

## 37. The Book of 2Samuel—20:1-26 Pt.3

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### *“Rebellion, Revenge and Reason” Pt.3*

(4/23/17)

As we come to 2Samuel 20 we come to the last chapter chronologically in the life of David as recorded in this book (1Kings 1 & 2 records the end of his life).

The last four chapters of 2Samuel are considered appendixes to David’s life and reign.

In chapter 19 of 2Samuel, David is returning to Jerusalem to retake the throne after the revolution led by his son Absalom was defeated.

As we have already seen—not everyone was happy David has come back as king and chapter 20 chronicles the unrest and aftermath surrounding his return.

Three weeks ago, we began a study in 2Samuel 20 which we built around two main points—  
1. The Passage Explained; and 2. The Principles Extracted.

After we finished explaining the passage, we then started extracting the principles.

There are three principles embodied in three persons: 1. The Rebellion of Sheba; 2. The Revenge of Joab; and 3. The Reason of a Wise Woman

## II. The Principles Extracted

### C. The Reason of a Wise Woman—v.14-22

#### **2 Samuel 20:14-15 (NKJV)**

**<sup>14</sup> And he went through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth Maachah and all the Berites. So they were gathered together and also went after *Sheba*. <sup>15</sup> Then they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth Maachah; and they cast up a siege mound against the city, and it stood by the rampart. And all the people who *were* with Joab battered the wall to throw it down.**

This siege mound was a ramp that was built up with dirt and stones which allowed an attacking army to get higher up on the wall so the battering ram could more easily punch a hole thru it.

#### **2 Samuel 20:16-19 (NKJV)**

**<sup>16</sup> Then a wise woman cried out from the city, "Hear, Hear! Please say to Joab, 'Come nearby, that I may speak with you.' " <sup>17</sup> When he had come near to her, the woman said, "*Are you Joab?*" He answered, "*I am.*" Then she said to him, "Hear the words of your maidservant." And he answered, "I am listening." <sup>18</sup> So she spoke, saying, "They used to talk in former times, saying, 'They shall surely seek *guidance* at Abel,' and so they would end *disputes*. <sup>19</sup> *I am among the peaceable and faithful in Israel. You seek to destroy a city and a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?*"**

In the Hebrew she is indicting Joab, she is bringing charges against him (as though she was a prosecuting attorney and he was on trial).

She is saying to Joab,

*"This is a faithful and peaceable city in Israel—one with a glorious past.*

*This is a city that has been known as a place where wise people lived, a city that many came to, to have difficult questions answered and problems solved.*

*I myself am one of the peaceful and faithful among the mothers of Israel—what have we done that you seek to destroy us?"*

Joab is so determined to kill Sheba that he doesn't care about the collateral damage (loss of innocent lives)—where as this wise woman pleads for a 'surgical strike' and that Joab would reconsider and target only the guilty man.

In other words, would he destroy a whole city and its inhabitants just to judge and kill one man?

At this point this woman's plea for her town sounds very much like Abraham when he pled with the Lord for Lot and his family to be saved from the judgment that God was about to bring on the city of Sodom—"Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (Gen.18:23)

Peter, in his second epistle chapter 2 verse 9, answers that question clearly when he said—"*the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment*" (Comment)

**2 Samuel 20:20-22 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> And Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy! <sup>21</sup> That *is* not so. But a man from the mountains of Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, has raised his hand against the king, against David. Deliver him only, and I will depart from the city." So the woman said to Joab, "Watch, his head will be thrown to you over the wall." <sup>22</sup> Then the woman in her wisdom went to all the people. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and threw *it* out to Joab. Then he blew a trumpet, and they withdrew from the city, every man to his tent. So Joab returned to the king at Jerusalem.

As I read these verses, one of the things that stood out to me was how the Holy Spirit makes it a point to call this woman 'wise' twice in this passage (v.16 & v.22).

Why was she wise, in what way was she acting wisely?

*"Well, she was wise because she pushed the idea that it was better for Joab to only kill one guilty man and let all the other law abiding citizens of her city live, rather than kill everyone to get to one rebel."*

Okay, but let's be honest, it doesn't take 'Solomonic' wisdom to figure that out—I mean, that's not so much wise as it is just plain *obvious*!

No, there's more here than that, highlighted by how the Holy Spirit makes it a point to call this woman wise (twice) for the way she handled the situation—something that goes beyond the obvious.

First of all, the Bible has a lot to say about wisdom and how important it is that we seek it and walk in it in all matters of life—the whole book of Proverbs stresses that as does Paul.

**Colossians 4:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> Walk in wisdom toward those *who are* outside, redeeming the time.

**Ephesians 5:15 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise...

The Greek word translated *circumspectly* carries with it the idea of “*precision and accuracy*”—but also has the idea of *looking, examining, and investigating* something with great care.

But this Greek word further includes with it the idea of *alertness*—as one author put it—

*“As believers walk through the spiritual mine field of the world, they are to be constantly alert to every danger that Satan puts in their way”.*

So Paul is telling us, “*See that you walk (live your Christian life) carefully with great precision—looking all around and giving strict attention to all things as one might do when passing through a very dangerous place.*”

Paul went on to say in Ephesians 5, “*If you do this you will be wise and not a fool*”.

Of course obedience to God's Word in general is how we walk in wisdom.

*"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...the fear of the Lord is to hate evil."* (Prov. 9:10; 8:12)

The Bible says the reason people live wicked lives is because—there is *"no fear of God before their eyes."* (Psalm 36:1)

In other words, the reason they live lives of wickedness and rebellion is because they don't believe a day of judgment is coming—they don't think they will have to stand before a Holy God someday and give an account for how they lived their lives on the earth.

Therefore they don't walk in wisdom—on the contrary they walk in wickedness and rebellion against God and the commandments He has placed in His Word.

**Proverbs 1:29-33 (NKJV)** [Wisdom is speaking here]

<sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the Lord, <sup>30</sup> They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke. <sup>31</sup> Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with their own fancies. <sup>32</sup> For the turning away of the simple will slay them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them; <sup>33</sup> But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, And will be secure, without fear of evil."

The wisdom spoken of here is knowing and applying the Word of God—anyone who doesn't is a fool.

**Psalms 19:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> The law of the Lord *is* perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple...

Okay, but getting back to the wise woman in our passage this morning—once again, why is she called *wise*?

First of all, let's start with her own words—she said in v.19, “**I am among the peaceable and faithful in Israel.**”

The idea of her being among “the faithful in Israel”—is her way of saying she was faithful to her king (David) and to the God of Israel.

In other words, she was loyal to the king (unlike rebellious Sheba) and obedient to God and His Word.

Who knows if David had already written Psalm 31 by this time and she was making reference to it in her words to Joab—

**Psalm 31:23 (NKJV)**

<sup>23</sup> Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! *For* the LORD preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person. [Sheba?]

Or Psalm 101, another Psalm of David—

**Psalm 101:6, 8 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> My eyes *shall be* on the faithful of the land, That they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, He shall serve me...<sup>8</sup> Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land, That I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the LORD.

So, she was wise because she lived her life as one who was faithful to her God and to her king.

We could apply that into our lives by saying—it is wise to live a life faithful to our King (Jesus) and to the God of the Bible.

Living a life of rebellion and sin is the most foolish, unwise thing a person can do. (Elaborate)

So first, she was wise because she lived a faithful life; and secondly, she was wise because she lived a peaceable life (v.19)—even taking the role of a ‘peacemaker’ in our passage.

**Matthew 5:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> Blessed *are* the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

A peacemaker is one that not only tries to resolve conflict and bring peace between people (horizontal peace).

Another kind of peacemaker, like the one Jesus spoke of in Matt.5:9, is a person who seeks to help people make peace with God—this is vertical peacemaking or more commonly what we call evangelism.

**Romans 5:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... (Explain)

**Daniel 12:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. (soul winner)

**Proverbs 11:30 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup> The fruit of the righteous *is a tree of life*, And he who wins souls *is wise*.

One author said it well in commenting on this subject—

*1. It is hardly possible to estimate too highly the worth of peace among men. 2. Those who would make peace between others must themselves be at peace with God, with their own hearts, and with their neighbors. The peacemaker must not be a peace-breaker. 3. The greatest Peacemaker the world has ever seen is Jesus Christ, who is “our Peace” (Eph. 2:14). 4. In proportion as we partake of his spirit we shall endeavor to heal all unholy strife and promote “peace on earth.”*

Alright, let’s wrap this up by looking at what this story teaches us about wisdom and folly.

Again, the Holy Spirit is lifting the woman in our passage up as someone who, when confronted with a serious problem, comes across as one who demonstrates great wisdom—let's see how.

### **First of all, the woman saw the problem realistically**

I mean the danger was clear enough to everyone in the town of Abel, but there may have been some false hopes of rescue or maybe that Joab was only trying to 'scare them' and not really intending to destroy the city, after all *"we're good people why would he want to destroy us?!"*

When you're facing a crisis of some kind it is wise to deal with the problem head on and not enter into wishful thinking or fanciful hopes that the problem really isn't as bad as it seems or that it will 'go away' on its own or resolve itself—this kind of 'burying of your head in the sand' never leads to a good outcome.

Unfortunately, that kind of thinking characterizes many people in our country when it comes to eternal judgment. (Explain)

### **Secondly, she did something about it**

She didn't wait for somebody else to act but took it upon herself to do something.

All too often when a major problem or crisis or conflict hits—many people are paralyzed with inaction, afraid to do something for fear they're going to do the wrong thing and make things worse.

Look, pray (absolutely the first thing we do)—but then step out in faith and act to solve the problem or resolve the conflict!

So many Christians are waiting for God to do something for them, but often God is waiting for them to step out in faith and do something for Him.

This woman was wise because, not only did she look at the situation *realistically*—she stepped out in faith to do something about it *practically* to resolve it.

She argued her case, challenging the rightness of Joab’s actions; he was forced to agree with what she said—so a compromise was reached.

**And finally, she took steps to fulfil the terms agreed upon—in other words she kept her word**

One author said,

*“Wisdom is a combination of intelligent insight and bold action. The Old Testament rarely separates the intellectual from the pragmatic: wisdom is not simply knowing but also doing.”*

Thus, this conflict comes to a satisfactory end with a minimum of casualties (only Sheba lost his head)—all because of the intervention of a ‘wise woman’.

She was wise because she was faithful to her king (unlike rebellious Sheba) and obedient to her God—the God of Israel.

Also, she was wise because she was a peacemaker and not a troublemaker (like Sheba who tried to stir up division and hatred towards God’s king—David).

And finally, she was wise because she was a woman of action, not willing to just ‘sit there’ until the people of her city were slaughtered by an overzealous general.

How about you? Are you, like this woman, a wise person or a foolish person?