

## Exegetical Notes – 2 Samuel 20:14-26

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen for Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kylies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

[charleshjensen@aol.com](mailto:charleshjensen@aol.com)

### 2 Samuel 20:14-26

#### Verses 14-17

***<sup>14</sup> Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel Beth Maakah and through the entire region of the Bikrites, who gathered together and followed him. <sup>15</sup> All the troops with Joab came and besieged Sheba in Abel Beth Maakah. They built a siege ramp up to the city, and it stood against the outer fortifications. While they were battering the wall to bring it down, <sup>16</sup> a wise woman called from the city, "Listen! Listen! Tell Joab to come here so I can speak to him." <sup>17</sup> He went toward her, and she asked, "Are you Joab?"***

***"I am," he answered.***

***She said, "Listen to what your servant has to say."***

***"I'm listening," he said.***

- David's troops, now under the command of Joab, pursued Sheba, who was leading a rebellion against David, to Abel Beth Maakah (see 2 Samuel 19:40-20:13). Sheba and his army were within the city. Joab prepared to attack the city. He had built a siege machine that would batter the walls of the city until they fell.
- A woman, she is given no name in the story nor does she seem to have any official rank, called down from the walls of the city. She is simply called "wise." She asked to speak to Joab.
- Joab went to the city wall to speak with this woman.

#### Verses 18-21

***<sup>18</sup> She continued, "Long ago they used to say, 'Get your answer at Abel,' and that settled it. <sup>19</sup> 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?"***

***<sup>20</sup> "Far be it from me!" Joab replied, "Far be it from me to swallow up or destroy! <sup>21</sup> 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."***

***The woman said to Joab, "His head will be thrown to you from the wall."***

- The woman quoted a proverb to Joab about the city. Apparently, the people of this town were proverbially known for their wisdom. They were also known to be peaceful and loyal to Israel. They were not troublemakers. She wanted to know why the city was under siege. Apparently, Sheba's presence there was not openly known and the city had not declared loyalty to him.
- Joab informed her of the reason for the siege and she promised to throw Sheba's head to him from the wall.

## **Verse 22**

***<sup>22</sup> Then the woman went to all the people with her wise advice, and they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bikri and threw it to Joab. So he sounded the trumpet, and his men dispersed from the city, each returning to his home. And Joab went back to the king in Jerusalem.***

- The woman explained the situation to the people. They cut off Sheba's head and threw it over the wall to Joab.
- Joab sounded the trumpet which called off the siege and the men went home.

## **Verses 23-26**

***<sup>23</sup> Joab was over Israel's entire army; Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and Pelethites; <sup>24</sup> Adoniram was in charge of forced labor; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; <sup>25</sup> Sheva was secretary; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; <sup>26</sup> and Ira the Jairite was David's priest.***

- So, the argument between Israel and Judah was resolved for the moment, and the nation appeared to be at peace under David. On the surface all was fine.
- Leaders were appointed and all appeared to be in order.

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