

## II Samuel 15:12 (to 1st .), 31

12And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices.

Ahithophel's strategy might have been successful, but David has placed one of his confederates in Absalom's camp. Hushai, known to be a respected advisor to David, pretends to join the rebellion by appealing to Absalom's vanity (see 15:32–37; 16:16–18). When Hushai's counsel is sought, he counters Ahithophel's directive, effectively returning treachery for treachery. Outwitted, aware of his loss of influence, and likely foreseeing Absalom's defeat, Ahithophel departs to end his life.

Giloh, the city of Ahithophel, was one of the groups of towns just south of Hebron ([Joshua 15:51](#)), and Ahithophel may have gone there in readiness to be summoned by Absalom. Why he deserted David does not appear. It has been conjectured that he was aggrieved at David's treatment of Bath-sheba, who is supposed to have been his granddaughter.

31And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

“**One told David**, or, *David told*, i.e. David being hereof informed, acquaints his friends and followers with it, to stir them up to join with him in the following prayer against him.

**Turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness;** either infatuate him, that he may give foolish counsel; or let his counsel be rejected as foolish, or spoiled by the foolish execution of it.” (Matthew Poole Commentary).

7II Samuel 17:1 *Ahithophel*, 2, 5, 7, 14 (to 1st .), 23

1Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night:

“*his night*] The night following David’s flight and Absalom’s entrance into Jerusalem. Ahithophel’s advice, given no doubt at the council described in ch. [2 Samuel 16:20](#), was excellent. The success of the rebellion would be ensured by striking a sudden blow, and securing the king’s person. A small body of picked troops might easily have overtaken David, who was not likely to get more than twelve or fifteen miles from Jerusalem the first day.” (Cambridge Bible).

“This night - 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.” (Barnes’ Notes).

2And 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:

“*will make him afraid*] The word describes the *panic* caused by a sudden night attack, in the confusion of which David might easily be seized.” (Cambridge Bible).

“*I will come upon him while he is weary* — Before he has had time to breathe from the fatigues he has just gone through; *and weak-handed* — Before he has collected more forces. *I will make him afraid* — Strike a terror into him by this sudden attack, made in the night, when he is ill-provided. *I will smite the king only* — And proclaim pardon to all the rest. *And I will bring back all the people* — By this means I shall easily bring over their allegiance to thee.” (Benson Commentary).

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

“ **Call now Hushai.**—The good sense of Absalom and all the people at once approved the counsel of Ahithophel; but, at a crisis so important, Absalom sought the advice also of the other famous counsellor of his father.” (Ellicott’s Commentary).

7 And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good at this time.

“Though he generally gives most wise and admirable counsel, yet he seems now to be under a mistake, and not sufficiently to consider all the present circumstances of this business.” (Benson Commentary).

14And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.

“**The counsel of Hushai is better.** It seemed safer. Nothing in it was left to chance, and Absalom, already at the head of such numbers as to be able to select from them twelve thousand picked men, saw himself, in fancy, marching forward with all Israel at his feet. As a matter of fact, he did advance with so large an army that David was saved only by the skilful strategy of Joab. 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 smite David, and so be, not only Absalom's counsellor, but also his commander-in-chief.” (Pulpit Commentary).

23And 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.

“Put his household in order; disposed of his estate by will. Compare [Isaiah 38:1](#).”

**Hanged himself;** partly because he could not endure to outlive his disgrace, and the rejection of his counsel; and partly because he foresaw by this means David would gain time and strength, and in all probability be victorious, and then the storm would fall most heavily upon his head, as the main author and pillar of the rebellion, and the contriver of those two pernicious counsels above mentioned.” (Matthew Poole Commentary).”