The Counsel of Ahithophel

“A wise man is strong, Yes, a man of knowledge increases strength; For by wise counsel you will wage your own war, And in a multitude of counselors there is safety.” – Pr.24:5-6 (NKJV)

Because of human diversity, it is becoming increasingly difficult to single out a concept that enjoys the acceptance of the generality of the entire human race. The saying that “Life is not a Bed of Roses” appears universal however. By implication, we all agree that there will always be a challenge to confront or a struggle to face as we travel on the face of the earth since life is a journey. The text above makes us to understand that everybody has got his/her own war to fight. War differs in nature, degree, and dimension for different people. It may be spiritual, emotional, or physical. It may be in marriages, family, business, career, workplace, or Church (that sounds weird no doubt). And to be successful in fighting such wars, one needs wise counsel. King David is a very good example of a man who fought diverse wars - spiritually, emotionally, and physically all the days of his life. As an anointed king in Israel, he fought spiritual war of sexual immorality, emotional war of being a fugitive for a long time even as an anointed King, and physical war of colonization. During his reign as king, David surrounded himself with wise men as counselors such as his uncle, Jehonathan (same as Jonathan) and others; but Ahithophel stood out amongst them all. While David’s uncle, Jonathan was referred to as a counselor, Ahithophel was called the “king’s counselor.”

“Also Jehonathan, David’s uncle, was a counselor, a wise man, and a scribe; and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king’s sons. Ahithophel was the king’s counselor, and Hushai the Archite was the king’s companion. After Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, then Abiathar. And the general of the king’s army was Joab.” – 1Chr.27:32-34 (NKJV)

King David saw so much wisdom in the counsel of Ahithophel as well as its potency that he had to pray to God to turn his counsel to foolishness when he pitched his tent with David’s son, Absalom in his act of treason (2Sam.15:31). Apart from the official relationship that existed between Ahithophel and King David by reason of his political appointment, Ahithophel also had a family relationship with King David just like his uncle, Jonathan. Ahithopel was King David’s in-law because he was the grandfather of Bathsheba and the great grandfather of Solomon (2Sam.11:3; 23:34). It’s obvious that Solomon came from a family tree of wise people since wise counsel most often come from men of wisdom. After all, no one can give what he/she does not have. Solomon must have benefited from the wisdom that flowed down from Ahithophel to his grandfather, Eliam, and to his mother, Bathsheba (Pr.4:3-7 Amp). No wonder he had enough wisdom to ask God for greater Wisdom to reign over His people (Israel). Perhaps this will give us insight to how he knew the most important thing (wisdom) to ask God for when He gave him a “blank check” (2Chr.1:7-10). Brethren, this is how far we should apply the wisdom of men in our lives; that is, to help us seek greater wisdom from God. No matter how wise a man is, he is still a man and not God; therefore he is subject to human error. Unfortunately, King David and his rebellious son, Absalom did not seem to understand this truth early, hence they turned the counsel (advice) of Ahithophel to a “god.”

“Now in those days the advice Ahithophel gave was like that of one who inquires of God. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel’s advice.” – 2Sam.16:23 (NIV)
In reality, the advice of Ahithophel was not always as good as though it’s from God; hence it should not be taken as such. Such also is the advice of men. It was King David and his son, Absalom, who took the advice of Ahithophel that way; it wasn’t really. Otherwise, how can one reconcile the fact that a man whose counsel, King David held in so high esteem, could advice Absalom to sleep with his father’s concubine in the sight of all Israel (2Sam.16:20-22)? That could not have come from God because there is no iota of God’s wisdom in such advice. Brethren, many believers have found themselves right now in some very bad situations that they did not bargain for. It could simply be because they acted on what I call - “The Counsel of Ahithophel in the eye of David and Absalom.” Some acted on the presumed wise counsels of some elderly people, only to realize later that it was a grave mistake. They have forgotten that “great men are not always wise, nor do the aged always understand justice” (Job.32:9). Some even claimed that they acted on the counsel of some “men of God” who in turn claimed to base their counsels on revelation (vision). They have also forgotten that that could be what I also call – “The vision of Eliphaz.” Eliphaz saw a vision where a spirit quoted a scripture to him while he was thinking about Job’s condition; he then concluded that what the spirit told him was true about the reason for Job’s ordeal. Though he confessed that he could not discern the appearance of this spirit, yet he went ahead to advice Job based on that vision (Job. 4:12-21). Eventually the revelation turned out to be false. The Word of God tells us to not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God……. (1John 4:1). Thank God for Job who refused to be misled with such counsel.

“Behold, my eye has seen all this, My ear has heard and understood it. What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you. But I would speak to the Almighty, And I desire to reason with God.” – Job 13:1-3 (NKJV)

Whose counsel are you acting on? Do you have an “Ahithophel” or an “Eliphaz” who has replaced God in the issues of your life? Job chose to speak directly with God Almighty and to reason face-to-face with Him concerning the issue at hand. The good news is that you and I have a better covenant relationship with God than Job had, hence God is more than willing to speak to us if we will ask Him sincerely. Do not make the opinion of men the compass for your life. Always remember that no matter how logical the counsels of men are, the scriptures say “……….If they do not speak according to this word (the word of God), it is because there is no light in them” (Ish.8:20).

**Prayer Point**
Father, open my understanding to see the limitation of the wisdom of men in the name of Jesus (1Cor.2:4-5).

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