

# The Advice of Ahithophel and Hushai

## Second Samuel 16:15 to 17:29

The central unit of **Absalom's** rebellion against his father and David's return to Yerushalayim deals with the conflicting advice of **Ahithophel** and **Hushai**. The previous file (Du - **Shim'i Curses David**) ended thus: **The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself (Second Samuel 16:14).** This file ends thus: **The people were exhausted and hungry and thirsty in the wilderness (Second Samuel 17:29).** **Three key verses**, interspersed throughout (16:23, 17:14 and 17:24), provide the clue for analyzing the section as three chiasms arranged within a larger chiasmic structure, the clash between **Ahithophel's** advice and **Hushai's** advice serving as a focus for the whole.<sup>413</sup>

- A. Arriving in Jerusalem, Absalom is befriended (16:15-19)
  - B1. Ahithophel advises Absalom (16:20-22)
    - B2. **Ahithophel is described in glowing terms (16:23)**
  - B3. Ahithophel advises Absalom (17:1-4)
    - C1. Hushai advises Absalom (17:5-13)
      - C2. **Hushai's advice is declared better than Ahithophel's (17:14)**
    - C3. Hushai advises Zadok and Abiathar (17:15-16)
  - B1. David crosses the Jordan (17:17-22)
    - B2. **Ahithophel commits suicide (17:23)**
  - B3. Absalom crosses the Jordan (17:24-26)
- A. Arriving in Mahanaim, David is befriended (17:27-29)