

1. I'm going to read quite a few verses this morning, which I normally try not to do, but I think it will help set the stage for what the Lord wants to say to us today.
2. Two weeks ago I mentioned this passage of scripture, and I wanted to come back to it today because of the significance that it has for our lives.

TEXT: **1 Chronicles 27:25-33** Azmaveth son of Adiel was in charge of the royal storehouses. Jonathan son of Uzziah was in charge of the storehouses in the outlying districts, in the towns, the villages and the watchtowers. **26** Ezri son of Kelub was in charge of the field workers who farmed the land. **27** Shimei the Ramathite was in charge of the vineyards. Zabdi the Shiphmite was in charge of the produce of the vineyards for the wine vats. **28** Baal-Hanan the Gederite was in charge of the olive and sycamore-fig trees in the western foothills. Joash was in charge of the supplies of olive oil. **29** Shitrai the Sharonite was in charge of the herds grazing in Sharon. Shaphat son of Adlai was in charge of the herds in the valleys. **30** Obil the Ishmaelite was in charge of the camels. Jehdeiah the Meronothite was in charge of the donkeys. **31** Jaziz the Hagrite was in charge of the flocks. All these were the officials in charge of King David's property. **32** Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counselor, a man of insight and a scribe. Jehiel son of Hacmoni took care of the king's sons. **33** Ahithophel was the king's counselor. Hushai the Arkite was the king's friend.

TITLE: **A friend of the king.**

INTRO:

1. I have for years read this passage in 1 Chronicles and I have for years been amazed at the mention of the name of Hushai the Arkite.
2. Basically this list of names beginning in verse 25 is a list of who's who in the kingdom of Israel.
3. The names listed here are the names of the most powerful people in all of the land.
4. This group of men would be the equivalent of the modern-day cabinet of the President of the United States.
5. These men made decisions. These men had tens of thousands of people who answered to them. These men had their finger on the pulse of the economy, the government, the labor force, the working, and preservation of land.
6. These men oversaw the production of food and transportation. They were in charge of relations with the neighboring countries.
7. When these men entered the room, they commanded respect. And it has often puzzled me, why in the middle of all the mention of these great leaders, would the writer of Chronicles include the fact that Hushai the Arkite was the king's friend?

8. I believe the reason why his name is mentioned is because the writer of Chronicles is trying to send a message, and the message is that having a friend is important.
9. As a matter of fact having a friend is just as important as having the most skilled dream team of leaders in place. Having a friend is vital.
10. Evidently this friend was committed to the king, and evidently the king was committed to this friend because his name would forever go down in the history books as the friend of the king.
11. You know commitment is not something that is as highly valued as it once was. Commitment to friendship, commitment to relationship, commitment to much of anything just doesn't seem to be as prevalent as it once was in our society.
12. I would even go so far as to say that as a society we have moved more to an arms length type of commitment level. We have moved to a place where we keep people at bay, we keep them at a distance.
13. In many ways as a society we have become skeptical and untrusting of those around us. I don't know if it's because there are more bad things happening in the world or if we just hear of more bad things happening in the world because of the abundance of media outlets ready to report the story.
14. But for whatever reason, we tend to be a bit untrusting of the good in people.
15. I have been following a story of the murder of a young mother and her two children ages 9 and 11 because the murder occurred very near where I grew up.
16. I have also been following the story because the husband of this family works for a ministry I am familiar with and I know many people who work there.
17. The bodies of this 31-year-old mother and her two boys were discovered dead in their home on a Monday. By Wednesday the same week, people were posting comments online proclaiming the father guilty of a horrendous crime and calling for him to be executed.
18. On the one hand I understand that because there have been so many bizarre stories in the past several years it is easy to jump to conclusions, but on the other hand I have to ask what about the guiding principle in our society that says a person is innocent until proven guilty.
19. What about love? What about compassion? What about understanding and sympathy. Now for all I know this man may be guilty, but I sure bet he could use a friend right now.

20. What about all the people in history who have been presumed guilty and were later found to be innocent?
21. King David was a man who understood what it meant to need a friend. That's why Hushai the Arkite was listed among the most powerful people in all of Israel, because **one of the most powerful things we can possess in life is a friend.**
22. And while this could be a message this morning about making friendships with others around us, I believe what God wants to do is remind us how special and how available a friendship with Jesus is to us.
23. Do you know that you and I can be the King's friend? For some of us it may be difficult to view God as a friend. It may be easier to see him as an authority that controls our life and calls the shots, and there is no denying that that is a part of who God is in our lives. But he also desires to be our friend.
24. **Proverbs 18:24 A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.**
25. Now there is some debate among bible scholars as to whether that is a reference to God or not, but I choose to believe that Jesus wants to be a friend that sticks closer than a brother.
26. I believe **God delights in being our friend.**
27. One of the great songs of history to capture that idea is a song written in 1855 by a man by the name of Joseph M. Scriven. If ever there was a man who needed a friend in Jesus it was Joseph Scriven.
28. Joseph was born and grew up in Ireland. After finishing his education he met and fell in love with the woman of his dreams, but the day before their wedding his fiancé drowns in a freak accident.
29. He was so overcome with grief that he sold everything he had, moved to Canada, and started a new life.
30. While living in Canada he taught school and there fell in love with a beautiful lady by the name of Eliza Rice. They made plans to be married, but just a few weeks before the wedding she became deathly sick.
31. Even though the best doctors were called in she lost her battle with sickness and died again just a few days before they were to be married.
32. Again Joseph was heart broken. In response to this tragedy he devoted his life to helping handicapped children and gave his life to serving others.
33. About 10 years went by and one day he received word that his mother in Ireland was near the point of death, but he didn't have the money to travel and visit her.

34. The only thing he new to do was to write her a letter and hope that it arrived in time before she passed away. With heartache and grief, fearing that he would lose someone else in his life to death, he wrote these words to his mother.

35. What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

Blessed Savior, Thou hast promised Thou wilt all our burdens bear
May we ever, Lord, be bringing all to Thee in earnest prayer.
Soon in glory bright unclouded there will be no need for prayer
Rapture, praise and endless worship will be our sweet portion there.

36. Joseph Scriven had found what king David had found, that there is great value in having a friend.

37. I say again, I believe God wants to be that kind of friend to you and me.

38. And I believe we get a glimpse of what kind of friend Jesus is to us by studying the kind of friend that Hushai the Arkite was to David.

39. Hushai was a friend to David in two ways. He was a friend who stuck with David through the most difficult of times, and he was a friend who stuck with David even when David didn't deserve a friend.

Through the most difficult of times.

1. Now it may seem that the mention of Hushai in 1 Chronicles 27 is just an isolated incident, but the truth is, this isn't the first time we hear of Hushai.
2. The first mention of Hushai comes in 2 Samuel chapter 15.
3. To set the stage for you here, David the king of Israel is on the run for his life because his son Absalom is attempting to take over the kingdom. In truth Absalom is trying to kill his father.
4. Absalom is marching his way up to the city of Jerusalem with a hired army to storm the palace, so David flees, and as he does, it's interesting to see how David's friends respond.

5. What David soon found out was that everybody who says they are your friend isn't really your friend. Because as soon as difficulty presented itself, some of David's friends started making plans to leave him, while others packed their bags to go and join David in his escape.
6. And it is at this point that we begin to see the depth of the friendship that Hushai had with David. Listen to 2 Samuel 15:30-32 But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up. 31 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness." 32 When David arrived at the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite was there to meet him, his robe torn and dust on his head.
7. You will remember that Ahithophel is mentioned in 1 Chronicles chapter 27 as the king's counselor, but here he is defecting to Absalom. He is a traitor, and as David is thinking about and praying about the fact that the people he has made great are now turning their back on him, he looks off in the distance and he sees Hushai the Arkite.
8. Notice how Hushai is dressed. His robe is torn and there is dust on his head. By presenting himself this way to David what Hushai was saying was, I am torn up about this. I love you, and if you are going to suffer, I am going to suffer with you.
9. By meeting him at the summit of the mountain he was also saying, hey I am along for the ride. You're not getting rid of me.
10. But David has a different idea. And beyond just the loyalty that Hushai is showing David, David asks Hushai to do something that only a really close friend would say yes to.
11. 2 Samuel 15:33-34 David said to him, "If you go with me, you will be a burden to me. 34 But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; I was your father's servant in the past, but now I will be your servant,' then you can help me by frustrating Ahithophel's advice.
12. Let's put David's request in perspective here. Hushai runs out to meet David because of his loyalty to the king. But I believe there is also another reason why he runs out to David.
13. Hushai knows that because he is the king's friend that he will not be safe in the city. He knows that his life is in danger. So the safest place he can be is with David.
14. David is a mighty warrior. I believe in truth David didn't need to run for his life. David's army probably could have defeated Absalom's army, the only reason David didn't stay and fight was because he didn't want to harm his son.

15. So Hushai runs to David's safety, but David asks him, go back into the city, and tell Absalom that you will serve him like you served me.
16. In other words trick him and while you're there, confuse the advice of Ahithophel. Also you can be a spy and you can send word to me so that I will know what is going on.
17. You can be my eyes and ears in the throne room.
18. How good a friend was Hushai? Hushai put his life on the line. Not only did he stay with David during a time of great difficulty, but he gave his all.
19. I can only imagine what kind of fear ran through his mind as Hushai went back to the city, stopped to wash the dust off his head and take a bath.
20. Then he got dressed up in his best cloths to present himself to Absalom.
21. I can only imagine that he spent every waking moment thinking, if I get caught, I'm a gonner. Their gonna kill me.
22. But yet Hushai was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.
23. Is it just me or is there not a striking similarity to what Jesus has done for each and every one of us in this room?
24. Jesus Christ was in a place of safety. He was in heaven, secure and in the arms of his father. But one day his father looks over at him and says, there are some people down there in Batesville Arkansas who are going to need a friend.
25. Their going to need a savior. So Jesus came some two thousand years before we were even born, and he laid his life on the line for you and me by dying on a cross.
26. But when he got ready to go back to heaven, he didn't leave us alone again, he sent his Holy Spirit to be with us every step of the way.
27. He sent a Holy Spirit who echo's the words of God to us each and every day **Hebrews 13:5 "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."**
28. That's the kind of friendship we have in Jesus. Those are some of the benefits of being the friend of the king, a friend that won't leave us in the difficult times of life.
29. But there is another element of Hushai's friendship. Hushai was a friend even when

A friend wasn't deserved

1. 1 Chronicles chapter 27 describes Ahithophel as the king's counselor, and it would be normal to label him just a common traitor, but the truth is there was a motive for why Ahithophel betrayed David.

2. You may remember that earlier in his life David had an affair with Bathsheba and got her pregnant. Then to cover up his sin David had Bathsheba's husband Uriah murdered.
3. You will also remember that sin set off a series of terrible events in David's life. The baby that was born out of that affair eventually died.
4. Then later, one of David's own sons, Amnon, raped one of his daughters Tamar who was the sister of Absalom.
5. Later on this same Absalom who is now trying to take the life of David, killed Amnon and was banished from the presence of the king for several years.
6. Because of the distance and separation from his father, Absalom became angry and let his rage build up to the point that now he's trying to kill David and everybody is choosing sides.
7. So Ahithophel chooses to side with Absalom. But why. He was the king's counselor?
8. He chose to side with Absalom because he thinks that David is just getting what he deserves.
9. You see Ahithophel had something at stake in all of this, and that is the fact that Bathsheba who David had an affair with was his granddaughter.
10. 2 Samuel 11:3 identifies Bathsheba as the daughter of Eliam, and 2 Samuel 23:34 identifies Eliam as the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite who was David's counselor.
11. Ahithophel had secretly carried in his heart for years a grudge against David. He felt like David had ruined the life of his granddaughter.
12. She was happy, she was content, she was happily married, and David ruined all of that.
13. Because of David she had to mourn the loss of her husband. Then she had to mourn the loss of her baby not to mention the embarrassment of it all. Her life had been reduced to a life of grief and difficulty.
14. And it was all David's fault. So when David found himself on the run from Absalom, Ahithophel thought, this is my chance to get even with David for what he did to Bathsheba.
15. Now let's go back to the friendship of Hushai. Do you think that Hushai didn't know all of this?
16. Of course Hushai knew everything that was going on. He was the king's friend. Hushai could have just as easily determined, well this is all David's fault and he's just getting what he deserves.

17. But Hushai didn't act that way. He remained loyal to David even though David was suffering for his own sin.
18. Again, I can't help but see the parallel with the kind of friend we have in Jesus.
19. Most of the time when we suffer, we suffer because of the mistakes we have made, and the failures and sins we have committed. Not all the time, but a lot of the time.
20. In truth it was our sin that caused Jesus to have to hang on a cross and die.
21. We are responsible. We deserve punishment. We deserve punishment from God, but instead what we get is the wonderful friendship and companionship of a loving God who cares for us more deeply than we will ever know.
22. That's what it means to be a friend of the king. We get a friend even when we don't deserve a friend.

Conclusion:

1. 1 Chronicles 27:33 Hushai the Arkite was the king's friend.

2. I've got to tell you, I don't think I will ever look at that little verse the same again.
3. Who knew that 7 little words could carry so much meaning?
4. Are you taking advantage of the friendship you have in Jesus?
5. Are you living like the friend of the King?
6. Are difficulties blinding you to who you really are in Jesus?
7. Are failures keeping you from enjoying your place in Jesus?
8. Is sin separating you from the friendship you could have in Jesus?
9. Friendship is your place. If you don't feel like the friend of God, why not? What's keeping you from being his friend?
10. Prayer.
11. If there is some sin that is separating you from friendship with Jesus. Deal with it. Right now.
12. Confess that sin (admit it). And then repent of it (allow that grief to change future behavior).
13. Speak truth to yourself. What do I mean by that?
14. Some of you have been led to believe you are unlovable. But it is a lie. Speak truth to the lie.

15. Proverbs 18:24 A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
16. Despite your feelings, declare that you believe the truth. Speak truth to the lie.
17. Thank the Lord for his friendship as an act of faith.
18. What a friend we have in Jesus.