

## A Study of 2 Samuel 20

### I. Outline.

1. Sheba, another REBEL, calls Israel to abandon the reign of David and follow him (2 Sam 20.1-2).
2. David makes provision for the ten concubines (2 Sam 20.3).
3. David commands Amasa first, then Abishai to assemble forces to defeat Sheba; Joab (with a deceptive move) kills Amasa, takes back command of David's forces, and pursues Sheba with David's forces (2 Sam 20.4-13).
4. Joab pursues Sheba to Abel and Beth Maachah and cast up a siege mound (2 Sam 20.14-15).
5. A WISE WOMAN prevents the loss of many lives by interceding and having the rebel, Sheba, eliminated (2 Sam 20.16-22).
6. A list of officers under King David (2 Sam 20.23-26).

### II. Summary.

Strong emotions remain among the northern tribes evidently because of what they perceived as David showing favoritism toward his tribe: **Judah**. David really had nothing to do with it, but there were obviously remnants of the divisive spirit that came from conflict between King Saul and David (or Judah and the rest of the tribes). This reflects back to the lack of support for David among those northern tribes when David became king at first over ONLY Judah. More recently, those feelings were added to when some of the tribes of Israel were not allowed to participate in bringing David safely across the Jordan River as a part of a celebration. They seem to have been crowded out by the massive appearance of the men of Judah. Feelings of jealousy and being objects of neglect fed the divisive spirit that had been developing over about 40 years. Sheba suggested and many seemed ready to acknowledge that they had no part with David's kingdom. David's priority upon returning to Jerusalem was to make provision for his ten concubines whom he had left to take care of the property as he fled Jerusalem. Then, after having offered to the elders of Judah to make Amasa head of the armed forces, David keeps his word by assigning Amasa the responsibility of gathering the troops to remove Sheba as a threat to the kingdom. The warrior David knew that time was not on his side if someone was gathering strength to oppose his reign, so when Amasa did not meet the deadline, he assigned the task to Abishai. Apparently Amasa continued to round up the troops and met up with Abishai and Joab's forces at Gibeon. Here Amasa was brutally murdered by Joab and Joab takes charge of the forces leading them on to find Sheba. Abel and Beth Maachah is the place Sheba had fled. Joab was ready to destroy the city thinking they were supporting Sheba. However, a WISE WOMAN intervened and made it possible for ONLY Sheba to lose his life. This accomplished, Joab dismissed the warriors and reported back to David that the mission had been accomplished.

### III. Chronology/Lists/Links.

**BIBLE PERIOD:** The Period of the United Kingdom. From Thompson's Chain Reference Bible, the date of this chapter is estimated to be: **1023 B.C.**, p. 336.

*If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods*, please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/wl79hp7>

You can read an excellent article on Chronology from Wayne Jackson here:

<https://tinyurl.com/wylvljh>

**LINKS:** *These links are to the writings of men and not to inspired Scripture, thus care and caution in weighing the conclusions is always wise. Some might not be online links, but listing of material commonly available in books and publications.*

- Burton Coffman: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/2-samuel-20.html>
- Adam Clarke's Commentary: [https://biblehub.com/commentaries/clarke/2\\_samuel/20.htm](https://biblehub.com/commentaries/clarke/2_samuel/20.htm)
- JFB: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/jamieson-fausset-brown/2-samuel/2-samuel-20.html>

#### IV. Aids in Exposition.

1. **2 Samuel 20.1-2.** Judah and the ten tribes had strong contention at Gilgal over the disrespect the ten felt as Judah came to the river to bring David to Jerusalem (2 Sam 19.43 speaks about the tone of the discussion using the word **FIERCER** to describe Judah's words). Even to the extent that an evil man named Sheba could so soon divide the nation once again. It must have been just some representatives of the ten tribes who joined in with Sheba at the first. He did not seem to have had much success raising any great army to support his cause. As he headed north with whatever troops he had, he would likely have been trying to gain more support. His main goal seems to have been to put distance between himself and the forces David would surely raise to come after him.
2. **2 Samuel 20.3.** Coffman seems upset with the treatment David gave these women, but I think it was more a matter of that ancient culture. Of course, David certainly had no business having more than one wife or sexual partner (my only comfort is Acts 17.30). But, personally, I am confident that these women were treated well. It is true also as Coffman point out that David having concubines set an ungodly precedent for Solomon who followed him.
3. **2 Samuel 20.4-13.** David gave Amasa his first assignment as troop commander and set a deadline for him to accomplish it. For some reason Amasa did not meet the deadline. Coffman quotes Willis as he suggests three possible reasons and then Coffman adds a fourth: (1) he did not think it necessary to hurry, (2) he did not know how to summon the troops quickly, (3) the men of Judah had lost confidence in him, (4) he might have contemplated casting his lot with the new rebellion under Sheba. Whatever the reason, David knew the **URGENCY** of putting a stop to Sheba's attempted coup and passed on the assignment to Joab's brother, Abishai. Amasa was able to catch up to Abishai's forces at Gibeon. It seems obvious that the very sight of Amasa caused a great rage in Joab (who had humbled himself to go along under his brother's command), and he took the life of Amasa then and there in a very brutal move. The troops were quite willing for Joab to take his old command and followed him after the body of Amasa was moved out of sight.
4. **2 Samuel 20.14-15.** Beth Maachah is far north (about 30 miles north of the Sea of Galilee), and is the place Joab found Sheba behind the walls. Without making any inquiry about a peaceful solution (cf., Deut 20.10-12), Joab began the usual procedure to attack a walled city. Joab would have been especially intent on having success in getting rid of the threat from Sheba. First, because of the loyalty he had to David; maybe more importantly, he sought some way to regain his good standing with King David. There is no doubt that he knew quite well that David was thoroughly irritated with him because he had disobeyed the order to deal kindly with Absalom.

5. **2 Samuel 20.16-22.** The city had a reputation, evidently, of being a center of wisdom and people came there with questions and problems for suggested solutions. A wise woman of the city requested to have a conversation with Joab. She made a perfectly logical and good argument that there was no need to destroy the city. Joab was wise enough to listen to her appeal and suggested his only need was for Sheba to be delivered to him, promising to leave if that happened. The wise woman passed on this information to the city leaders and the result was that Sheba was beheaded and his head tossed over the wall as evidence there was no more to fear from Sheba. David blows the trumpet and all go home. Joab returns to King David with mission accomplished.
6. **2 Samuel 20.23-26.** Here at the restart of the kingdom under David is given a listing of the officers serving King David. An earlier list can be seen at 2 Samuel 8.15-18.

#### V. **Lessons & Applications.**

2 Sam 20.1-2... Coffman-- This new rebellion was the direct result of the bitter words exchanged in the quarrel mentioned at the end of the preceding chapter. Josephus tells us that, Sheba's actions occurred, "While these rulers (the men of Israel and those of Judah) were disputing with one another." [2] "The fierce words of the men of Judah led to evil results," [3] giving us another example of the frequent danger of winning an argument.

2 Sam 20.18-22... Wisdom saved the woman, her city, David's reputation, Joab's career, and many innocent lives. *Expository Notes of Dr. Thomas Constable:*

<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dcc/2-samuel-20.html>

#### VI. **Questions.**

##### **True or False**

01. \_\_\_\_\_ David was unclear in his instructions to Amasa.
02. \_\_\_\_\_ At Gibeon was a great stone.
03. \_\_\_\_\_ Joab's forces were attempting to throw down the wall at Abel of Bethmaachah.
04. \_\_\_\_\_ Joab was accused of wanting to swallow up something.
05. \_\_\_\_\_ The trumpet Joab blew signaled time to attack.

##### **I Found it in Verse(s)**

06. \_\_\_\_\_ Ten people were kept in ward and fed.
07. \_\_\_\_\_ A sword falls out.
08. \_\_\_\_\_ An appeal for conversation.
09. \_\_\_\_\_ Someone described as a man of mount Ephraim.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Name of David's scribe.

##### **Short Answer**

11. The people behind the wall did this to solve their problem.

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12. This man lifted up his hand against the king.
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13. Seeing the dying body of Amasa, the soldiers did this...
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14. Joab's phony greeting to Amasa was...
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15. The think David did NOT want Sheba to gain access to was...
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*Each Question is worth 7 Points*

**My Score is: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Answers will be found on next week's handout*

**ANSWERS to 2 Samuel 19 Questions...** **01**—True, 8; **02**—False, 11; **03**—True, 24; **04**—True, 33; **05**—True, 40; **06**—5; **07**—35; **08**—21; **09**—17; **10**—9; **11**—Because the king is near of kin to us, (42); **12**—Rogelim, (31); **13**—Thou shalt not die (23); **14**—Return thou, and all thy servants (14); **15**—If Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well (6).

**VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.** The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL 5.82Wx6.32H

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 K H H G C Y U Y W H E N  
 C A S T O O D T H E N K  
 Y N Y O A C A M E I T A  
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 C J E R U S A L E M V G  
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 S A I D T E N T J S T C  
 I B O E I E W O M A N O

ABEL	AMASA	BICHRI	CAME	CAST
CITY	DAVID	EVERY	HAND	HEAR
HIGHWAY	ISRAEL	JERUSALEM	JOAB	JUDAH
KING	LORD	PEOPLE	PURSUE	SAID
SHEBA	STOOD	TENT	THEN	WENT
WHEN	WOMAN			

