

II Samuel Lesson 20

II Samuel Chapter 20

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Email: mail@KjvBibleStudies2.net

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Memory verses for this week: *Job 12:14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.*

Introduction: More consequences of the civil war with Absalom continue. A different Benjamite, Sheba, incited a new revolt. Meanwhile Joab murders Amasa. Joab in turn suppresses the revolt of Sheba.

I. Political Situation For David Is Still Unsure

2 Sam 20:1 And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel.

2 Sam 20:2 So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

2 Sam 20:3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.

In verse 1, it is noted that this Sheba is called a man of Belial. Belial is essentially a name of the devil. It referred to a wicked man. Though unstated, this Sheba may have been a part of Absalom's rebellion. As a Benjamite, he may also have been still sore that David had removed the kingdom from the house of Saul of that tribe.

He sounded a trumpet which was a public signal announcing that as far as he was concerned, he wanted nothing to do with the son of Jesse. The phrase "the son of Jesse" likely was one of contempt not even giving David the honor of mentioning his name. He urged all disgruntled with David to desert to him.

Verse 2 indicates that David had not as yet arrived at Jerusalem. It would appear that many of the men who came to meet him as he crossed Jordan were not enthusiastic. Those of diluted loyalty turned away from him. The tribe of

Judah showed their loyalty to their king as he journeyed up from the Jordan River valley to Jerusalem. When David had been forced to flee the city, he had left ten of his concubines in charge of his palace. Absalom had publicly defiled them and humiliated them. David took care of them for the rest of their lives, but he was not intimate with any of them.

J. Vernon McGee in his commentary pointed out how undependable the children of Israel had become to King David.

It is amazing how faithless and undependable the children of Israel were. Some people might say, "Well, that was a crude day before man was developed and civilized." I would like to ask those people a question. Do you think things are any better today? It is interesting that the president of this country, or any public official, can make some little statement that should not have been said and, when a poll is taken, they find out that his popularity has so diminished that he cannot be elected to office again. This can happen to any officeholder regardless of his party affiliation. That proves just how fickle the mob can be; it shows how fickle all of us are. God knows our hearts.

Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Whose heart is this verse speaking about? The heart of a brutal dictator? No. It is speaking about your heart and mine. Wicked things are in the human heart. The apostle Paul could say in Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." The ten tribes of Israel followed Sheba in his rebellion.

II. Joab Murders Amasa

2 Sam 20:4 Then said the king to Amasa, Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present.

2 Sam 20:5 So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah: but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.

2 Sam 20:6 And David said to Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom: take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and escape us.

2 Sam 20:7 And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

Because Sheba's revolt was already brewing, David ordered Amasa to call up the men of Judah for action within three days. For reasons not disclosed, Amasa was unable to do so in the appointed time. Verse 6 finds David clearly worried about the extent of Sheba's revolt. He ordered Abishai, a longstanding general (and nephew of his) to take the forces at hand to deal with Sheba. Included in this quickly assembled force were Joab's men. (David had apparently removed Joab from his position as chief of the general staff because of his killing of Absalom).

Also David's palace guard (the Cherethites and the Pelethites) along with all other warriors available set out to pursue after Sheba. David wanted to nip this rebellion in the bud before Sheba could occupy a fortified city and thus have military strength.

2 Sam 20:8 When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.

2 Sam 20:9 And Joab said to Amasa, Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him.

2 Sam 20:10 But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.

It is apparent that Joab, though demoted, was still in this fighting force. **Amasa was the one who led David's forces.** Joab was wearing a loose garment girded with a belt. He apparently was not dressed for battle, but went anyway when the opportunity arose. He had evidently hastily fastened a sheath upon this belt and stuck a sword in it. However, the sword was too small for the sheath. It fell out when they were by the large rock outcropping at Gibeon. Perhaps in sarcasm, perhaps in feigned friendship, Joab grabbed Amasa by his beard to kiss him. However, Amasa was naive to the murderous intent of Joab who ran a sword under his ribs and killed him.

Stabbing him in that place evidently allowed the sword to pierce his heart. He evidently then ripped the sword down in such a way as to cause the intestines of Amasa to fall out. Having accomplished murder born of jealousy and hatred, Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.

Matthew Henry said this about Amasa.

We have here Amasa's fall just as he began to rise. He was nephew to David

(ch. 17:25), had been Absalom's general and commander-in-chief of his rebellious army, but, that being routed, he came over into David's interest, upon a promise that he should be general of his forces instead of Joab. Sheba's rebellion gives David an occasion to fulfil his promise sooner than he could wish, but Joab's envy and emulation rendered its fulfillment of ill consequence both to him and David.

- I. Amasa has a commission to raise forces for the suppressing of Sheba's rebellion, and is ordered to raise them with all possible expedition, v. 4. It seems, the men of Judah, though forward to attend the king's triumphs, were backward enough to fight his battles; else, when they were all in a body attending him to Jerusalem, they might immediately have pursued Sheba, and have crushed that cockatrice in the egg. But most love a loyalty, as well as a religion, that is cheap and easy. Many boast of their being akin to Christ that yet are very loth to venture for him. Amasa is sent to assemble the men of Judah within three days; but he finds them so backward and unready that he cannot do it within the time appointed (v. 5), though the promotion of Amasa, who had been their general under Absalom, was very obliging to them, and a proof of the clemency of David's government.

II. Upon Amasa's delay, Abishai, the brother of Joab, is ordered to take the guards and standing forces, and with them to pursue Sheba (v. 6, 7), for nothing could be of more dangerous consequence than to give him time. David gives these orders to Abishai, because he resolves to mortify Joab, and degrade him, not so much, I doubt, for the blood of Abner, which he had shed basely, as for the blood of Absalom, which he had shed justly and honorably. "Now (says bishop Hall) Joab smarteth for a loyal disobedience. How slippery are the stations of earthly honours and subject to continual mutability! Happy are those who are in favour with him in whom there is no shadow of change." Joab, without orders, though in disgrace, goes along with his brother, knowing he might be serviceable to the public, or perhaps now meditating the removal of his rival

III. Sheba's Revolt is Suppressed

2 Sam 20:11 And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go after Joab.

2 Sam 20:12 And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

2 Sam 20:13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

2 Sam 20:14 And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Bethmaachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him.

2 Sam 20:15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah, and they cast up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench: and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down.

A lieutenant of Joab announced for all loyal to Joab and David to follow after Joab to the battle ahead. As other soldiers headed north to fight Sheba, in coming upon the body of Amasa, they stopped to gape. Joab's lieutenant dragged his body to the side and covered him with a cloth. This removed the distraction.

In verse 14, we have the record on the ongoing pursuit of Sheba. Joab's forces pursued Sheba northward through Israel all the way to Bethmaachah. This is in the far north of Israel near the city of Dan on the Lebanese border. It appears that a community of Berites joined with Joab in pursuit of Sheba. Joab's men cornered Sheba and his forces in the city of Bethmaachah. They laid siege to the city and made preparations to attack. The mention of them casting a bank against the city likely refers to building mounds adjacent to the walls thereof to batter from and shoot arrows into the city.

2 Sam 20:16 Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.

2 Sam 20:17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.

2 Sam 20:18 Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.

2 Sam 20:19 I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?

2 Sam 20:20 And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy.

2 Sam 20:21 The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

2 Sam 20:22 Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they

cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

A woman in the city interceded, wanting to know why their city was about to be destroyed. This elder state's woman of the city (also known as Abel) eloquently and diplomatically enquired why Joab was about to destroy a city of Israel. Joab replied, **"Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. "Joab also informed her of Sheba's revolt against King David and if the city would deliver Sheba, they would be left alone. And the woman said unto Joab,"Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall."**

Verse 22 shows that the woman had little trouble persuading the men of the city to remove the head of Sheba which was thrown over the wall to Joab. As promised, Joab signaled his men to retreat. They packed up and returned to Jerusalem. How he explained his murder of Amasa to David is not recorded.

2 Sam 20:23 Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites:

2 Sam 20:24 And Adoram was over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder:

2 Sam 20:25 And Sheva was scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests:

2 Sam 20:26 And Ira also the Jairite was a chief ruler about David.

Note is made of the reorganized government of David. Though David was king, his reign was weak at this point. He likely deemed it wise to place Joab back as chief of his general staff. Although a loose cannon, Joab had proved loyal to David. Other notables are mentioned such as Benaiah continuing in his position as palace guard. Adoram became the head of the newly created department of internal revenue. Jehoshaphat and Sheva continued in their old positions as did Zadok and Abiathar as priests. Ira the Jairite became what amounted to chief of staff for David or possibly a type of prime minister. Although battered, David was restored to his throne. The bitter harvest of his sin years earlier had finally come to pass. David paid a terrible price for his sin with Bathsheba. He of the flesh reaped bitter corruption.

In the KJV Commentary, it said this about Joab.

*Sheba did finally enter into a walled city at **Abel ... Beth-maachah**. This city was located in the extreme northern part of Israel near Dan. Here **Joab** attempted to batter down the **wall**. During the siege a woman of*

wisdom bargained with Joab for the preservation of the city. Joab spared the city for **the head of Sheba**. Once **Sheba** had been killed, the siege was called off; and the army went back to **Jerusalem**

While David was a saved man, he reaped the bitter harvest of his fleshly deeds.

Rom 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Rom 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Rom 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Rom 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

KJV Bible Studies are prepared and distributed free of charge. The lessons may not be sold without consent. If you have questions or wish to discuss the lessons, or possibly need help in finding Jesus Christ as your Personal Lord and Savior, contact us at the email below.

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Email: mail@KjvBibleStudies2.net

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.