

## OB Elbert - When Wisdom Perishes

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When Wisdom Perishes. Subtitled but wait, It Gets worse, and we'll be discussing aspects of 2nd Samuel, chapters 13 through 17.

But before I go into the subject in detail, you have to know this kind of reminds me of the Charles Dickens A Christmas Carol when he says, before I go into my story, you have to understand that Marley was completely dead, and before we begin our discussion today, you must understand about Ahithophel. Ahithophel was a wise counselor in Israel, and reading from 2nd Samuel 16:23, we read. Now, in those days, the counsel that Ahithophel gave was, if was as if one consulted the word of God.

So was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed both by David and by Absalom.

The story has its roots in chapter 13. David's firstborn son was named Amnon, and Amnon would have been in line to be the first to sit on the throne of Israel. But Absalom had a sister. Her name was Tamar, and she was beautiful. Her mother was different from Amnon's mother.

Her mother was Absalom's mother, so she was Absalom's full sister, and Amnon lusted after Tamar, and he counseled with Jonadab, who advised him, pretend that you're sick and ask your father David to send Tamar in to prepare food for you, to nourish you and bring you back to health.

But wait, it gets worse. She came, she prepared the food for him, and then the ruse was over and he accosted her, and because he was stronger than her, he violated her. But I appreciate her cool, calm, collected, sanctified response to him. Before he did this, she answered him, no, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel.

Do not do this outrageous thing. As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the outrageous fools in Israel. Now, therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you. But he didn't listen to her, and he violated her.

But it gets worse. After he had violated her, the Scriptures record that he hated her with a very great hatred, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her, and he said to her, get up, go.

But wait, it gets worse.

He called his young man his servant, and said, put this woman out of my presence, and so to mar in her shame, lived the rest of her life apparently in isolation, and when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. But Absalom spoke to Amnon, neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar, and so Absalom plotted against him.

And after two full years, Absalom saw his opportunity and he invited his brothers to come join him at BAAL Hazor, which is near Ephraim. Come and have a feast with me. But the real motivated motivation was that when Amnon came, Absalom commanded his servants, saying, mark you, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, strike Amnon, then kill him. Do not fear. Have I not commanded you?

Be courageous and be valiant.

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And so when Amnon's heart and mind were distorted with the wine that he had been drinking, Absalom gave the command, and they killed and Amnon revenge after two years.

And so Absalom fled away to tell my, the son of Amihud, the king of Geshur, and David mourned for his son. Day after day, Absalom fled and went to Geshur and was there three years, and why did he go to Geshur? Because Talmai, the son of Amahud, was his grandfather, the brother of his wife.

And so he went to live with his uncle, his grandfather, and David mourned for his son day after day, and so Absalom being there, we read in 2nd Samuel 3. 3 Absalom was the son of Makah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.

But Absalom's absence from Jerusalem did not last too long because Joab, one of David's mighty men, realized that David was pining away in his heart for his son, and contrary to his better judgment, David consented to have Absalom return to Jerusalem.

And so it seemingly was very happy. Joab arose and went to Geshur, found Absalom, and brought him to Jerusalem. But the king said, let him dwell apart in his own house. He is not to come into my presence, and so Absalom lived apart in his own house and did not come into the king's presence.

Absalom lived there for three years, and in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him.

And so Absalom lived for two full years in Jerusalem without coming into the king's presence, and then Absalom consulted with Joab. Get me an audience with the king.

Finally, David consented. Joab went to the king and told him David summoned Absalom, the murderer of his firstborn, and so he came to the king and he bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom. It sounds really great, doesn't it?

But wait, it gets worse.

After this, Absalom got himself a chariot, probably a very nice custom built chariot, and if that wasn't enough, he hired 50 men to march before him wherever he went. It was quite a show, and he set himself up in the gate of the city, and he would stand there and say, you know, from what city are you?

And when he said, your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel. Absalom would say to him, see, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you, and then Absalom would say, oh, that I were judge in the land. Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice.

And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him, and thus did Absalom to all Israel who came to the king for judgment, and so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. But it gets worse.

Absalom went to with 200 men from Jerusalem who were invited guests and went in their innocence and knew nothing. But while Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel. Remember, we talked about Ahithophel? Ahithophel the Gilanite, who was David's counselor from his city, Gilo, and the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

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And a messenger came to David, saying, the hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom, and so King David took his household and escaped for his life from Jerusalem. It was told, David, Ahithophel is among the conspirators of Absalom, and David said this.

O Lord, please turn the council of Ahithophel into foolishness when wisdom perishes.

And so David and his entourage fled into the wilderness. Absalom entered Jerusalem and set himself up as king, and people were yelling, long live the king. Long live the king, and Absalom counseled with Ahithophel saying, give me your counsel.

What shall we do? What shall we do to cement our rulership here? And Ahithophel said to Absalom, go into 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. Wisdom had perished. So they pitched a tent for Absalom, Absalom on the roof.

And Absalom went into his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel, and now again in those days, the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God, and so was all the counsel of Ahithophel, esteemed both by David and by Absalom.

David had an ally, Hushai, and Hushai was sent to Absalom's council to advise in addition to whatever Ahithophel had to say. Now Ahithophel had it in for David, and he wanted to single David out. This wasn't just about taking the new young king and setting them up in power and making sure that I'm part of his cabinet. There was a grudge here.

And ahithophel said in 2nd Samuel 17, he said this to Absalom, Let me choose 12,000 men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. I will come upon him while he's weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee, and I will strike down only the king, and I will bring back all the people to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the rest of the people will be at peace.

And the advice seemed right in the eyes of Absalom that he should give him 12,000 men to go murder his father.

But it gets worse.

I think the Lord overruled and put it on Absalom's heart and mind to call upon Hushai. He said, call Hushai the archite also, and let us hear what he has to say, and when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, thus hath Ahithophel spoken. What shall we do? He says he, if not?

Or shall we do as he says, if not, you speak, and Hushai said to Absalom, this time the council that Ahithophel has given is not good, and he explained that David would be like a wounded bear in the wilderness, and when the 12,000 that would go with Ahithophel to murder David came upon him, David and his battle hardened men, men would turn on them, and there would be a great slaughter.

You know that your father and his men are mighty men of valor. Don't do it. Do not do it.

And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and he went off to his home in his own city. He set his house in order and hanged himself, and he died and was buried in the tomb of his father, a man who stood as counselor to David, whose words were as though they were the words of the Lord God turned against him after all those years together. What was the driving force?

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It was Ahithophel's granddaughter.

It was Ahithophel's grandson in law.

Ahithophel had a son, Eliam.

Eliam, his son, had a daughter, and her name was Bathsheba, and her husband was Uriah.

I think Ahithophel could never forgive David for what he did to them, and I think that deep grudge soured him and poisoned him and led him to betrayal.

In second Samuel 23, and we don't read the whole account, but just we note here that when David was in the wilderness, there were 30 mighty men who were very loyal to him. They stuck by his side through thick and thin, and the list is given there in 2nd Samuel 23, and one of those listed is Eliam, the son of Ahithophel of Gila.

And another of the 30 that traveled loyally with David in his time in the wilderness. Imagine a band of 30 people, totally dedicated. The other was Uriah.

And I can just imagine Eliam saying, have I got a girl for you. He knew the character of Uriah. What an outstanding and courageous, valiant, noble man he was. Who else would you want your daughter to marry?

So he got them hooked up. They were married. I doubt not that Ahithophel was there for the wedding of his granddaughter, and then that beautiful union was ruined, and Eliam, being in a position of authority in the armies of Israel, would have been on the inside track as to how David managed to have Uriah killed in battle.

What's our lesson?

We must learn to forgive genuinely. Harboring grudges for years does nothing to improve us. Someone once wisely said that bearing hatred and a grudge towards someone else is like drinking poison and hoping it makes them sick.

Ahithophel could not get over the circumstances. May the Lord give us strength to fully forgive all those who have trespassed against us.