

# W discussion 2 Samuel 17

We're almost arriving at the end of the feud between Absalom and David. And the betrayal and backstabbing does not does not subside. It seems to only escalate further and it is difficult, as a reader, to keep track of the alliances, distant family ties or fellow villagers. And surprisingly God is even playing a background role in this chapter.

## Betrayal of an old advisor (17:1-14)

We've been briefly introduced to an advisor called Ahithophel. And the last chapter ended with the statement:

<sup>23</sup> 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. (2 Samuel 16:23)

And it seems that he is giving a wise and peaceful council to Absalom yet another Hushai (always mentioned as David's friend) gives another more violent council.

1. Compare the two suggestions on how to deal with David and his men? Which do you like better? Why?
2. Who is betraying who here? On which side is Ahithophel and whose side is Hushai?
3. According to the story God has a hand in which council is followed (verse 14). What do you think of his role – especially when you read verse 23?

## Chaos is betrayal (17:15-22)

Hushai, David's friend, betrays Absalom by warning David of his own violent plan – so David can escape. So Hushai asks Zadok and Abiathar who send a female servant to Jonathan and Ahimaaz, to tell David of the plan. "But a young man saw them and told Absalom" (verse 18). So Ahimaaz and Jonathan have to hide in a well before they can tell David.

1. What is the impression you get from this "cloak and dagger" story to get information to David?
2. Why was this plan (from Hushai) necessary, instead of Ahithophel's plan?

## The last betrayal? (17:23-29)

There is still a gruesome, but beautiful part of the story coming, but we seem to have arrived at the final betrayal. Amasa is made head over Absalom's army (Joab has been removed and is fighting with David). But this was not a smart move because:

Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite, who had married Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruah, Joab's mother. (2 Samuel 17:25)

And David is staying in Mahanaim – Shobi (the son of Nahash and thus the brother of Abigail who is the sister of Joab's mother ... it's a small world) and Rabbah, Machir and Barzillai are supplying him with all the goods.

It is clear from these couple of verses that Absalom is completely on his own, he can't and shouldn't trust anyone. David is the only one that can trust the people he speaks to and hears from. It is clear who will win ... if you can keep track of the names, family ties, villagers and alliances.

1. Betrayal seems to play an important role? Why?
2. Deep down, on whose side are you really? Who is the underdog here?

What role does betrayal play in your own life? Does God play a role in it? Have you been the one betraying?