**SHEBA REBELS AGAINST DAVID**

**(A Troublemaker Sheba and A Wise Woman)**

2 Samuel 20:1- 26

Key verse 20:19

**“We are the peaceful and faithful in Israel. You are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why do you want to swallow up the Lord’s inheritance?”**

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(Greeting) Good morning. It is very nice weather today, and we are blessed to come to our church to listen to God’s words this morning. Thank you for coming. One of my senior coworkers in my job used to say to us, “Thank you for coming.” It was not usual to say that at work because we did not come to McDonald's or restaurants. We came to work. But he was an older man, and he liked to say it. And I wanted to use his words, “Thank you for coming.” Today’s passage is one small chapter in the Old Testament. Don’t expect too much from today’s message. But expect much from God and the holy spirit.

(Prayer) Heavenly father. Thank you for our Sunday worship service and your passage, 2 Samuel 20 today. We pray that we listen to what you want to say to us. We pray that God’s light shines on our hearts through your words personally. I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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In the previous passage, 2 Samuel 19, King David returned to Jerusalem after a forced exile caused by his son Absalom’s rebellion. There were four people: Barzillai, Shimei, Mephibosheth, Ziba, and ten tribes of Israel and the tribe of Judah who met the king. Each one met David with a different attitude.

In this passage, 2 Samuel 20, David faced another rebellion. There were five people in this chapter. Those were Sheba, Amasa, Abishai, Joab, and a wise woman in Abel.

**Part 1. A troublemaker Sheba in rebellion (1 - 13)**

The nation Israel went through a civil war between Absalom’s army and David’s army in the previous chapter. The country was divided between Absalom and David. Even after Absalom died, the whole nation was not united in the kingship of David, as we can see in the previous passage, chapter 19. Some people were arguing about who would bring back King David and some people were busy trying to make themselves safe.

Look at verse 1. Then a man named Sheba suddenly sounded the trumpet and shouted, “We have no share in David, no part in Jesse’s son! Every man to his tent, Israel!” In his words, all the men of Israel deserted David and followed Sheba. This was an important moment when the nation had confusion and chaos. This one man’s announcement stirred the whole country. The entire Israelites, except Judah's people, followed his words to betray King David in the 2nd rebellion.

In Matthew 3, John the Baptist preached the message of repentance by saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” By his words, all people from Jerusalem and Judea came to him to repent. In this case, one spiritual leader, John the Baptist's announcement, led this movement of repentance in the country, just like the Asbury revival this year.

But in this chapter, the opposite case happened with the man Sheba. Who was Sheba? Verse 1 called him a troublemaker. According to the dictionary, a troublemaker is a person who consciously or unconsciously causes trouble. Sometimes, we see someone who is a troublemaker in our school or job. Naturally, people do not want to cause trouble because trouble can put me or others in trouble. Then why does someone want to make trouble? The person might lack healthy self-confidence or grow up without proper family love.

And in verse 1, Sheba was a Benjamite. So, he was from the tribe of King Saul. In the first sentence, Sheba denied David’s kingship, “We have no share in David.” And he used the name of David’s father, Jesse, for his family background. Jesse was a humble farmer. So what happened after Sheba’s shouting announcement?

Look at verse 2. All the men, ten tribes of Israel, deserted David to follow Sheba. But the men of Judah stayed by David. This showed who genuinely supported King David.

In verse 3, we can see what David had done for his ten concubines whom Absalom harmed. The ten concubines were kept in confinement until they died, living as widows. David could not be their husband again, and they could not remarry. They suffered for the rest of their lives because of Absalom’s and David’s sin. So we can see the result of sin, the suffering of people around us.

In verse 4, David gave Amasa a mission as a military general to summon all the men of Judah in 3 days. However, Amasa did not complete his task on time. Amasa was a nephew of David and a cousin of Joab. Amasa’s mother was Abigail, a sister of King David based on **1 Chronicles 2:16-17**. Amasa was the commander in the army when Absalom rebelled against David. At the same time, Joab was the army commander for David(**2 Samuel 17:25**). But after Absalom died, David reappointed Amasa as his military commander in place of Joab on **2 Samuel 19:13**. It was an act of forgiveness and grace by king David toward Amasa.

But in verse 5, we can see Amasa not only kept the three days but also did not finish summoning Judah. It was Amasa’s first mission from King David as the military commander, but he did not finish his job. It revealed that Amasa was not thankful for David’s favor and forgiveness to him.

Look at verse 6. David ordered Abishai to pursue Sheba before he went inside a fortified city. David knew that time was important. In **2 Samuel 17:2**, Ahithophel advised Absalom to attack David immediately. David had the same idea to pursue Sheba as soon as possible. So Joab and his men went out to pursue Sheba.

**Part 2. Joab killed Amasa (8 - 13)**

Look at verse 8. Amasa came to meet Joab and his army in Gibeon. Joab was wearing military clothes because he was on a military mission. And there was a dagger on his belt. The dagger dropped out as Joab stepped forward.

As Amasa approached Joab without a guard, Joab killed Amasa with his small knife while he kissed Amasa on the cheek. Here, we can see Joab continuously killing defenseless people through 2 Samuel. Joab killed Abner, the commander of Saul’s army, for the death of Joab’s brother Asahel in **2 Samuel 3:27**. Joab pretended to discuss with him in a room. Joab also killed Absalom, son of David, who was defenseless, hanging by his long hair in an oak tree. Joab disobeyed David’s order, “Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake.”

Amasa’s dead body was removed from the road, and Joab and his army continued pursuing Sheba.

**Part 3. A wise woman in a city Abel (14 - 26)**

Look at verse 14. Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel and gathered soldiers for him in a city called Abel Beth Maakah. Now all the army of Joab besieged Sheba in Abel Beth Maakah.(**Image: besieged city**) Sheba and his followers were hiding in the city. Joab’s army was attacking the city. They built a siege ramp against the city and destroyed the wall.

Look at verse 16. A wise woman in the city wanted to speak to Joab. She tried to rescue her city. And she dared to talk to her enemy's military general Joab. And Joab came near the woman. Their actual conversation is recorded in this passage. It was a dramatic and serious conversation because they were at the frontline of the war.

I was never in the war, and even never in the army. So, I can not understand the life and death situation in the war. But I went to job interviews several times, which was a tense situation. I had to watch what I had to say and how I had to answer simply and correctly. Since the job interview is about being hired or going home, the talk between Joab and the wise woman was about who will live and who will die.

And amazingly, the bible recorded their actual conversation. Their conversation is the whole content of the passage, so you don’t have to listen to my message. Many conversations were recorded throughout the Bible, from God and Adam to Jesus and Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, and Saint Paul.

Let’s read their conversation together in turn. Since I am a man, I play the part of Joab, and everyone reads the part of the wise woman. Let’s go.

**“Are you Joab?”**

**“I am.”**

**“Listen to what your servant has to say.”**

**“I am listening.”**

**“Long ago, they used to say, ‘Get your answer at Abel,’ and that settled it. We are peaceful and faithful in Israel. You are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why do you want to swallow up the Lord’s inheritance?”**

**“Far be it from me! Far be it from me to swallow up or destroy! That is not the case. A man named Sheba, son of Bikri, from the hill country of Ephraim, has lifted up his hand against the king, against David. Hand over this one man, and I’ll withdraw from the city.”**

**“His head will be thrown to you from the wall.”**

So Joab and the wise woman agreed with one thing from their conversation. It was the death of Sheba.

Let’s look at verse 22. Now, the woman went to all the people with her wise advice, and they cut off the head of Sheba. This could be also risky for her because Sheba was the military leader with his soldiers inside the city. And the citizens in the town might disagree with her. And Sheba’s soldiers would fight back against her. But all the people in the city agreed with her and followed her wise advice. This means Sheba’s followers agreed with her, too. The woman was wise, but the result of her wise advice was not in her control as we experience all the results of our ideas and efforts are out of our hands. The result was in God’s control.

This dismissed the war. Joab sounded the trumpet. Sheba also sounded the trumpet at the beginning of the chapter when he started rebellion. But Joab’s trumpet was the sound of victory and peace. Joab’s army dispersed from the city and returned home.

In this story, one troublemaker started the civil war, and one wise woman ended it. The bible called Sheba a troublemaker and called the woman wise. The meaning of wise in the dictionary is ‘having the power of discerning and judging properly as to what is true or right.’ The woman had the power of discerning and judging the war situation and confronted Joab. And confrontation is a very hard thing to do, especially in a war situation. In a war, the reason for the war is very important. I learned the term is called “Casus Belli”. “전쟁 명분(戰爭 名分)” from google search. She had to reason with Joab’s casus Belli 전쟁 명분. She mentioned the Lord’s inheritance. In verse 19, she said "Why do you want to swallow up the Lord’s inheritance?” She recognized her city Abel as the Lord’s inheritance. The city and the people were owned by God. So it was wrong to destroy God’s people and city.

And Joab and the woman agreed on the problem's source, Sheba.

Like this short story, the entire bible teaches us about human history and the world. The source of the problem and troublemaker is sin. Sin entered the world through the fall of Adam in Genesis 3 just like Sheba entered the city Abel in his rebellion. “You will be like God.”, the snake said to them. They wanted to be their own God as Sheba wanted to become a king himself. It was a rebellion against God.

Sin caused trouble in everything in the world. Guilt, shame, and fear marked the relationship between people and God. And the result of sin is death, just like the possible result of the city of Abel. **Romans 5:12** says, “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people because all sinned.” When Sheba entered the city, Abel, the faithful and peaceful people in the city were in great danger of death.

But God promised the solution right after sin in the same chapter, **Genesis 3:15**. Let’s read this verse together. “And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” God’s promised one will crush Satan's head and defeat sin. God was wise to give his promise to the world. And God’s promise and solution came to us.

Just like one man, Sheba started the rebellion, and one man started sin in the world, God’s promised one man finished the sin. Let’s read **Romans 5:19**. “For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.” So, as we can blame the one man who started sin, we can also thank the one man who finished sin.

God’s promise is about this one man. The gospel from the bible means good news. The good news is not only about going to heaven. The gospel is about one person. God could have announced in heaven, “All people’s sin will be forgiven, and you have to believe it,” But God wanted to send a person as the solution to the problem of sin. This was the wisdom of God based on **1 Corinthians 1:24**.

The tribes of Israel who followed Sheba could have blamed Sheba after he died. But they had a rebellious mind toward David, so they followed Sheba. They could not blame only Sheba because they also followed him. Sheba was the enemy in the war, and their rebellious mind was the internal enemy in their heart. We also recognize sin as our enemy in our hearts.

As Jesus defeated sin on the cross, we do not follow sin, but Jesus the true king from God. **Romans 6:11** says, “In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” After Sheba died, everyone went home. No one will follow the dead man. In the same way, we cannot follow sin because we are dead to sin. We are alive to God in Jesus as the woman recognized her and her city as the Lord’s inheritance. The verse said, count yourselves. In other bible version, consider yourselves. The wise woman considered herself and her city as the Lord’s inheritance, not as the follower of Sheba. This was how she thinks by her faith in God. We have to think the same way and live the same way in our faith. God’s words change our thinking, and when our thinking changes, our life is changed.

We must follow our true king from God just like the tribe of Judah followed king David.

I also have a rebellious mind like Sheba.

For one example, I hated the Korean education system when I grew up from elementary school to college. “행복은 성적순이 아니잖아요!’ “Happiness is not based on the school scores!” was how I felt in my school days in Korea. I went to a cartoon & animation school after I graduated from my college in 2001. I wanted to do what I wanted to do for the first time in my life. But both my feet were injured and they caused my neck and back pains since 2010. I could not do what I wanted to do.

My rebellion is not putting God in the place of God in my life. I was trying to act as God over my life. I pursued what I wanted to do over what God wanted me to do. Spiritually God puts me where I am supposed to be through his words. Remain in Jesus and live for him. I have to follow the true king whom God appointed over me.

I pray that we all live a new life of victory through him, dying to our sinful nature. Thank you for listening. I started the message with Thank you for coming. I want to end the message with Thank you for listening with your patience. I will pray.

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(Closing prayer) Heavenly father. Thank you for the son whom you sent to us to free us from the power of sin. Your words are guiding us in the right way and your words change our thinking and life. Help us to follow you and listen to you. I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.