

## 2 Samuel 17:1-14

Background: David is hiding out in the wilderness from Absalom his son who is now his enemy. As we look at this lesson, ask yourself where is the wilderness today? I'm not speaking logistically but instead spiritually. The wilderness is that place or season between where you were and where God ultimately wants to bring you into. It is that place and space in time where you are not where you used to be but not in the promised place or in full recovery of what you have lost. David is in the wilderness but he is in a better relationship with God here. He is forced to trust totally on His providence. That is a better place than being comfortable in Jerusalem and still facing judgment. However, the wilderness is not God's best but part of the process. Here are some wilderness truths:

- Wilderness or transition is often not pleasant or comfortable but is part of the process of recovery.
- God will provide and deliver a word to you in the wilderness.
- The wilderness experience is designed to help us trust more in God for deliverance.
- There is an expiration date on how long you stay. God never intended for us to stay there.
- The wilderness is designed to eliminate and weed out those things that hinder you from moving into and possessing God's best for you.

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

**2** *And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I will smite the king only:*

**3** *And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace.*

**4** *And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.*

Verses 1-3: Ahithophel really has it out for David. He suggests he be allowed to attack David now.

As I looked at the possible application, the following observations were revealed to me. Note, Ahithophel plays the role of David's enemy. Here is the enemy plan:

1. Rise up tonight, immediately and pursue after David.
2. Attack him while he is tired and weak.
  - Notice Ahithophel suggests that Absalom remain behind and he will lead the attack.
3. Strike fear in him; make him afraid.
4. Use the fear to cause everyone who is following David to also become afraid and turn from following him.

5. Strike David as the leader only and then bring the other people who were following him back to serve Absalom.
6. After this, everyone will be at peace and okay with what is happening. But this is a worldly peace that will not last. It is not the peace that God provides.

So I see six points (there may be more) in the enemy's plan. Also, I noticed some similarities with other wilderness situations.

The enemy's plan during the exodus. Israel when they left Egypt in Exodus Chapter 14 we see a similar plan. Pharaoh sees that the people are rapped in the wilderness and regrets that he has allowed Israel to stop serving them. Pharaoh pursues after Israel to either kill or bring them back into bondage. As he pursues God's people, he strikes fear in the people and they are ready to revolt and turn against their leader Moses. Notice the purpose of the enemy pursuit is to prevent Israel from passing over and escaping. There are similarities between Pharaoh's plan and what Ahithophel proposes.

Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Satan pursues after Jesus and attacks while h is tired and hungry from fasting. One objective of the attack was to strike fear and cause Christ to doubt that the Father was going to provide for him in the wilderness. The temptation through fear and doubt was to try and get Jesus to stop following and trusting in the Father and instead take matters into his own hands. This would be in effect following and serving the enemy rather than following God and standing on His promises.

So the enemy's plan throughout the Bible is very similar and has the same objective as the plan Ahithophel proposes. The same spirit is at work here.

Verse 4 – The plan sounded good to Absalom.

*<sup>5</sup> Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.*

*<sup>6</sup> And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do after his saying? If not; speak thou.*

*<sup>7</sup> And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good at this time. <sup>8</sup> For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.*

*<sup>9</sup> Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place: and it will come to pass, when some of them be overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom. <sup>10</sup> And he also that is*

*valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man, and they which be with him are valiant men.*

*<sup>11</sup> Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person. <sup>12</sup> So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that are with him there shall not be left so much as one.*

*<sup>13</sup> 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 be not one small stone found there.*

*<sup>14</sup> 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, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.*

Verse 5 – Absalom calls David’s friend to get a second opinion.

Verse 6 – Absalom tells Hushai what Ahithophel suggested and wants to know his opinion.

Verse 7 – Hushai tells him something contrary and opposite the counsel of Ahithophel. He says the idea is not a good idea at this time. Hushai is smart enough to not tell them it is a bad idea....so he doesn’t say it is a bad plan...just not a good time to execute it. Hushai’s plan features the following:

- Reminds Absalom of David’s previous valor and the brave men with him are mighty.
- Tells them David and his men will be like a mother bear after her cubs when it comes to getting the throne back.
- Suggests David will not be easily found with the people and that if they come on him, they will suffer early casualties.
- When Absalom’s troops suffer early losses, his brave men will become fearful.
  - Hushai is also using fear to sell his plan. This is fear of failure and defeat.
- Suggests he wait for more troops to build up his army. The idea is to try and delay Absalom from attacking soon so David can have more time to prepare.
- Huge difference where Hushai proposes that Absalom himself lead this large army.
  - This appeals to Absalom’s pride which will further sell his idea.
- David’s experience and might could be a problem....so instead of going right after him....build up a great force or coalition first. He can even go into battle (appeals to his pride).

- He shows how his plan can lead to victory.

Verse 14 – Absalom and the people with him like Hushai’s counsel better. Why, how...because the Lord was behind it to defeat Absalom. God is about to allow him to follow the bad advice for the purpose of defeating him. Hushai has to be careful not to take credit...it is not just his wisdom but God using him to fulfill His plan for defeating the enemy and answering David’s prayer.

Summary:

- God’s plan is to show us the enemy’s plan against us...like a scouting report so we know what to expect. Likewise today, the Bible reveals the enemy’s plan against us through these stories.
- We may have to spend more time in the wilderness so God can use our situation to defeat the enemy and get the glory. What you are experiencing in your wilderness season is not just about you....it is designed to defeat the enemy through your testimony and bring glory to God.