

2 Samuel 20:1-26 **Rebellion of Sheba – Officers of David's Administration**

Rebellion of Sheba

1 And there happened to be there a rebel, whose name was Sheba the son of Bichri, a Benjamite. And he blew a trumpet, and said:

"We have no share in David, Nor do we have inheritance in the son of Jesse; Every man to his tents, O Israel!"

2 So every man of Israel deserted David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri.

David returned to Jerusalem – Concubines put into Isolation

But the men of Judah, from the Jordan as far as Jerusalem, remained loyal to their king.

3 Now 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 seclusion and supported them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living in widowhood.

Pursuit and Defeat of Sheba

4 And the king said to Amasa, "Assemble the men of Judah for me within three days, and be present here yourself." **5** So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah. But he delayed longer than the set time which David had appointed him.

6 And David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take your lord's servants and pursue him, lest he find for himself fortified cities, and escape us."

7 So Joab's men, with the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and all the mighty men, went out after him. And they went out of Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.

8 When they were at the large stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came before them. Now Joab was dressed in battle armor; on it was a belt with a sword fastened in its sheath at his hips; and as he was going forward, it fell out. **9** Then Joab said to Amasa, "Are you in health, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. **10** But Amasa did not notice the sword that was in Joab's hand. And he struck him with it in the stomach, and his entrails poured out on the ground; and he did not strike him again. Thus he died.

Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri. **11** Meanwhile one of Joab's men stood near Amasa, and said, "Whoever favors Joab and whoever is for David — follow Joab!" **12** But Amasa wallowed in his blood in the middle of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he moved Amasa from the highway to the field and threw a garment over him, when he saw that everyone who came upon him halted. **13** When he was removed from the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.

14 And he went through all the tribes of Israel to Abel and Beth Maachah and all the Berites. So they were gathered together and also went after Sheba. **15** 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.

16 Then a wise woman cried out from the city, "Hear, hear! Please say to Joab, 'Come nearby, that I may speak with you.'" **17** 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."

18 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. 19 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?"

20 And Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy! 21 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."

22 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.

David's Government Officers

23 And Joab was over all the army of Israel; Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; 24 Adoram was in charge of revenue; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 25 Sheva was scribe; Zadok and Abiathar were the priests; 26 and Ira the Jairite was a chief minister under David.

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Facts Revealed:

Rebellion of Sheba [2 Samuel 20:1-2]

- ✧ King Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, and after his death a number of people from his tribe sought to retain kingdom authority over Israel in their tribe.
- ✧ Sheba the son of Bichri of the tribe of Benjamin made his bid for the throne when David was at his weakest point after the death of Absalom who tried to take the throne by force.
 - ◇ Sheba seemed to have a great sway over the people, because when he called for the armies of Israel to follow him instead of David, they all left David except for the tribe of Judah who stayed loyal to their king. [2 Samuel 20:1-2]
 - ◇ The same people who had followed Absalom in rebellion against David, were the first to speak of bringing back the king, now followed Sheba, demonstrating their loyalty toward David was politically motivated and insincere .

David returned to Jerusalem – Concubines put into Isolation [2 Samuel 20:2-3]

- ✧ The ten concubines David had left to keep the house in his absence when he fled before Absalom, were defiled by Absalom in the sight of all Israel and in the sight of the sun. [2 Samuel 15:16, 21-22]
 - ◇ This was a fulfillment of the words of Nathan the prophet. [2 Samuel 12:10-11]
 - ◇ Now on David's return to Jerusalem, David put the women who had been defiled by Absalom into seclusion, cared for them, but did not go in to them, leaving them in a sense of widowhood until their death.

Pursuit and defeat of Sheba [2 Samuel 4-22]

- ✧ With Sheba, a devotee of Saul, leading the armies of Israel in rebellion against David in an attempt to restore the throne to the tribe of Benjamin, David viewed this rebellion as a greater threat than the rebellion of Absalom.

- ✧ David had promised to make Amasa the head of his armies in the place of Joab when he sent for his tribe of Judah to be the ones to bring the king back to Jerusalem after the death of Absalom and the defeat of the armies of Israel. [2 Samuel 19:11-14]
- ✧ Now it is time for the armies of Judah to be activated in response to the rebellion of Sheba.
- ✧ David appointed Amasa to assemble the armies of Judah for the pursuit of Sheba, and he appointed a set time of three days. [2 Samuel 20:4]
- ✧ Amasa dallied longer than the appointed time, so David expressing his concern over the urgency of the situation with Sheba, commanded Abishai the brother of Joab to take David's elite force of mighty men and pursue Sheba.
- ✧ Joab and all the mighty men including the Cherethites and the Pelethites went out after Abishai from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. (The Cherethites and Pelethites were David's personal body guards)
- ✧ When they reached the large stone in Gibeon, they met Amasa on the road.
- ✧ Joab greeted Amasa asking, "Are you in health my brother?" Then taking Amasa by the beard and kissing him, Joab killed Amasa with the sword in his other hand with one blow.
- ✧ Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba.
- ✧ Amasa, wallowing on the road in his own blood, became a deterrent to the other soldiers who stopped when they came upon him, so one of Joab's men said, "Whoever favors Joab and whoever is for David — follow Joab!" Then he moved Amasa from the highway into the field, threw a garment over him, and all the people went after Joab in pursuit of Sheba.
- ✧ Sheba took up a position in the fortified city of Abel and Beth Maachah as David had feared. [2 Samuel 20:6, 15]
- ✧ As Joab and his men went through the tribes of Israel, the men of the tribes joined them and also went after Sheba.
- ✧ They caught up with Sheba at Able Beth Maachah and laid siege to the city.
- ✧ A wise woman in the city found a way to break the siege, so she called out to Joab seeking the reason for the siege of the city.
- ✧ Joab informed her that the presence of Sheba was the cause of the problem.
- ✧ She talked with the men of the city and they threw Sheba's head to Joab over the wall.
- ✧ Joab called off the siege, and he and his men withdrew and returned to David the king at Jerusalem.

Officers of David's Government [2 Samuel 20:23-26]

- ✧ Joab was over all the army of Israel;
- ✧ Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites;
- ✧ Adoram was in charge of revenue;
- ✧ Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder;
- ✧ Sheva was scribe;
- ✧ Zadok and Abiathar were the priests;
- ✧ Ira the Jairite was a chief minister under David.