, so the person over them just has to appear to be the right man for the job.

2Samuel 17:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘Ămâsâ’ (אַמָּסָא) [pronounced <i>gum-aw-SAW</i>]	<i>burden; the people of Jesse; transliterated Amasa</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6021 BDB #771
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
‘îysh (איש) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שם) [pronounced <i>shame</i>]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Yith ^e râ’ (יִתְרָא) [pronounced <i>yihth-RAW</i>]	<i>abundance; and is transliterated Ithra, Yithra</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3501 BDB #452
Yis ^e r ^o êlîy (יִשְׂרָאֵלִי) [pronounced <i>yish-reh-ay-LEE</i>]	<i>God prevails; refers to a descendant of Israel (Jacob), inhabitant of nation Israel; transliterated Israelite</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #3481 BDB #976

This reading is disputed. The CEB tells us: LXX^A and 1 Chron 2:17; MT an Israelite; LXX^M a Jezreelite.⁸⁰ The Bibles I used based upon the LXX all have *Jezreel*. The Vulgate has *Jezreelite*. According to the NKJV,⁸¹ some LXX manuscripts read *Ishmaelite* (as does 1Chronicles 2:17).

Keil and Delitzsch gives us the most sensible commentary: *The description given of Jithra as יִלְאֲרָשִׁי is very striking, since there was no reason whatever why it should be stated that Amasa's father was an Israelite. The Seventy (the LXX) have therefore given ὁ Ἰεζραηλίτης, i.e., sprung from Jezreel, where David's wife Ahinoam came from (1Sam. 27:3); but they have done so apparently from mere conjecture. The true reading is evidently יִלְאֲרָשִׁי, an Ishmaelite, according to 1Chron. 2:17, where the name is written Jether, a contracted form of Jithra.*⁸²

I think that there are two things going on here: Ithra is a foreigner and he is not properly married to Abigail, the mother of Amasa.

Translation: Amasa [was] the son of a man [whose] name was Ithra the Israelite [possibly, Jezreelite, Ishmaelite],... Amasa's father is Ithra, and Ithra is an Israelite. The actual race here is disputed. First problem

⁸⁰ <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2Samuel%2017;&version=CEB> (footnote for 2Sam. 17:25) accessed April 20, 2013.

⁸¹ <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2Samuel+17;&version=NKJV> (footnote for 2Sam. 17:25) accessed April 20, 2013.

⁸² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:25–26.

is, one does not generally call an *Israelite* an *Israelite*.⁸³ So, I think that part of what is going on is, Amasa has a foreign father, one who did not marry his mother.

Now, when it comes to skill and professionalism, it does not matter if this Amasa is a bastard or not. His father may have raped his mother; his father may have had an affair with his mother; or whatever—but Amasa is who he is. The problem is, the Bible is not concentrating on Amasa as a soldier or Amasa as a man; the Bible concentrates on Amasa's lineage, which suggests that, this is what Absalom focused on.

Look, Absalom is calling the shots here—he can point over the cross-eyed, always-confused Charley Brown and say, “You're my new general.” So he chooses. However, his choice appears to be made upon this guy's background and not upon anything else.

2Samuel 17:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăšher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bōw' (בָּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾĀbīyġāyil (אֲבִיגַיִל) [pronounced a ^b -vee-GAH-yil]	<i>my father is joy (or, joyous); or my father's joy; and is transliterated Abigail</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #26 BDB #4
bath (בַּת) [pronounced bath]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
Nāchāsh (נָחָשׁ) [pronounced naw-KHAWSH]	<i>serpent and is transliterated Nahash</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #5176 BDB #638

According to BDB, Nahash is *the father of Abigail, the mother of Amasa, the commander of Absalom's army*.⁸⁴

Translation: ...*who had relations with* [lit., *come unto*] *Abigail, the daughter of Nahash*,... Amasa's mother is Abigail (not David's wife) and the Abigail is the daughter of Nahash. Now, usually *Nahash* refers to a man. This would mean that we are carrying Abigail into the next part of this verse rather than Nahash.

So, first thing we know is, Amasa is a bastard, possibly by a foreign national (if his father is an Ishmaelite). This would be a rather unsavory background, but not out of the question.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. claims⁸⁵ that this is the same Nahash who is David's friend, the King of the Ammonites. He would have first have had an affair with David's mother (long before David was born); and then, this woman later became Jesse's wife, and bore 7 or so sons, the youngest of whom is David.

⁸³ Of all the commentators that I read, only Keil and Delitzsch seemed to point this out. Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:25–26.

⁸⁴ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; from e-sword; H5176.

⁸⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0456.

I believe that this is another man with the same name, who came along later in the life of David's mother. Jesse passed away, possibly being an older man than his wife, and his wife then married a man named Nahash. The reason I take this position is, I believe that Amasa is young, like Absalom, and Absalom wants him to be his top general because of his name and birthright.

2Samuel 17:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âchôwth (אָחֻוּת) [pronounced aw-KHOWTH]	<i>sister, half-sister; relative; beloved [bride]; figuratively of intimate connection; metaphorically for relationship between Israel and Judah; another</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #269 BDB #27
Ts ^e rûwyâh (זְרוּיָה) [pronounced tz ^e roo-YAW]	<i>balsam; transliterated Zeruiah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #6870 BDB #863
'êm (אֵם) [pronounced aim]	<i>mother [humans, animals]; grandmother used figuratively for an intimate relationship, for a nation; a metropolis, a great and leading city; metaphorically for the earth; point of departure or division</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #517 BDB #51
Yôw'âb (יֹאָב) [pronounced YOHW-aw ^b V]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: ...the sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab. Abigail is a sister to Zeruiah, assuming that Nahash is a man here, which squares with 1Chron. 2:16–17. Zeruiah is David's sister who raised 3 great military men (1Chron. 2:16). We do not hear about this Abigail being David's sister until this Chronicles passage, which suggests that she is a half-sister, through a different parent.

In fact, 1Chron. 2:16–17 Their [referring back to David and his brothers] sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. Zeruiah's family: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel—three in all. Abigail gave birth to Amasa, whose father was Jether the Ishmaelite. (CEB) 2Sam. 17:25 And Absalom made Amasa captain of the army instead of Joab. This Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Jithra, an Israelite, who had gone in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. (CEB) Now, Jesse is the father of David and his brothers, and, presumably, of Zeruiah, but Abigail here is called the daughter of Nahash, and she is not mentioned in the Samuel birth lines. Therefore, Nahash is the father of Abigail, making her David's half-sister. Abigail had a relationship with Jether (Ithra), who is probably an Ishmaelite, which was not a marriage, but resulted in the son, Amasa. Although many commentators suggest that Nahash was the first husband for David's mother, let me suggest to you that he came along after Jesse died, and they had at least one more child, Abigail. This would make Abigail quite a bit younger than David and Zeruiah; and therefore, her son, Amasa, would be younger than Joab and his brothers.

This is easier to see as a genealogy chart. David's mother has two husbands.

David's Line, Including Abigail				
Jesse and David's mother (unnamed)			Nahash and David's mother (unnamed)	
 Eliab Abinadab Shimea	 Nethanel Raddal Ozem	 David	 Zeruiah (husband) Joab Abishai Asahel	 Abigail (Nahash) Amasa

Some⁸⁶ have suggested that Jesse = Nahash. I don't believe that to be true. Several⁸⁷ have also suggested that Nahash is a woman's name as well, so that this is Jesse's 2nd wife. I also do not believe that to be true.

Zeruiah may have been born to Jesse and David's mother. Abigail is David's half-sister and she may be Zeruiah's half-sister.

However, David's mother is off with another man at some point in time, probably after Jesse's death. This is going to separate her somewhat from her family with Jesse; and she has a daughter (possibly two) by this new man. Her daughter Abigail has a relationship—quality unknown—with Nahash, who is called an Ishmaelite. Given all that is going on here, I would say almost certainly Abigail is a later-born daughter to David's mother, 10 or even 20 years younger than Zeruiah. This would fit with Amasa being a new generation leader.

Although it is impossible to know Abigail's and Amasa's exact genealogy (I believe it is correctly portrayed here), the idea of why Absalom has chosen Amasa is clear.

Amasa represents a new generation, a younger generation, like Absalom is. Absalom is the new, improved and younger David; Amasa is the new, improved and younger Joab—and he is brash, because, after all, he is a bastard. Neither man—Absalom or Amasa—is really equipped for the position that they hold. However, Absalom is making a symbolic appointment here and not one based upon competence. This is why the genealogy is so important and stressed here. Do you notice what is not mentioned? His military experience.

Therefore, all of this is about Amasa being the newer, younger Joab, the new generation, the new blood. He is an outsider. He's not exactly in David's family, as there is a different father (his grandfather); and Amasa is probably a bastard. And he is the youngest of this group. So how does sometimes a younger kid who doesn't fit in make his way in this world? Sometimes he acts tougher, sometimes he tries to throw his weight around; sometimes he acts like he is more than he is. For Absalom, he might seem just like the right fit as his general. He's got the right pedigree and he's the right age.

Guzak sees it a different way: *Amasa was the son of a niece of David and a cousin of Joab.*⁸⁸ However, even by Guzak's estimation, Amasa is still the younger, brasher Joab.

Application: We had a recent appointment to the Supreme Court that was done in much the same way. When President Obama put up Sonia Sotomayor's name up to be a Supreme Court Justice, what was **sold** to us over and over again was her marvelous **back story** and her rise from poverty. What the president wanted was a young liberal voice on the court for many more years. And there was a huge amount of **background information** about her which was virtually ignored.

The translation reads: *Absalom placed Amasa over the army in lieu of Joab. Amasa [was] the son of a man [whose] name was Ithra the Israelite [possibly, Jezreelite, Ishmaelite], who had relations with [lit., come unto]*

⁸⁶ Geneva Bible Translation Notes; courtesy of e-sword; 1599; 2Sam. 17:25. Also Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:22–29.

⁸⁷ Including Matthew Henry above.

⁸⁸ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 17:24–26.

Abigail, the daughter of Nahash, the sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab. This is the first time that we meet up with Amasa (and Abigail, apart from the mention in Chronicles); and we will develop him more thoroughly a few chapters from now.

And so bivouacs Israel and Absalom in a land of the Gilead. 2Samuel 17:26 **And Israel (as well as Absalom) bivouacked in the land of Gilead.**

Israel, led by Absalom, after crossing over the Jordan, bivouacked in the land of Gilead.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Israel camped with Absalom in the land of Galaad.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so bivouacs Israel and Absalom in a land of the Gilead.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.
Septuagint (Greek)	And all Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Easy-to-Read Version <i>The Message</i>	The Israelites under Absalom's command set up camp in the region of Gilead. Absalom and the Israelites made their camp in the land of Gilead. Israel and Absalom set camp in Gilead.
New Life Bible	And Israel and Absalom set up their tents in the land of Gilead.
New Living Translation	Absalom and the Israelite army set up camp in the land of Gilead.
The Voice	Absalom and <i>the army of Israel</i> camped on the plains of Gilead.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible <i>God's Word</i> TM	Meanwhile, AbSalom and the army of IsraEl had camped in the land of Gilead. The Israelites and Absalom camped in the region of Gilead.
New American Bible	Israel and Absalom encamped in the territory of Gilead.
New Simplified Bible	The Israelites under Absalom's command set up camp in the region of Gilead.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	Israel and Absalom camped in the land of West-Jordan. And Israel and Absalom put up their tents in the land of Gilead.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So Israel, and Absalom with them, pitched their tents in the country of Galaad.
NET Bible [®]	The army of Israel [Heb "and Israel."] and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead.
NIV – UK	The Israelites and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible exeGesés companion Bible	Isra'el and Avshalom pitched camp in the land of Gil'ad. And Yisra El and Abi Shalom encamp in the land of Gilad.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	So Yisroel and Avshalom encamped in Eretz Gil'ad.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Syndein/Thieme

{Geographical Location of Battle of Civil War}

So Israel and Absalom bivouacked in the land of Gilead. {Note: From here on for the next section, 'Israel' refers to Absalom's his revolutionary army. Next, the land of Gilead is on the East side of the Jordan River- 60 miles long and 20 miles wide. The battle was fought on the East side of the Jordan River - in the north trans-Jordania area. }

Third Millennium Bible
World English Bible
Young's Updated LT

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

Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

And Israel encamps with Absalom in the land of Gilead.

The gist of this verse:

Absalom and his army, taken out of Israel, camps east of the Jordan, in pursuit of David.

2Samuel 17:26

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chânah (חָנָה) [pronounced khaw-NAW]	to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against], to set up camp; to lay siege to; to incline, to decline, to bend down	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2583 BDB #333
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀbīyshāloām (אָבוּשַׁיִם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Gil ^e ʾad (גִּלְעָד) [pronounced gil-GAWD]	rocky region; transliterated Gilead	masculine proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #1568 BDB #166

Translation: And Israel (as well as Absalom) bivouacked in the land of Gilead. The people of Israel are put before Absalom in this verse, simply to indicate that Absalom is not their true leader.

Gilead is east of the Jordan, also known as Transjordan. You may recall this as the territory settled by Gad, Reuben and a half-tribe of Manasseh. Moses led the Israelites up along the east side of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, and the people from these tribes liked this area, and claimed it for themselves. Moses agreed to this, as long as they continued to fight with Israel to take the rest of the land.

So Absalom has a large army which he has moved east of the Jordan, where David is, and Absalom has someone in charge of his army because this man has the right name and the right relationship.

Because all of this is new to Absalom, and because, at this time, Amasa is somewhat of an unknown—selected more for his pedigree rather than for his military prowess—we do not know how organized this army is.

We do not know if men from Gilead joined in with David. If food and supplies were brought to him, additional troops seems likely (although this is conjecture on my part). The very fact that we found many people coming to David as he left Jerusalem suggests that this may have continued to occur even in the land of Transjordan. The Pulpit Commentary estimates⁸⁹ that, by the time Absalom came over the Jordan River, David had 20,000 troops with him. R. B. Thieme, Jr. estimates that David has only 400 men at this point in time.⁹⁰ However, with David being east of the Jordan, and near to the city which supported King Saul, there is a very good chance that David will raise up some additional men for his army at this time.

Every hour that Absalom delays is another hour for David to find the right place to be, where he can both concentrate his troops and protect his civilians.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Supply Lines for David's Troops

The verb for all of this is found in v. 29, so vv. 27–29 are combined below.

And so he is as a coming of David to Mahanaim, and Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the sons of Ammon and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, a bed and basins and articles of molding and wheat [products] and barley [products] and flour and roasted grain and a bean and lentils and roasted grain; and honey and curds and sheep and milk products from the herd they have brought for David and for the people who [are] with him to eat, for they had said, “The people [are] hungry and weary and thirsty in the desert-wilderness.”

2Samuel
17:27–29

And so it was as David came to Mahanaim, that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim [brought to them] beds, bowls and eating utensils, and wheat [products], barley [products], flour and roasted grain; and beans, lentils and roasted grain [as a soup]; and honey and curds and small livestock along with [various] milk products from the herd, for David and the people who [are] with him, for they determined [lit., *said*], “The people [are] hungry, worn-out and thirsty in the desert-wilderness.”

And so it was as David came to Mahanaim, that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought to them wheat products, barley products, flour and roasted grain; and beans, lentils and roasted grain as a soup; and honey and curds and small livestock along with various milk products from the herd, for David and the people who are with him, for they determined, “The people are hungry, worn-out and thirsty in the desert-wilderness.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

⁸⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:27.

⁹⁰ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, Lesson #631_0440. In another lesson, Bob suggests that David has 200 men with him. Lesson #631_0442.

Latin Vulgate	And when David was come to the camp, Sobi the son of Naas of Rabbath of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammihel of Lodabar and Berzellai the Galaadite of Rogelim, Brought him beds, and tapestry, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and meal, and parched corn, and beans, and lentils, and fried pulse, And honey, and butter, and sheep, and fat calves, and they gave to David and the people that were with him, to eat: for they suspected that the people were faint with hunger and thirst in the wilderness.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is as a coming of David to Mahanaim, and Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the sons of Ammon and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, a bed and basins and articles of molding and wheat [products] and barley [products] and flour and roasted grain and a bean and lentils and roasted grain; and honey and curds and sheep and milk products from the herd they have brought for David and for the people who [are] with him to eat, for they had said, "The people [are] hungry and weary and thirsty in the desert-wilderness."
Peshitta (Syriac)	²⁷ When David came to Mahanaim. Abishai, the son of Nahash of Rabbath of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Gamil of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Dobelin ²⁸ Brought beds and carpets and earthen vessels and wheat and barley and parched wheat and flour and beans and lentils ²⁹ And honey and butter and sheep and cheese of cows, and offered them to David, and to the people who were with him, to eat; for they said, The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness.
Septuagint (Greek)	And it came to pass when David came to Manahaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and Machir son of Ammiel of Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought <u>ten embroidered beds (with double coverings)</u> and <u>ten</u> caldrons, earthenware and wheat, barley and flour, meal and beans, and parched seeds, honey and butter, sheep and cheese of the herd. And they brought them to David and to his people with him to eat; for one said, The people are faint and hungry and thirsty in the wilderness.
Significant differences:	The Syriac has <i>Abishai</i> instead of <i>Shobi</i> . The Latin has <i>tapestry</i> as the second item brought; and the Syriac has <i>carpets</i> . The Greek gives the number of bed and number of basins brought. The differences in the foods brought appear to be quite minor, with a repetition found in the Hebrew not found elsewhere.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	When David arrived in Mahanaim, Nahash's son Shobi, who was from Rabbah of the Ammonites; Ammiel's son Machir, who was from Lo-debar; and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought couches, basins, and pottery, along with wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, curds, sheep, and cheese from the herd so that David and the troops who were with him could eat. They said, "The troops have grown hungry, tired, and thirsty in the wilderness."
Contemporary English V.	After David came to the town of Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash came from Rabbah in Ammon, Machir the son of Ammiel came from Lo-Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite came from Rogelim. Here is a list of what they brought: sleeping mats, blankets, bowls, pottery jars, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, yogurt, sheep, and cheese. They brought the food for David and the others because they knew that everyone would be hungry, tired, and thirsty from being out in the desert.
Easy English	When David came to the town called Mahanaim, Shobi, Makir and Barzillai were there. Shobi was the son of Nahash, who came from the *Ammonite town called Rabbah. Makir was the son of Ammiel, who came from Lo Debar. Barzillai came from Rogelim in the area called Gilead. They brought beds, bowls and pots to David. They also brought wheat, barley (like wheat), flour and some grain that they

had cooked. And they brought beans, small peas (types of vegetables) and honey. They also brought some sheep, sheep's milk and cheese that they had made from cows' milk. They brought all this for David and his men. The three men thought, 'The people are in the desert. They will be hungry and tired. They will also need to drink.'

Good News Bible (TEV)

When David arrived at Mahanaim, he was met by Shobi son of Nahash, from the city of Rabbah in Ammon, and by Machir son of Ammiel, from Lodebar, and by Barzillai, from Rogelim in Gilead. They brought bowls, clay pots, and bedding, and also food for David and his men: wheat, barley, meal, roasted grain, beans, peas, honey, cheese, cream, and some sheep. They knew that David and his men would get hungry, thirsty, and tired in the wilderness.

The Message

When David arrived at Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Ammonite Rabbah, and Makir son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought beds and blankets, bowls and jugs filled with wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans and lentils, honey, and curds and cheese from the flocks and herds. They presented all this to David and his army to eat, "because," they said, "the army must be starved and exhausted and thirsty out in this wilderness."

New Life Bible

When David had come to Mahanaim, he met Nahash's son Shobi from Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, Ammiel's son Machir from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim. They brought him beds, washing pots, dishes, grain, flour, seeds, honey, sour milk, sheep, and cheese from the cattle, for David and his men to eat. For they said, "The people are hungry and tired and thirsty in the desert."

New Living Translation

²⁷ When David arrived at Mahanaim, he was warmly greeted by Shobi son of Nahash, who came from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and by Makir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and by Barzillai of Gilead from Rogelim. ²⁸ They brought sleeping mats, cooking pots, serving bowls, wheat and barley, flour and roasted grain, beans, lentils, ²⁹ honey, butter, sheep, goats, and cheese for David and those who were with him. For they said, "You must all be very hungry and tired and thirsty after your long march through the wilderness."

The Voice

When David arrived in Mahanaim, Shobi (the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites), Machir (the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar), and Barzillai the Gileadite (from Rogelim) brought beds, basins, earthenware, wheat, barley, meal, parched seeds and grain, beans, lentils, honey, butter, sheep, and *local* cheese for David and his men to eat; for they knew the men were hungry, tired, and thirsty there in the wilderness.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

Well, when David entered Manaim, WesBi (the son of NaAs from RabBath, an AmMonite), MachIr (the son of AmiEl from LodaBar), and BarZilLai (the Gileadite from RogelLim) brought ten cots and blankets, ten pots, some plates, and some wheat, barley, flour, toasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, butter, mutton, and cheese, and they gave it to David and his people to eat. For they said: 'They are starving, thirsty, and weak from traveling through the desert.'

Christian Community Bible

When David arrived at Maha naim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir the son of Ammiel from Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, brought beds, basins, earthen vessels, wheat, barley, meal, roasted grain, beans and lentils, honey and curds, sheep and cheese from the herd. All this was for David and the people with him to eat for they said, "The people are hungry, weary and thirsty in the desert."

God's Word™

When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi, son of Nahash from Rabbah in Ammon, and Machir, son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai from Rogelim in Gilead brought supplies and food for David and his troops: bedding, bowls, pots, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, buttermilk, sheep, and calves.

	They brought these things because they thought, "The troops in the desert are hungry, exhausted, and thirsty."
New American Bible (R.E.)	When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi, son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, Machir, son of Ammiel from Lodebar, and Barzillai, the Gileadite from Rogelim [2 Sm 9:4; 19:32; 1 Kgs 2:7; Ezr 2:61.], brought beds and covers, basins and pottery, as well as wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, and butter and cheese from the flocks and herds, for David and those who were with him to eat; for they said, "The people will be hungry and tired and thirsty in the wilderness."
NIRV	David came to Mahanaim. Shobi, the son of Nahash, met him there. Shobi was from Rabbah in the land of Ammon. Makir, the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, met him there too. So did Barzillai from Rogelim in the land of Gilead. They brought beds, bowls and clay pots. They brought wheat, barley, flour, and grain that had been cooked. They brought beans and lentils. They brought honey, butter, sheep and cheese that was made from cows' milk. They brought all of that food for David and his people to eat. They said, "These people have become hungry. They've become tired and thirsty in the desert."
New Jerusalem Bible	When David reached Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah-of-the-Ammonites, Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought bedding, rugs, bowls and crockery; and wheat, barley, meal, roasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, curds and cows' cheese and sheep's cheese, which they presented to David and the people with him for them to eat. 'The army', they said, 'must have been hungry, tired and thirsty in the desert.'
New Simplified Bible	David went to the town of Mahanaim. Shobi son of Nahash came from Rabbah in Ammon, Machir son of Ammiel came from Lo-Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite came from Rogelim. Here is a list of what they brought: sleeping mats, blankets, bowls, pottery jars, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, Also honey, yogurt, sheep, and cheese. They brought food for David and the others because they knew that everyone would be hungry, tired, and thirsty from being out in the desert.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	As David had come to Mahanaim on-foot, Shobi the son of Nahash from Amman and of the sons of Amman, Machir the son of Ammiel from Debir, and Barzillai from West-Jordan approached with pallets, dishes, designed articles of wheat, barley, parched meal, broad-beans, parched lentils, honey, butter, sheep, ox, and cheese for David and for the people with him to eat. They said, "The people are hungry, tired, and thirsty in the wilderness."
Bible in Basic English	Now when David had come to Mahanaim, Shobi, the son of Nahash of Rabbah, the Ammonite, and Machir, the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, Came with beds and basins and pots, and grain and meal, and all sorts of dry foods, And honey and butter and sheep and milk-cheeses, for David and his people: for they said, This people is in the waste land, needing food and drink and rest.
The Expanded Bible	Shobi, Makir, and Barzillai were at Mahanaim when David arrived. Shobi son of Nahash was from the Ammonite town of Rabbah. Makir son of Ammiel was from Lo Debar, and Barzillai was from Rogelim in Gilead. They brought beds, bowls, clay pots, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, ·small peas [lentils], honey, milk curds, sheep, and cheese made from ·cows' milk [·the herd] for David and his people. They said, "The people are hungry and tired and thirsty in the ·desert [wilderness]."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	When David arrives at Makhanaim, Shobi, the son of Nakhsh, from Rabath, of the Beni Amon, and Makir-ben-Amial of Lodbar, and Barzilai, the Ghiladite of Rogelim,

came with beds, and blankets, and furniture, cups, and wheat and barley, and flour, and oats, and beans, and lentils, and fuel; with honey and butter, and sheep, and cow's cheese for food; and advanced to meet David and the forces with him, for they said, "The people are hungry and exhausted."

New Advent (Knox) Bible

Meanwhile, upon David's coming to the Encampment, Sobi son of Naas the Ammonite, and Machir son of Ammihel from Lodabar, and Berzellai that dwelt in Galaad, at Rogelim, brought him presents; beds and coverlets and earthenware, wheat and barley, flour and parched corn, beans and lentils and fried pulse, honey and butter, sheep and fattened calves. So they made provision for David and his followers, that were like to be hard pressed with hunger and thirst, there in the desert.

NET Bible®

When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, Makir the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought bedding, basins, and pottery utensils. They also brought food for David and all who were with him, including wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils [The MT adds "roasted grain" וְיָקָלִי (vÿqali) at the end of v. 28, apparently accidentally repeating the word from its earlier occurrence in this verse. With the LXX, the Syriac Peshitta, and an Old Latin ms the translation deletes this second occurrence of the word.], honey, curds, flocks, and cheese [Heb "cheese of the herd," probably referring to cheese from cow's milk (rather than goat's milk)]. For they said, "The people are no doubt hungry, tired, and thirsty there in the desert [Or "wilderness" (so KJV, NASB, NRSV, TEV, NLT)]."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

After David had arrived in Machanayim, Shovi the son of Nachash, from Rabbah of the people of 'Amon; Machir the son of 'Ammi'el from Lo-D'var and Barzillai the Gil'adi from Roglim brought beds, basins, clay pots, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, roasted millet, honey, curdled milk, sheep and cheese made of cow's milk for David and the people with him to eat; because they said, "These people are hungry, tired and thirsty from the desert."

exeGesés companion Bible

And so be it,
David comes to Machanayim,
and Shobi the son of Nachash of Rabbah
of the sons of Ammon
and Machir the son of Ammi El of Lo Debar
and Barzillay the Giladiy of Rogelim
bring near beds and basons
and formed instruments;
and wheat and barley and flour and parched
and beans and lentiles and parched
and honey and butter and flock and cheese of oxen
for David and for the people with him, to eat:
for they say, The people famish and languish
and thirst in the wilderness.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)

When David reached Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbath-ammon, Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim presented [Brought up from v. 29 for clarity.] couches, basins, and earthenware; also wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans, lentils, parched grain [Lacking in the Septuagint and Syriac.], honey, curds, a flock [Emendation yields "curds from the flock."], and cheese [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain.] from the herd for David and the troops with hi to eat. For they knew that the troops must have grown hungry, faint, and thirsty in the wilderness.

The Scriptures 1998

²⁷ And it came to pass, when Dovid was come to Machanayim, that Shovi Ben Nachash of Rabbah of the Bnei Ammon, and Machir Ben Ammiel of Lo-Devar, and Barzillai the Gileadi of Rogelim,

²⁸ Brought mishkav (bedding) and sappot (bowls) and earthen vessels, and chittim (wheat), and se'orim (barley), and kemakh (flour), and roasted grain, and pol (beans), and adashim (lentils), and roasted seeds,

²⁹ And devash, and khemah (curds), and tzon, and cheeses of the herd, for Dovid, and for HaAm that were with him, to eat; for they said, HaAm are hungry, and weary, and tzameh (thirsty), in the midbar.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:*The Amplified Bible*

When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash of Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim Brought beds, basins, earthen vessels, wheat, barley, meal, parched grain, beans, lentils, parched [pulse-seeds of peas and beans], Honey, curds, sheep, and cheese of cows for David and the people with him to eat; for they said, The people are hungry, weary, and thirsty in the wilderness.

Darby Translation

And as soon as David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched [corn], and beans, and lentils, and parched [pulse], and honey, and cream, and sheep, and cheese of kine to David, and to the people that were with him, to eat; for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty in the wilderness.

Emphasized Bible

And it came to pass, when David entered Mahanaim, that Shobi son of Nahash of Rabbah of the sons of Ammon and Machir son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite, of Rogelim, brought, sleeping rugs, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat and barley, and meal and roasted corn,—and beans and lentils, and parched pulse; and honey and cream, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat,—for they said, The people, are hungry and weary and thirsty, in the wilderness.

English Standard V. – UK

²⁷ When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, ²⁸ brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans and lentils [Hebrew adds and parched grain], ²⁹ honey and curds and sheep and cheese from the herd, for David and the people with him to eat, for they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness."

Syndein/Thieme

{The Administration of Logistical Grace to David through -Three Honorable Men} Now it came to pass, when David came to Mahanaim, that {prince} Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah {king} of the people/children of Ammon, {King Nahash was a friend of David - and this son will also be a friend - when he died his oldest son Hanun rebuked David's ambassadors (2Samuel 10:4) and David marched on them - apparently Shobi stayed loyal to David and is now supplying him} and Machir/Makir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, {this man was the eldest son of Manasseh. He cared for Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan son of Saul and friend of David} and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim {a city also north of Mahanaim}, {he was 80 years old and a great wealthy land-owner/industrialist of the day - Gileadite also means he is of the tribe of Manasseh - in 2Samuel 19:31-39 he escorted David to the Jordan river, but would not live with David in Jerusalem so he took his son instead (1King 2:7 Solomon was told by David to show kindness to all the sons of Barzillai} provided/brought/furnished sleeping-beds, and bowls/basins, and pots/'earthen vessels', and wheat, and barley, and flour, and roasted grains, and beans, and lentils, and dried foods, and honey, and curds, and sheep, and cheese

from cow's milk, for David, and for the people who were with him, to eat. For they 'had thought and concluded', "The people are hungry, and exhausted, and thirsty . . . in their 'desert trek'."

Webster's Bible Translation

And it came to pass, when David had come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, Brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched [corn], and beans, and lentils, and parched [pulse], And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of cows, for David, and for the people that [were] with him, to eat: for they said, The people [are] hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

Young's Updated LT

And it comes to pass at the coming in of David to Mahanaim, that Shobi, son of Nahash, from Rabbah of the Bene-Ammon, and Machir son of Ammiel, from Lo-Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite, from Rogelim, couch, and basin, and earthen vessel, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and roasted corn, and beans, and lentiles, and roasted pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, have brought nigh for David, and for the people who are with him to eat, for they said, 'Thy people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.'

The gist of this verse:

Three people are named as supplying David and his troops with K-rations.

2Samuel 17:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
bôw' (בוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
The kaph preposition, or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e], which means <i>like, as, according to</i> , when this is combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning <i>as, often, when, as soon as</i> . It carries with it a temporal connotation.			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

2Samuel 17:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Machānayim (מַחֲנַיִם) [pronounced mahkh-uh-AH-yim]	two camps; transliterated Mahanaim	proper singular noun; location with the locale hê	Strong's #4266 BDB #334

The directional hê is the *âh* (ה) ending to a noun, usually found after a verb of motion. This is called the *directive hê* or the *he locale*, which often indicates direction and puts somewhat of an adverbial spin on the noun. Essentially, it answers the question *where?* The pronunciation of the word does not change. The directional hê indicates the direction in which something moves. It is often used with the noun *heaven* and the most literal rendering in the English would be *heavenward*. We can also indicate the existence of the hê directional by supplying the prepositions *to* or *toward*.

Translation: *And so it was as David came to Mahanaim,...* Normally, with an army, supply lines are set up. An army is nearly worthless unless they nourished and rested. However, David left Jerusalem with a small army, and no supply lines were set up because people could not easily get to him from Jerusalem. We just studied two couriers who were almost caught bringing information to David. So, quite obviously, no supply line could have been set up. Therefore, even though some of the men have brought some food for themselves for this forced march out of Jerusalem, those supplies (including those from Ziba) are long gone by this time.

You may wonder, if you have read ahead, why are we concerned with David and his men eating and having the basic necessities of life? Why all of these details? Remember Absalom and how he put someone in charge of his army because of the man's name? The commanding officer knows that his men must rest, eat and drink. Even though the men have training to go without, that can only go for so long. The fact that David's army is well-supplied here, and there is an amateur heading up Absalom's troops suggests to us that Absalom did not take the same amount of care for his own troops. He put someone over them who was there only because of his name and relationship, but not because he was the best man for the job. So, here David's army is being well-fed; this suggests that Absalom's army is not. As the old saying goes, *an army marches on its stomach*; meaning, you get the best from your troops if they are well taken care of.

2Samuel 17:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Shôbîy (שׁוֹבִי) [pronounced show-BEE]	captor; glorious; a precious stone of some kind; transliterated Shobi	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7629 BDB #986
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Nâchâsh (נָחָשׁ) [pronounced naw-KHAWSH]	serpent and is transliterated Nahash	masculine proper noun	Strong's #5176 BDB #638

According to BDB, Nahash is *the father of Abigail, the mother of Amasa, the commander of Absalom's army.*⁹¹

⁹¹ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; from e-sword; H5176.

2Samuel 17:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Rabbâh (רַבָּה) [pronounced <i>rahb-BAW</i>]	<i>many, much, great (in the sense of large or significant, not acclaimed); transliterated Rabbah, Rabba</i>	a proper, locative noun; construct form	Strong's #7237 BDB #913
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'Ammôwn (אֲמוֹן) [pronounced <i>gáhm-MOHN</i>]	<i>tribal [inbred]; transliterated Ammon</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #5983 BDB #769

This is often transliterated *Bene-Ammon* and is a common designation for this country.

Translation: ...that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites... Shobi ben Nahash is mentioned only here, and he (or his father Nahash) is said to be from Rabbah of the Ammonites. You may recall that there was an alliance between David and Nahash of the Ammonites. However, when Nahash died, his son Hanun took over, and Hanun was an ass. He specifically picked a fight with David, and the result was, Israel beat down Ammon for Hanun's impertinence (this is in **2Sam. 10** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#))). Apparently, after defeating the Ammonites, David set up a provisional government under Shobi, Nahash's other son, a son who was more well-disposed toward David.

Now you may look at the Nahash here and the Nahash named in v. 25, but here Nahash is further defined as being from Rabbah of the Ammonites, which essentially sets him apart from the Nahash named back in v. 25, who has no similar qualifiers in his name.⁹²

This is so that we can keep these men separate in our thinking.

The Nahash's of Scripture

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Nahash I of the Ammonites was a son of a bitch and the father of Nahash below	I am assuming fatherhood here, although there is not necessarily an inheritance from father to son in every kingship. This man took great joy in poking out the eyes of the men of Israel. Saul soundly defeated this man in battle, and was very popular with Israel because of this victory. 1Sam. 11
Nahash II from Rabbah of the Ammonites	This man was presumably the next previous ruler of Ammon, and a friend of David. His son, Hanun, took over at his death, and when David sent ambassadors to show David's respect for Nahash, Hanun treated them shamefully and ended up starting a war with David. Hanun was apparently replaced by Shobi, both of them being sons of Nahash II. Although it is certainly possible for the Nahash's named in 2Sam. 10:1–15 17:27 to be different men, but time-wise, it makes sense for these to be the same men.

⁹² R. B. Thieme, Jr. and others would disagree with me at this point.

The Nahash's of Scripture

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Nahash, David's mother's other husband	According to the description in 2Sam. 17:25, David's mother apparently had another husband besides Jesse, and his name was Nahash. They had the daughter Abigail, who is the mother of Amasa. Some equate these two men. I believe the this Nahash came after Jesse and R. B. Thieme, Jr. says that they were married earlier and that these two men are the same. I take my position because I believe Amasa to be younger than Joab (although that could be true if his mother has an affair later in life).

One of the main purposes of a chart is, it helps to organize the information simply, allowing us to easily distinguish between these men with the same name.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

So far, this is what we have: **And so it was as David came to Mahanaim, that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites...** You may recall the Joab called in David for the final assault against the Ammonites at their capitol city of Rabbah. Where did Shobi come from, you might ask? He may have been banished or placed in jail by Hanun. David's good relationship with Nahash continued with Shobi his other son. It is very likely that Shobi was set up as a provisional king in Ammon. This is what would be normally done in a circumstance like this. Shobi is a part of the right family, so the Ammonites would not rebel against him; but he would also be loyal to David. Also, Shobi would probably send tribute to David as well, as a part of the payment for being left alive.

It is very like, therefore, that, under David, Shobi controlled this particular area of the Ammonites after they were beat down.

Barnes suggests *Shobi's father may have been the king of the Ammonites, and Shobi appointed by David as tributary king or governor of Ammon after he took Rabbah.*⁹³ This is simply a theory, and he presents one other as well.

Gill says that *Shobi was either the son, or the brother of Hanun king of the Ammonites, that used David's ambassadors in so shameful a manner (see 2Sam. 10:1–5), whom David overcame and deposed, and set up this brother in his room; who had showed his dislike of his brother's conduct, and now makes a grateful return to David for his favors.*⁹⁴ Of course, this is only a theory, and Gill also points out that he might simply be an Israelite living in Ramman.

2Samuel 17:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
Mâkîyr (מַכִּיר) [pronounced <i>maw-KEER</i>]	<i>sold; salesman; transliterated Machir; used poetically of Manasseh</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4353 BDB #569

⁹³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:27.

⁹⁴ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:27 (slightly edited).

2Samuel 17:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
‘Ammîy’êl (אֱמִיִּיֵּאֵל) [pronounced <i>gahm-mee-ALE</i>]	<i>one of the family of God; transliterated Ammiel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5988 BDB #770
min (מן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Lôw D ^e bar (וּלְדֵבָר) [pronounced <i>low-dehb-AWR</i>]	<i>without a pasture; not a pasture; transliterated Lo-debar</i>	proper singular noun	Strong's #3810 BDB #520

Translation: ...and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar... Machir is also an interesting fellow. He is mentioned one other time in 2Sam. 9:4. Remember Ziba? Ziba, although the servant of Saul, dropped Saul's son, Mephibosheth, off at Machir's saying, "Here, this is Saul's son; you take care of him." Then Ziba went off, figuring that he was free, and he apparently had a certain amount of the Sauline family fortune.

Machir faithfully takes care of Mephibosheth, until David puts Ziba under Mephibosheth once again. So mentioning Machir here is to jog our memories, to remind us all about Ziba, and how Machir did what Ziba should have been doing. In other words, Machir has integrity and Ziba does not.

Therefore, we are not surprised to find Machir here faithfully doing the right thing by supplying David and his army.

You may recall that, at the beginning of 2Sam. 16, Ziba brought David some supplies, but not nearly as much as is spoken of here. Ziba took the time to speak poorly of his master Mephibosheth, suggesting that Mephibosheth would use this unrest to put the kingdom back in the hands of the Sauline family (which assertion does not appear to be true). So, Ziba appears to use generosity in order to get what he wants, and David assured him that all that belonged to Mephibosheth would be given to him. You will recall, this was a mistake on David's part, and that great men do make some bad calls.

2Samuel 17:27d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Bar ^e zillay (בַּרְזִילָי) [pronounced <i>bar-zil-LAH-ee</i>]	<i>iron [-hearted]; my iron; transliterated Barzilla</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1271 BDB #137
Gil ^e âdîy (גִּלְעָדִי) [pronounced <i>ghil-aw-DEE</i>]	<i>rocky region; transliterated Gileadite</i>	adjective gentis with the definite article	Strong's #1569 BDB #167

2Samuel 17:27d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Rôg ^e lîym (רֹגֵלִים) [pronounced <i>row-gel-EEM</i>]	<i>feet, place for feet; place of fullers and is transliterated Rogelim</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #7274 BDB #920

BDB says this is a place in the highlands east of the Jordan.⁹⁵

Translation: ...and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim [brought to them]... Barzillai is 80 years old and quite wealthy (2Sam. 19:30–31). Barzillai is one of the many wealthy men in Scripture, and one of the many that is never told to give away all of his wealth. In fact, only one man of the several dozen rich men named in Scripture is ever told to give away his wealth, because Jesus was making a point with him, and a point with us.

We all live on this earth together, and, in case it has never occurred to you, under God's plan, everyone could be wealthy. Everyone could have all of their needs met. Everyone, if they wanted to buy a Porsche or a Lexus, they would just take the funds out of their bank account and buy one. God could have worked that out easily for our lives and our environment, but He chose not to. Why? **Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Point of doctrine: a rich man will with great difficulty enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Let Me put this in a different way: It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."** (Matt. 9:23–24). Rich men do not understand being needy; rich men, in general, do not understand what it means to need God or to reach out to God or to desire fellowship with God. If you were to choose between being rich and unsaved or poor all of your life but saved, any intelligent person would choose the latter.

Application: People with money to burn and a great deal of free time, often squander their resources satisfying their lusts. How many lottery winners have we heard of that, a year later, are broke, without assets and are in trouble? They have no capacity for wealth, and this is true for most people. If you had the option of right now, hopping in the plane and being on the shores of some beach in Brazil, surrounded by beautiful women in bikinis, would that not be a temptation to you (if you are a male)? Money also has to be dealt with in a variety of ways. That is, wealth does not just sit there, as if a bank account that is automatically replenished. It carries with it, its own brand of problems (like the hundreds or even thousands of people who want to take it from you—how many celebrities find themselves on the receiving end of greedy lawsuits?).

So Barzillai is a rich man, but a man whom God has entrusted great wealth; God knows that this is a man, when his wealth is needed, he will step up and provide.

Barnes on Barzillai: *Barzillai was ancestor, through a daughter, to a family of priests, who were called after him "sons of Barzillai," and who returned from captivity with Zerubbabel, but were not allowed to officiate as priests, or eat of the holy things, through defect of a proper register (Ezra 2:61–63). It is likely that being wealthy they had neglected their priestly privileges, as a means of maintenance, before the captivity.*⁹⁶

The Pulpit Commentary on this issue: *A clan of priests called themselves "the children of Barzillai," and claimed to be the descendants of his daughter. They could not, however, produce their genealogy, and were therefore degraded from the priestly office. (Ezra 2:61–63) Their claim,*

⁹⁵ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; e-sword, H7274.

⁹⁶ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:27.

*nevertheless, is a proof that Barzillai was a little king in Gilead, when thus a priestly race thought their alliance with him so honourable as to make them forget that they were of the lineage of Aaron.*⁹⁷

David would remember Barzillai's generosity for the rest of his life, saying on his deathbed to his son Solomon, "Be kind to the sons of Barzillai from Gilead. Let them eat at your table. They helped me when I was fleeing from your brother Absalom." (1Kings 2:7).

Although we do not know where Rogelim is in Gilead, it is the plural of Rogel (recall En-rogel from v. 17?). These are in entirely different places, but it is an interesting overlap.

Application: America is known for its generosity—among the poor, the middle class and the wealthy. There have been so many charitable institutions which have been begun by this or that wealthy individual. Parks or land have been donated; buildings erected for public use; the poor fed and clothed, etc.

Application: When it comes to the management of resources, in a government which is under God, there are things which are to be done for the poor. However, the Bible never prescribes an EBT⁹⁸ card. Private individuals with land are asked to leave the corners of their field unharvested, so that the poor could come and harvest them (which involves work). A portion of the taxes is collected for the poor (a 10% tax every third year, if memory serves). Care is given to those who are without any means to take care of themselves (widows and orphans are generally mentioned). Obviously, there are others who find life very difficult to navigate as well.

Application: In our society, living off the government (actually, living off the hard labor of your next-door neighbor) has become a lifestyle for many. This is nowhere suggested in the Bible. Laziness is condemned in Scripture, and it is a blight upon a nation.

My point in all of this is, Barzillai is an honorable man and he is wealthy. He will bring a lot of food and supplies to David's troops, knowing that they need them. This is true greatness. This is also the reason why many of us have not been given great wealth. When there is real need like this, we would not see it; if we saw it, we might not attend to it. Barzillai, on the other hand, saw the need and he uses his wealth to intervene and to help.

Application: There is another important point: wealth is relative. You might consider yourself dirt-poor, even though you have food on the table, a phone, a vehicle and air conditioning. This places you far ahead of David and even Solomon in terms of personal comfort. Your life is better and easier than was theirs, despite the fact that you look around and see so many people who are better off than you are.

Application: There will always be people you know who have a better house than you, and a worse house than you. There will always be people you know who drive a nicer car than you do; and those who drive a worse car. No matter where you are in what society, you can always point to someone whose life appears to be better materially-speaking, and someone whose life appears to be worse. Wealth is relative and should not be an issue in your life.

So far, this is what we have: *And so it was as David came to Mahanaim, that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim [brought to them]...* The verb *to bring* is not found in this verse, but at the end of the list of things which are being brought, which is not unusual. Often the direct object is found before the verb; here there are many things found first.

One thing that you will notice about these 3 men, about David's supporters who went with him, and David's great list of heroes—many of them, if not most, are foreigners; most of them are not born and raised in Israel. Most of them are not 10th generation Israelites. We have a similar phenomenon in our country—many of the people who most closely advocate the principles of our founding fathers or exemplify the principles of our free nation are often

⁹⁷ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:27.

⁹⁸ An electronic benefits transfer card.

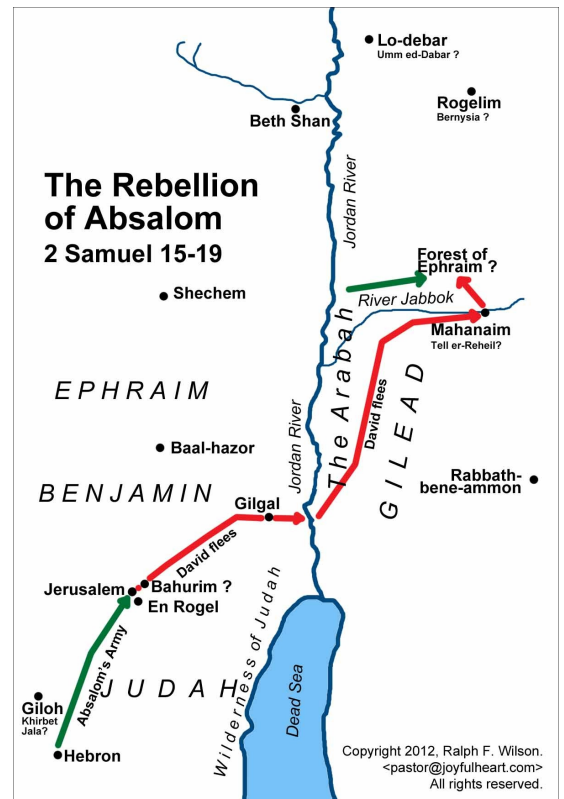
1st and 2nd generation Americans. They recognize the freedom and opportunity available in America, as well as its inherent fairness, and they come to American for that, to live that dream. Many people saw Israel as civilized and as worshipers of the true God; therefore, many people came to Israel to convert to the worship of Y^ehowah, and to live in Y^ehowah’s country. They are often the greatest patriots because they clearly understand the principles of Israel, and they come to Israel for that reason.

There is another point which should be made: these men are wealthy because of free enterprise in Israel. They worked hard, they invested money, their businesses grew—no doubt, God blessed them greatly—and, as a result, every one of these three men were wealthy, and they were wealthy enough to supply David and his entire army with rations. This was a great thing that they did; and it tells us why God made them wealthy—they knew how to recognize need and then how to see to the satisfaction of that need.

These three men make it their duty to determine exactly where David is, where he will probably be, and they organize a supply line for David’s army.

Map of the Rebellion of Absalom from Jesuswalk.com. This map is better than the previous one at placing Mahanaim, and it gives us a good idea as to the troop movement throughout this and the surrounding chapters.

As David pulls Absalom in that direction, Absalom is pulled further and further away from his line of supplies. There is a distinct possibility that Absalom did not make the proper provision for logistics, as warfare is not his area of expertise. He may have just figured he would cross over the Jordan, beat down David’s army, and then return back home.



This map was taken from Jesuswalk.com, and gives a rough idea as to where these different places are. It does appear that these 3 men came from very different places.

2Samuel 17:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mishkâb (מִשְׁכָּב) [pronounced mish-AW ^B V]	bed, couch; bier; laying down, the act of lying down	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4904 (from #7901) BDB #1012

2Samuel 17:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Clark: <i>These no doubt consisted in skins of beasts, mats, carpets, and such like things.</i> ⁹⁹			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çaph (סַף) [pronounced sahʃ]	<i>basin, goblet, bowl; a spreading out; a threshold, sill; door keeper</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5592 BDB #706
Keil and Delitzsch say that these are probably <i>field kettles</i> . ¹⁰⁰			
Clarke: <i>סַפּוֹת sappoth. Probably wooden bowls, such as the Arabs still use to eat out of, and to knead their bread in.</i> ¹⁰¹ Clark is giving the plural form here.			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
k ^e lîy (כֶּלִּי) [pronounced k ^e lee]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
yâtsar (רָצַי) [pronounced yaw-TSAR]	<i>molded, sculpted; fashioned; predestine, foreordain; devising [a plan]; planning</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3335 BDB #427
Clarke: <i>רָצוּי יֵלֵךְ keley yotser. Probably clay vessels, baked in the sun. These were perhaps used for lifting water, and boiling those articles which required to be cooked.</i> ¹⁰²			
Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: <i>Keley yotzair, literally means, vessels of the potter.</i> ¹⁰³			

Translation: ...beds, bowls and eating utensils,... When we think of a bed, we think of a mattress and a frame, and all of that. But this is not what a bed is in the ancient world. They are probably bringing blankets and the like, which are designed for covers at night. This is bedding designed for being outside.

They also bring bowls and sculpted artifacts, meaning plates and utensils (this is a many use word for things which are manufactured). All these things were designed for rugged outside use.

I want you to recall what Ziba brought in the previous chapter. Not near as much stuff as we see here. Although we do not know if Ziba or if his master Mephibosheth originally sent all of those things, there was not nearly as much as we see here. That is not necessarily a slight, as this was put together quickly in less than a day. These other provisions found here were gathered over a period of time and probably replenished as well.

David will be able to pick the battlefield, he will have an experienced general overseeing everything, and his men will be rested and fed. Even if David is outnumbered 10 to 1, he will have all the initial advantages—he will be ready for Absalom's army, knowing how many there are and from what direction it is coming. David's troops will

⁹⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:28.

¹⁰⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:27–29.

¹⁰¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:28.

¹⁰² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:28.

¹⁰³ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 17:28.

be well-rested and fed; it is likely that Absalom has not seen to the needs of his own troops. The general in charge over his troops is not really prepared to go to war with David.

2Samuel 17:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chîttâh (חִטָּהּ) [pronounced <i>kheet-TAW</i>]	<i>wheat, wheat stalks</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #2406 BDB #334
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
s ^e ôwriym (שֶׂעוּרִימ) [pronounced <i>seh-ôgoh-REEM</i>]	<i>barley grain; barley fields; sheaves of barley, barley harvest; cooked or measured barley</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8184 BDB #972
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kemach (קֶמַח) [pronounced <i>KEH-mahkh</i>]	<i>flour, meal</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7058 BDB #887
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qâlîy (קָלִי) [pronounced <i>kaw-LEE</i>]	<i>roasted corn, roasted grain</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7039 BDB #885

Translation: ...and wheat [products], barley [products], flour and roasted grain;... *Wheat and barley are both in the plural. I don't think that they would bring stalks of wheat or sheaves of barley, as that is very bulky and would require the troops to take the wheat and barley out. So, the plural suggests to me instead that there are wheat and barley products, which would include breads of various types. Raw flour is brought, something which many of us use in cooking (to thicken sauces and soups; to hold spices onto a meat that is being cooked, etc.). Also, there is the roasted grain or roasted corn, which appears to be a food with a long shelf life, ideal for those in the field.*

Clarke describes some of the food and the way it is moved about: *According to Mr. Jones, "the Moors of west Barbary use the flour of parched barley, which is the chief provision they make for their journeys, and often use it at home; and this they carry in a leathern satchel." These are ordinarily made of goat-skins. One of them now lies before me: it has been drawn off the animal before it was cut up; the places where the fore-legs, the tail, and the anus were, are elegantly closed, and have leathers thongs attached to them, by which it can be slung over the back of man, ass, or camel. The place of the neck is left open, with a running string to draw it up, purse-like, when necessary. The skin itself is tanned; and the upper side is curiously embroidered with red, black, blue, yellow, and flesh-coloured leather, in very curious and elegant forms and devices. Bags of this kind are used for carrying wine, water, milk, butter, grain, flour, clothes, and different articles of merchandise. This is, as I have before stated, the Scripture bottle. Mr. Jones farther says: "Travellers use zumeet, tumeet, and limereece. Zumeet is flour mixed with honey, butter, and spice; tumeet is flour done up with organ oil; and limereece is flour mixed with water for drink. This quenches the thirst much better than water*

alone; satisfies a hungry appetite; cools and refreshes tired and weary spirits; overcoming those ill effects which a hot sun and fatiguing journey might well occasion.” This flour might be made of grain or pulse of any kind: and probably may be that which we here term parched corn and parched pulse; and in the forms above mentioned was well calculated, according to Mr. Jones’s account, for the people hungry, weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.¹⁰⁴ This might be more detail than interests you, but it does help to give a picture of those in this part of the ancient world.

2Samuel 17:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
pôl (פול) [pronounced <i>pohl</i>]	<i>a bean, beans</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong’s #6321 BDB #806
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
‘ādāshîym (אֲדָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>guh-daw-SHEEM</i>]	<i>lentils</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong’s #5742 BDB #727
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
qâlîy (קלי) [pronounced <i>kaw-LEE</i>]	<i>roasted corn, roasted grain</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #7039 BDB #885

Keil and Delitzsch: *The repetition of וקלי is very striking; nevertheless the second must not be struck out without further ground as a supposed copyist’s error. As they not only ate parched ears or grains of wheat (see at Lev. 2:14), but were also in the habit of drying pulse, pease, and lentils before eating them (vid., Harmer, Beobachtungen, i. pp. 255–6), the second קלי may be understood as referring to parched pulse.*¹⁰⁵

I suggest that what is being described here is a bean soup which would have roasted corn or grain added to it.

Translation: ...and beans, lentils and roasted grain [as a soup];... It is reasonable to ask, *why do we have roasted grain twice?* It is likely that we have a baked bean soup here, with roasted grain in it. My guess is, therefore, that we have a huge amount of soup which has been made up, or something that can be made into a soup, where perhaps these 3 items are already mixed together.

There is the possibility that the second mention of *roasted grain* is a copyist error.

There are an abundance of products here, and some are designed to be consumed immediately; and some are made to be preserved for a few weeks.

¹⁰⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:28.

¹⁰⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:27–29.

2Samuel 17:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
d ^e bash (דבש) [pronounced d ^{eb} -VAHSH]	<i>honey</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1706 BDB #185
Barnes suggests that this word is also used for a grape product, wherein grapes are boiled down to the consistency of molasses and used as an article of food (I guess it is kind of like an unsweetened jam). At the time that he wrote, he said that 2/3 ^{rds} of the grapes in Syria were used to make this food, which is called, by the Arabs <i>dibs</i> . You will note that the spelling is similar enough to consider these words equivalent.			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chem ^e âh (חמאה) [pronounced <i>kheh</i> -MAW]	<i>butter, curds; yogurt; cottage cheese</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2529 BDB #326
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
tsô'n (צאן) [pronounced <i>tzohn</i>]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
Also spelled ts ^e ôwn (צאון) [pronounced <i>tseh</i> -OWN].			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâphâh (שפאח) [pronounced <i>shaw</i> -FAW]	<i>cheese [strained from whey]; cream; meaning uncertain; found only in this verse</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8194 BDB #1045
bâqâr (בקר) [pronounced <i>baw</i> -KAWR]	<i>bull, cow, ox, collectively: herd, cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #1241 BDB #133
Keil and Delitzsch: רקב תופש רקב signifies, according to the Chaldee and the Rabbins, cheese of oxen (i.e., of cows), and according to the conjecture of Roediger (<i>Ges. Thes.</i> p. 1462), a peculiar kind of cheese, such as the Aeneze in the province of Nedjid still make, and for which the term σαρωθ βουω retained by the LXX was probably the technical name. ¹⁰⁶			
Keil and Delitzsch: (Note: According to Burckhardt's account (<i>Die Beduinen</i> , p. 48), "after they have taken the butter from the butter-milk, they beat the latter again till it coagulates, and then dry it till it is quite hard. It is then rubbed to pieces, and in the spring every family stores up two or three lasts of it, which they eat mixed with butter.".) ¹⁰⁷			

¹⁰⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:27–29.

¹⁰⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:27–29.

2Samuel 17:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Keil and Delitzsch continue: <i>Theodotus, on the other hand, has γαλαθηνά μωσχάρια, milch-calves; and the Vulgate pingues vitulos, - both of them renderings which can certainly be sustained from the Arabic usage of speech, and would be more in accordance with the situation of the words, viz., after יכ-ורמא צאן, "for they said (or thought) the people have become hungry and faint and thirty in the desert," i.e., in their flight to Mahanaim.</i> ¹⁰⁸			

Translation: ...and honey and curds and small livestock along with [various] milk products from the herd,... The honey probably has a long shelf life, and is used for flavoring. The livestock is designed to be brought along as something which will grow and can be killed and eaten later.

We do not know for certain the milk products which are spoken of here. It is likely that there is cheese, yogurt and/or cream that is collected from the herd of cows. It is first collected as milk and then processed into the other products.

2Samuel 17:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nāgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i>]	<i>to bring near, to bring here; to cause to draw near, to cause to approach</i>	3 rd person plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
‘am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
’āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

¹⁰⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 17:27–29.

2Samuel 17:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced aw-KAHL]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #398 BDB #37

Translation: ...for David and the people who [are] with him,... It is here where we finally have the verb that we are looking for, the verb which I placed way back in v. 27 (we normally place our verbs before the direct objects in the English).

This shows great thoughtfulness on the part of the men who were named back in v. 27.

2Samuel 17:29c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'am (אָמ) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
râ'êb (רָעַב) [pronounced raw-GAY ^B V]	<i>hungry, stricken with hunger</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7457 BDB #944
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âyêph (אָיַף) [pronounced gay-YAYF]	<i>famished; tired, weary, faint, worn out, exhausted, languishing [from toil or thirst]; knackered</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #5889 BDB #746
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
tsâmê' (צָמָא) [pronounced tsaw-MAY]	<i>thirsty, parched; when preceded by the definite article, it means the state of being thirsty; in a parched condition</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #6771 BDB #854

2Samuel 17:29c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mid ^e bâr (מִדְבָּר) [pronounced mid ^e - BAWR]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

Translation: ...for they determined [lit., said], “The people [are] hungry, worn-out and thirsty in the desert-wilderness.” Note that these 3 men are coming from different areas and they appear to have very different backgrounds. One man is a soldier who was involved in the attack of Rabbah of the Ammonites. Another is a wealthy businessman for the Gided area. Another took up the responsibility of taking care of Saul’s lame son, Mephibosheth, when the man who should have done that chose not to (Ziba). These men appear to live in different cities, they have different backgrounds, and it is possible that this was not a group effort, but that these men acted as individuals, each bringing things from their own supply of provisions.

Even this statement here, **They said, “The people are hungry, knackered and thirsty in the wilderness”** could be a conclusion that each one came to on his own, maybe speaking to those around them. All are aware of David’s movements; all are aware of what is going on in Israel with the Absalom revolution, and all of them are establishment-oriented, understanding that David and his army must be supported.

As R. B. Thieme, Jr. has said on many occasions, *giving* is first a mental attitude; *giving* begins in the soul; then it is manifested according to one’s own blessing. These three men had generous and considerate souls. They did not consider David and his followers as castaways to be ignored, nor did they allow David and Absalom to sort out their differences first on the battlefield. They saw a need and they fulfilled this need. They took a stand by supporting David, something which could have resulted in the deaths of these three men. Consider this, if you desire wealth—would you be willing to part with some of your wealth, if doing so put you in danger of death? These men did what was right, and that is why God the Holy Spirit recorded their names and their provisions here in the Word of God.

The Pulpit Commentary makes this excellent application for us: *In the Christian warfare against error and sin there is room and need for this kind of service. The progress of the spiritual cause depends no little on the material aids. As soldiers must eat and drink in order that they may fight, so Christian ministers and missionaries, however spiritual and holy and disinterested, cannot preach and teach unless they are fed and clothed, and their work facilitated by various appliances which are only to be obtained and maintained by money or money's worth. It is only in exceptional cases that competent labourers are able to support themselves by the Labour of their hands or from their private fortunes. Hence the absolute necessity that Christians should furnish material supplies, and the certainty that the progress of the Christian cause in the world will be greatly hindered if, through indifference or avarice, such supplies are scantily furnished. In our time the duty of furnishing them more abundantly needs to be pressed on the attention of the disciples of Christ with much urgency. The world is almost everywhere open to the missionary; devoted men and women offer themselves, ready to go anywhere to make Christ known; but in many instances they cannot be sent forth for want of the means of sending and sustaining them. That the ability of Christ's servants in this direction is being employed to the utmost is incredible in view of the lavish expenditure of many of them on worldly display and luxury. The disposition is wanting; and this in part because a conviction has not yet been awakened in their hearts of the necessity and worth of pecuniary supplies, and the imperative duty and high*

honour of furnishing them. Such a conviction may be promoted by due attention to the following considerations.¹⁰⁹

Let me take a portion of this application, and make a further one: [Just] as soldiers must eat and drink in order that they may fight, so Christian ministers and missionaries, however spiritual and holy and disinterested [in the cosmic system], cannot preach and teach unless they are fed with the good Word of God. This is probably the greatest error found in all Christian service—you cannot truly serve God apart from knowing the Word of God, and learning the Word of God is a day-by-day process. Although there are clearly maturation levels spoken of in Scripture, no one gets to the point where they can no longer feed upon God’s Word. There is a clear analogy to our temporal lives: we all reach a point of physical maturation, where we stop the dramatic changes which occur between the ages of 0 and 16; however, we never outgrow the need for food.

You cannot truly serve God apart from knowing the Word of God, and learning the Word of God is a day-by-day process.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This is quoted and paraphrased from the Pulpit Commentary.¹¹⁰

The Sharing of Our Material Goods with the Servants of God

1. The good women who ministered to our Lord of their substance (Luke 8:2–3) thereby became partakers in His work.
2. The Philippians who showed hospitality to St. Paul when amongst them, (Acts 16:15) or sent gifts to him afterwards, (Philip. 4:14–16) are recognized by him as having "fellowship" (partnership) with him, "in furtherance of the gospel" (Philip. 1:5, 7, Revised Version).
3. St. John describes those who were hospitable to evangelists as their "fellow helpers to the truth" (3Jn. 1:8).
4. In like manner, all who subscribe of their money towards the support of Christian ministries and missions, have the honour of being fellow workers with those who give the ablest personal service.

It does not matter if you make \$10/year or \$100,000/year, regular giving should be a part of your life. Just as these 3 men made it their duty to support David, so ought we to be towards those who labor in the Word of God.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Forward

Doctrines Covered and Alluded to Chapters of the Bible Alluded To

Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter

Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter

Definition of Terms

Introduction

Text

Addendum

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Exegetical Studies in Samuel

¹⁰⁹ The Pulpit Commentary; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:27–29.

¹¹⁰ The Pulpit Commentary; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:27–29.

Addendum

This chapter on Absalom's revolution is filled with wonderful lessons.

What We Learn from 2Samuel 17

1. We learn more about counterinsurgency and logistical support in warfare in this chapter.
2. We note that God the Holy Spirit spends a great deal of time on warfare in the Bible.
3. We find that some of the most important people in a war are people whose names you do not know.
4. Jesus Christ controls history. He may work through intermediaries, but ultimately, these events of this chapter occurred exactly as Jesus decreed them to.
5. God is anti-revolution.
6. We find out just how ill-prepared Absalom was with regards to leading his country, which is true of any leader who is chosen primarily for superficial reasons.
7. We find out that Absalom's brilliance + the advice of two great men is not enough for him to overcome David. Absalom's brilliance does not extend to every field. He is woefully ignorant of the art of warfare.
8. We have reasonable evidence to determine that all of this takes place on day one of Absalom entering into Jerusalem and on day one of him beginning to rape David's mistresses.
9. We become aware of Ahithophel's brilliance, at putting together a plan and being ready to carry it out, and, at the same time, keeps Absalom busy and out of his way.
10. Ahithophel has an excellent sense of timing whereas Absalom does not, because of his lack of understanding of warfare.
11. Ahithophel, to some degree, is playing Absalom; and, since there are no advisors to Absalom who are his equal, he is able to do this—until Absalom calls for outside advice from Hushai.
12. Revolution never replaces a bad ruler with a good ruler; and that everything is sweetness and light afterward. Once law and order is sacrificed for the revolution, law and order must be restored, which often requires more oppression than the ruler who was overthrown. The guarded optimism expressed by our media and political officials about the revolutions occurring in the Middle East is completely wrong and based upon the false view of revolution taught in our schools.
13. We learned that the American Revolution was actually a War for Independence, which is much different than a revolution, and that *taxation without representation* was only one of many complaints that the colonists had against England.
14. There is probably more information on the problematic text in v. 3 than is found in any other source; however, the exact text cannot be resolved here with any level of certainty. Yet, the Word of God is not altered or its message confused.
15. We have found out the number of wars going on in the world at any given time.
16. We learn how and why Ahithophel sells his plan to Absalom as he does.
17. It begins to become clear that Absalom has surrounded himself with *yes-men*, which is a flawed way to run any institution.
18. We examined the recent change of culture in the United States; the youths' foolish support for liberal policies and liberal presidents, and how this works against their own best interests. It is unbelievably stupid to vote for a president because he is cool.
19. We see where the importance of the elders probably originated (in that generation of men from the flood who were all alive at the same time for as many as 10 generations).
20. We find out why there is only one plan of action before Absalom.
21. We see that Absalom's key flaw is, he wants a starring role in the killing of David, and Ahithophel did not give him one (which was the correct choice by Ahithophel).
22. We see an example from our own history of how inclusiveness can be a mistake in war (under Carter); and letting the experts do their job can result in success (under Obama).
23. We find out why Absalom called for Hushai to hear another plan.
24. An example of President Obama not listening to the best advice. How he had made almost no consequential decisions until after he became president.
25. Insurgency is revolution; counterinsurgency is counter-revolution. Insurgency is anti-God; counter-insurgency is serving God.

What We Learn from 2Samuel 17

26. The nation which wins at clandestine warfare often wins the war.
27. When Hushai is called in and must make a pitch for a plan which he comes up with on the spot, we marvel at his brilliance.
28. We see that warfare and revolution often require the believer to take on a new set of values.
29. Hushai is at a distinct advantage when Absalom calls him in to pick his brain.
30. We see that Hushai is smart enough not to denigrate Ahithophel's character or brilliance; he only criticizes this one particular plan, and he lists specific reasons for his criticism.
31. Hushai is able to think under pressure. In fact, he is brilliant to speak to Absalom specifically and say things like, "You know your father," when Absalom really does not know his own father.
32. Hushai's suggestion that David will do everything to protect himself appeals to Absalom, because this is Absalom's own thinking.
33. We find out that many leaders (if not most) hate bad press and will do anything to avoid it.
34. Hushai is brilliant enough to paint a picture for Absalom, with him as the leading character in the war against David.
35. We find out why a larger army is not necessarily a better army.
36. Absalom's arrogance makes him think that he knows things which he does not know.
37. Why Absalom, who was not a man of war, was eager to go to war with David; and why he was not concerned for his own life.
38. We notice that Absalom does not order that surveillance of David and David's troop movements be done; this is a serious error in battle strategy (and the Bible is filled with examples of strategy and tactics in warfare).
39. Hushai uses several psychological ploys in order to convince Absalom that his plan is right: he paints a picture so that Absalom can see himself doing what Hushai describes; Hushai places Absalom in an exalted position (in Absalom's imagination); and Hushai uses the editorial *we*, which gives reassurance to Absalom. These are common ploys used in advertising today (particularly making a person identify with this or that person in a commercial).
40. Hushai provides Absalom with a contingency plan, something which Ahithophel did not. This is not something that Hushai thought of that Ahithophel did not; it is just that, Ahithophel did not believe he needed to fill Absalom's head with unnecessary information. Ahithophel would have done what needed to be done.
41. We saw contemporary examples of how politicians define their opponents (often falsely) in order to defeat them in elections. They use the same broad brush strokes that Ahithophel did.
42. We learn about Absalom's followers and what kind of people they are.
43. We do a final side-by-side comparison of Ahithophel's plan with Hushai's plan, and examine them in all respects.
44. We see that Hushai is an answer to David's prayer for God to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel.
45. Every generation passes along his nation and the spiritual condition of his nation to the next generation; each generation has a great deal to say as to what will happen to their own nation by the decisions that they make. We examined the example of the Berachah pivot of the 1980's.
46. We saw what it means to have a personal sense of destiny.
47. We find that God clearly used Hushai to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel; and that this was done through clandestine warfare.
48. We see that the Bible actually examines what an intelligence network does and how it functions. The Bible is very detailed in this area, and reveals that there are times when lying is legitimate.
49. We learned the one mark of a mature believer: acting when one ought to act and stopping and letting God act when circumstances call for that.
50. We find out why revolutionary movements often target the youth for their support.
51. We studied a list of the legitimate lies in Scripture and saw why they are legitimate.
52. We studied the greatness of the British Empire.
53. We see that, unlike Absalom, David is a leader who knows when good advice is being offered and he acts on that advice immediately. A believer needs the humility to recognize good advice and to hear it when it is given.

What We Learn from 2Samuel 17

54. We touched on compartmentalization arrogance.
55. We find that Ahithophel, because of his anger toward King David, is similarly flawed. He knows what Absalom ought to do, but is thrown out of kilter when Absalom does not choose his plan. He probably knows that, inevitably, Absalom revolt will be quashed because of Absalom's arrogance and bad decision here.
56. We examined why Ahithophel killed himself and referred to the doctrine of suicide.
57. We studied Ahithophel's betrayal of David and its similarities to Judas' betrayal of Jesus.
58. We find out what Amasa's bloodline is given and the importance of that. We also have a modern-day example of how bloodline today is placed before competence.
59. We studied 3 very different men who supported David and why they are important, and what spiritual lessons that we learn from them.
60. We discussed in some detail the factor of wealth in society and why all men are not wealthy, even though God can provide that for us.
61. We briefly glanced at the concept of welfare and living off the government.
62. We discussed how some 1st and 2nd generation Americans are often more squared away in divine establishment principles than people who have been here for many generations.
63. We find that logistics are necessary in warfare.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

Antiquities of the Jews - Book VII

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF FORTY YEARS. FROM THE DEATH OF SAUL TO THE DEATH OF DAVID.

CHAPTER 9.

CONCERNING THE INSURRECTION OF ABSALOM AGAINST DAVID AND CONCERNING AHITHOPHEL AND HUSHAI; AND CONCERNING ZIBA AND SHIMEI; AND HOW AHITHOPHEL HANGED HIMSELF.

6. And when Absalom had done what he was advised to by Ahithophel, he desired his advice, in the second place, about the war against his father. Now Ahithophel only asked him to let him have ten thousand chosen men, and he promised he would slay his father, and bring the soldiers back again in safety; and he said that then the kingdom would be firm to him when David was dead [but not otherwise]. Absalom was pleased with this advice, and called for Hushai, David's friend (for so did he style him); and informing him of the opinion of Ahithophel, he asked, further, what was his opinion concerning that matter. Now he was sensible that if Ahithophel's counsel were followed, David would be in danger of being seized on, and slain; so he attempted to introduce a contrary opinion, and said, Thou art not unacquainted, O king, with the valor of thy father, and of those that are now with him; that he hath made many wars, and hath always come off with victory, though probably he now abides in the camp, for he is very skilful in stratagems, and in foreseeing the deceitful tricks of his enemies; yet will he leave his own soldiers in the evening, and will either hide himself in some valley, or will place an ambush at some rock; so that when our army joins battle with him, his soldiers will retire for a little while, but will come upon us again, as encouraged by the king's being near them; and in the mean time your father will show himself suddenly in the time of the battle, and will infuse courage into his own people when they

Josephus' History of this Time Period

are in danger, but bring consternation to thine. Consider, therefore, my advice, and reason upon it, and if thou canst not but acknowledge it to be the best, reject the opinion of Ahithophel. Send to the entire country of the Hebrews, and order them to come and fight with thy father; and do thou thyself take the army, and be thine own general in this war, and do not trust its management to another; then expect to conquer him with ease, when thou overtakest him openly with his few partisans, but hast thyself many ten thousands, who will be desirous to demonstrate to thee their diligence and alacrity. And if thy father shall shut himself up in some city, and bear a siege, we will overthrow that city with machines of war, and by undermining it." When Hushai had said this, he obtained his point against Ahithophel, for his opinion was preferred by Absalom before the other's: however, it was no other than God (17) who made the counsel of Hushai appear best to the mind of Absalom.

7. So Hushai made haste to the high priests, Zadok and Abiathar, and told them the opinion of Ahithophel, and his own, and that the resolution was taken to follow this latter advice. He therefore bade them send to David, and tell him of it, and to inform him of the counsels that had been taken; and to desire him further to pass quickly over Jordan, lest his son should change his mind, and make haste to pursue him, and so prevent him, and seize upon him before he be in safety. Now the high priests had their sons concealed in a proper place out of the city, that they might carry news to David of what was transacted. Accordingly, they sent a maid-servant, whom they could trust, to them, to carry the news of Absalom's counsels, and ordered them to signify the same to David with all speed. So they made no excuse nor delay, but taking along with them their fathers' injunctions, because pious and faithful ministers, and judging that quickness and suddenness was the best mark of faithful service, they made haste to meet with David. But certain horsemen saw them when they were two furlongs from the city, and informed Absalom of them, who immediately sent some to take them; but when the sons of the high priest perceived this, they went out of the road, and betook themselves to a certain village; that village was called Bahurim; there they desired a certain woman to hide them, and afford them security. Accordingly she let the young men down by a rope into a well, and laid fleeces of wool over them; and when those that pursued them came to her, and asked her whether she saw them, she did not deny that she had seen them, for that they staid with her some time, but she said they then went their ways; and she foretold that, however, if they would follow them directly, they would catch them; but when after a long pursuit they could not catch them, they came back again; and when the woman saw those men were returned, and that there was no longer any fear of the young men's being caught by them, she drew them up by the rope, and bade them go on their journey accordingly, they used great diligence in the prosecution of that journey, and came to David, and informed him accurately of all the counsels of Absalom. So he commanded those that were with him to pass over Jordan while it was night, and not to delay at all on that account.

8. But Ahithophel, on rejection of his advice, got upon his ass, and rode away to his own country, Gilon; and, calling his family together, he told them distinctly what advice he had given Absalom; and since he had not been persuaded by it, he said he would evidently perish, and this in no long time, and that David would overcome him, and return to his kingdom again; so he said it was better that he should take his own life away with freedom and magnanimity, than expose himself to be punished by David, in opposition to whom he had acted entirely for Absalom. When he had discoursed thus to them, he went into the inmost room of his house, and hanged himself; and thus was the death of Ahithophel, who was self-condemned; and when his relations had taken him down from the halter, they took care of his funeral. Now, as for David, he passed over Jordan, as we have said already, and came to Mahanaim, every fine and very strong city; and all the chief men of the country received him with great pleasure, both out of the shame they had that he should be forced to flee away [from Jerusalem], and out of the respect they bare him while he was in his former prosperity. These were Barzillai the Gileadite, and Siphar the ruler among the Ammonites, and Machir the principal man of Gilead; and these furnished him with plentiful provisions for himself and his followers, insomuch that they wanted no beds nor blankets for them, nor loaves of bread, nor wine; nay, they brought them a great many cattle for slaughter, and afforded them what furniture they wanted for their refreshment when they were weary, and for food, with plenty of other necessaries.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-7.htm> accessed April 9, 2013. Josephus *Antiquities*; Book VII, Chapter 12.

Edersheim's commentary on this chapter, which some slight updating and editing.

Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 17

CHAPTER 2

Ahithophel's twofold advice

-

Hushai prevents imminent danger

-

David is informed, and crosses the Jordan

2 SAMUEL 16–20

Having thus secured himself and his fellow conspirators, Ahithophel proposed to select 12,000 men, make a rapid march, and that very night surprise David's followers, weary, dispirited, greatly outnumbered, and not yet properly organized. Had this advice been followed, the result would probably have been such as Ahithophel anticipated. A panic would have ensued, David fallen a victim, and with his death his cause been for ever at an end. But a higher power than the wisdom of the renowned Gilonite guided events. In the language of Holy Scripture, "Jehovah had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel" (Samuel 17:14).

But, as first explained to Absalom and the council of Israelitish elders, Ahithophel's advice at once commended itself to their acceptance. Hushai seems not to have been present at that meeting. He was too prudent to intrude unbidden into the king's council - chamber. Besides, he had made arrangements for communicating with David before any measure of his enemies could have been executed. Just outside the city wall, by the "En - Rogel," "the Fuller's Fountain" - for they dared not show themselves in the city, the two young priests, Jonathan and Ahimaaz the swift - footed (2 Samuel 18:3), waited in readiness to carry tidings to David.

Although Absalom had followed Ahithophel's vile advice, by which no immediate danger was incurred, it was another thing to take so decisive a step as to risk the flower of his army in a night attack upon David. If Ahithophel had retired from the royal presence in the expectation of seeing his counsel immediately carried out, he was soon to find himself disappointed. Hushai was next sent for, and consulted as to the measure proposed by Ahithophel. It was easy for the old statesman to conjure up difficulties and dangers to one so inexperienced and so irresolute as Absalom, and still more, by means of unlimited flattery, to turn one so vain into another course. Absalom had only to speak, and all Israel would gather to him from Dan even to Beer - sheba, - they would light upon David like the dew upon the grass; or if he fled into a city, why, cart - ropes would suffice to drag it, to the smallest stone, into the nearest river! On the other hand, this was the worst time for attacking David and his men when they were desperate. The idea of a night surprise was altogether inadmissible, bearing in mind David's great experience in such warfare; while any mishap, however small, would be fatal to Absalom's cause. We scarcely wonder, even taking the merely rational view of it, that in such a council - chamber the advice of Hushai should have prevailed, although we recognize none the less devoutly, the Hand of God in ordering all. There was one, however, who did not deceive himself as to the consequences of this fatal mistake. Ahithophel knew, as if he had already witnessed it, that from this hour Absalom's cause was lost. His own course was soon and decisively chosen. He returned to his city, set his affairs in order, and, with the deliberate cynicism of a man who has lost all faith, committed that rare crime in Israel, suicide. Typical as the history of David is throughout, we cannot fail to see here also a terrible prefigurement of the end of him, who, having been the friend and companion of the Lord Jesus - perhaps regarded as the "wise adviser" among the simple disciples - betrayed his Master, and, like Ahithophel, ended by hanging himself (Matthew 27:5). Meanwhile, Hushai had communicated with the priests in Jerusalem. His counsel had, indeed, been adopted; but it was impossible to know what one so irresolute as Absalom might ultimately do. At any rate, it was necessary David should be informed, so as to secure himself against a surprise. A trusty maidservant of the priest carried the message to the young men by the "Fuller's Fountain." At the last moment their enterprise was almost defeated. A lad - probably one of those stationed to watch any suspicious movement - noticed their hurried departure in the direction of David's camp. Happily, the young men had observed the spy, and got the start of those sent

Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 17

after them. It was not the first nor yet the last time that an Israelitish woman wrought deliverance for her people, when at Bahurim the two young priests were successfully hidden in an empty well, and their pursuers led astray (2 Samuel 17:18 - 20). And here we gladly mark how different from the present inmates of Eastern harems were the mothers, wives, and daughters of Israel, - how free in their social intercourse, and how powerful in their influence, the religious and social institutions of the Old Testament forming in this respect also a preparation for the position which the New Testament would assign to woman. But to return. Coming out of their concealment, the two priests reached the encampment safely, and informed David of his danger. Ere the morning light he and all his followers had put the Jordan between them and their enemies; and anything like a surprise was henceforth impossible.

From <http://www.levendwater.org/books/v5bhot.pdf> accessed . Footnotes were interspersed in the text and bracketed.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 17

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Ahithophel lays out his plan before Absalom

Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose [right] now 12,000 men that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will come upon him when he [is] weary and discouraged [lit., *slack of hands*], and I will frighten him; and the people with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king by himself. Let me bring back all of the people to you when everything is restored—[along with the body of] the man whom you are seeking. All of the people will be [at] peace.”

Later, Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose right now 12,000 men so that I may rise up and chase after David tonight. I will advance quickly against the king, while he is yet weary and discouraged in a surprise attack, causing the people with him to flee. Then I will strike down the king while he is by himself. Allow me to then bring all of the people back to you, at which point everything will return to normal. Furthermore, I will bring back the body of the man you seek and all of the people will be at peace.”

This idea was agreeable to Absalom [lit., *in the eyes of Absalom*] and to [lit., *in the eyes of*] the elders of Israel.

This plan that Ahithophel presented was agreeable, both to Absalom and to the elders of Israel who are with him.

Absalom calls for Hushai the Archite to join them and to give his thoughts on the matter

But Absalom said, “Call now Hushai the Archite as well and let us hear what he has to say [lit., *what (is) in his mouth—also he*].” Hushai came in to Absalom, and Absalom spoke to him, saying, “Ahithophel spoke in this way [lit., *as this word*]; do we do what he advises [lit., *do we do his word*] or, if not, [then] you speak.”

But Absalom said, “Call now Hushai the Archite and we will hear what he has to say as well.” When Hushai came in to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, “Ahithophel gave us this advice; should we follow his advice or do you have a better plan?”

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 17

A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Hushai answered [lit., <i>said to</i>] Absalom: “The counsel which Absalom has given [lit., <i>counseled</i>] [is] not good at this time.”	Hushai answered Absalom, saying, “The counsel that Absalom gave is not good advice at this time.”
Hushai also said, “You know your father and [you know] his men, that they [are] mighty men and [they are] bitter of soul, [just] like a bear bereaved [of her cubs] in the field. And [you know that] your father is a man of war and he will not spend the night with the people. Listen, he has [certainly] now been hidden in one of the pits or in some other [lit., <i>a certain</i>] place.	Hushai then added, “You know your father and his men—that they men are warriors and they are bitter right now, like a bear bereaved of her cubs in the field. Furthermore, your father is an experienced man of war and he knows not to spend the night in the midst of the people. Listen, even now, your father has certainly hidden himself in one of the pits or in some other place.
And it has been when [there is] a falling upon them in the first [battle], that a messenger [lit., <i>hearer</i>] will hear and then announce, ‘A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.’	And it will be when there is a surprise attack at first contact, then a messenger will announce, ‘A slaughter has occurred among the people who follow Absalom.’
He also is a man [lit., <i>son</i>] of courage whose heart is like the heart of a lion—melting, it will melt [at hearing such a report]—for all Israel knows that your father [is] a [great] warrior along with the men [lit., <i>sons</i>] of courage who [are] with him.	Even though your soldiers are men of great courage with hearts like a lions, their hearts will surely melt at hearing such a report. All Israel knows that your father is a great warrior along with the men of courage who are with him.
For I advise [that] all Israel be assembled, from Dan to Beersheba, a multitude like the sand which [is] by the sea, and [that] you [lit., <i>your faces</i>] go into battle. And we will come upon him in the one place where he is to be found; and we will [be] upon him as the dew that falls upon the ground, so that none remains of him; nor of all the men who are with him, not even one. And if he gathers [himself] to a city, then all Israel will bring ropes into that city and we will drag it down into [lit., <i>as far as</i>] the valley until not even a pebble is found.”	For I advise you, King Absalom, that all Israel—from Dan to Beersheba—be assembled, so your army is as the sand by the sea, and that you go into battle with them. We will come upon him in the one place where he can be found, and we will be upon him like the dew falling upon the ground, so that there is no one that remains of him—nor of all the men who are with him—not even one. If David withdraws to a city, then all of Israel will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it away stone by stone down to the river valley until not even a pebble remains.”
Absalom then proclaimed [lit., <i>said</i>]—with every man of Israel, “The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel.”	Absalom then proclaimed, along with his staff of elders, “The counsel of Hushai the Archite is superior to the advice of Ahithophel.”
Y ^e howah had ordained to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel; with the intent that Y ^e howah has brought disaster upon Absalom.	Jehovah had ordained that He would frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel, with the intent that He would bring disaster upon Absalom.

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 17

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Hushai later told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, “Accordingly Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel; and accordingly, I counseled [them]. Now, send quickly [a message] and make known to David, saying, ‘Do not lodge the night in the plains of the wilderness, but definitely pass over so that the king is not swallowed up along with all the people who [are] with him.’ ”

Hushai later told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests of Israel, “This is what Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel and this is what I advised them to do. Quickly send a message to David, telling him, ‘Do not lodge the night in the plains of the wilderness, but cross over the Jordan, so that the king is not swallowed up—along with the people with him—by the forces of Absalom.’ ”

Meanwhile [lit., *and*], Jonathan and Ahimaaz are waiting in En-rogel. A maidservant would go and tell them [wartime intelligence], and then they would go and tell King David (for they could not be seen entering into the city [of Jerusalem]).

Meanwhile, Jonathan and Ahimaaz would wait in En-rogel. When intelligence was gathered, a maidservant would go and tell them, then they would go and inform King David. They could not be seen entering into Jerusalem.

Although the sons of the priest are spotted, Absalom’s soldiers cannot find them

A youth saw them and made this known to Absalom. Both of them departed quickly. They came to the house of a man in Bahurim and he had a well in his courtyard. Therefore, they went down there [into the well]. The woman took and spread a covering over the surface of the well. Then she scattered grain over it, so the matter is not known.

A young man saw them and made this information known to Absalom. Both of them, when they realized they had been spotted, departed from there quickly. When they came to a man’s house in Bahurim who had a well in his courtyard, they descended into the well. The woman took and spread a covering over the opening of the well. Then she scattered grain over that, so that the well itself could not be seen or discerned.

The servants of Absalom came to the woman [at] the house, and they asked, “Where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?”

The servants of Absalom came to the woman at the house, and they asked, “Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?”

The woman answered them [saying], “They went over [that] streamlet of water.” So they searched [for them] but did not find [them]. Therefore, they returned [to] Jerusalem.

The woman answered them saying, “They went over that streamlet of water.” So they searched for them but did not find them. Therefore, they returned to Jerusalem.

The priests sons deliver Hushai’s intel to David, and David takes his troops over the Jordan

And it is regarding their departure when they came up out of the well and went. They made [what they knew] known to King David, saying unto him [lit., *David*], “Rise up [all of you] and quickly cross over the water, for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you.”

And it came to pass, after the men left, that they came up out of the well and departed. They informed King David about what they knew about Absalom’s plans, saying, “Rise up, all of you, and quickly cross over the River Jordan, for Ahithophel has given the following advice.”

David got up, along with the people who [are] with him, and they cross over the Jordan until the morning light. [There was] not even one remaining [behind] who did not cross over the Jordan.

David then arose along with the people around him, and they all crossed over the Jordan until the morning light. No one remained behind.

Ahithophel commits suicide

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 17	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not used, he saddled up his donkey, rose up, and went to his house in his city. He gave [thorough] instructions concerning his household and then he hanged himself and died. He was buried in the tomb of his father.	When Ahithophel realized that his advice had been rejected, he saddled up his donkey and rode to his house in his city. He gave thorough instructions concerning the function and deposition of his household, and then hanged himself until dead. He was buried in the tomb of his father.
David takes his troops to Mahanaim; Absalom crosses over the Jordan and names his general	
David had come to Mahanaim when Absalom crossed over the Jordan [River]—he and every man of Israel with him.	David had come to Mahanaim at the same time that Absalom crossed over the Jordan River along with all the men of Israel.
Absalom placed Amasa over the army in lieu of Joab. Amasa [was] the son of a man [whose] name was Ithra the Israelite [possibly, <i>Jezreelite</i> , <i>Ishmaelite</i>], who had relations with [lit., <i>come unto</i>] Abigail, the daughter of Nahash, the sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab.	Absalom placed Amasa over his army as a substitute for Joab. Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Ithra (he was an Israelite [possibly, <i>Jezreelite</i> , <i>Ishmaelite</i>]), who had relations with Abigail, who was the daughter of Nahash, who was also the sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
And Israel (as well as Absalom) bivouacked in the land of Gilead.	Israel, led by Absalom, after crossing over the Jordan, bivouacked in the land of Gilead.
David's logistical supply line	
And so it was as David came to Mahanaim, that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim [brought to them] beds, bowls and eating utensils, and wheat [products], barley [products], flour and roasted grain; and beans, lentils and roasted grain [as a soup]; and honey and curds and small livestock along with [various] milk products from the herd, for David and the people who [are] with him, for they determined [lit., <i>said</i>], "The people [are] hungry, worn-out and thirsty in the desert-wilderness."	And so it was as David came to Mahanaim, that Shobi ben Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought to them wheat products, barley products, flour and roasted grain; and beans, lentils and roasted grain as a soup; and honey and curds and small livestock along with various milk products from the herd, for David and the people who are with him, for they determined, "The people are hungry, worn-out and thirsty in the desert-wilderness."

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time: The Modern Language Bible (*The New Berkeley Version*) suggests that *Psalms 61 and 62 may have this period of David's flight into Transjordan as their setting*.¹¹¹ R. B. Thieme, Jr. did not teach any psalms in the midst or end of this chapter. Matthew Henry writes: *[David then crossed over the Jordan River]. There, as some think, he penned the 42nd and 43rd Psalms, looking back upon Jerusalem from the land of Jordan (Psalm 42:6: O my God, my soul is cast down within me; on account of this I remember You from the land of Jordan, and from the Hermonites, from Mount Mizar).*¹¹² Gill also suggests that

¹¹¹ The Modern Language Bible (*The New Berkeley Version*); Gerrit Verkuyl, Ph.D., Editor-in-chief; revised edition; Hendrickson Publishers, © 1969, p. 335.

¹¹² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:15–21.

David wrote Psalms 42–43 at this time.¹¹³ The Pulpit Commentary suggests¹¹⁴ that David wrote Psalms 3 & 4 during this time period, citing Psalm 3:5 4:8. They also write: *To the period of David's exile beyond Jordan have been also referred many other psalms: Psalms 61 62 63. (see inscription), 143. (Septuagint, "when his son pursued him"), 26., 27., 28., etc.*¹¹⁵ Dr. Lightfoot believes that Psalm 55 was written about Ahithophel.¹¹⁶ Several agree with Dr. Lightfoot on this point, and therefore, this psalm is appropriately studied with this chapter or with 2Sam. 15.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. covered this chapter in lessons #631_0436–0459 of his **1972 David series**.

Word Cloud for 2Samuel 17 Exegesis

(A few words like *BDB* and *pronounced* have been removed)



¹¹³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:22.

¹¹⁴ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:21.

¹¹⁵ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 17:21.

¹¹⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 17:22–29.

