

#10 - 8/5/2018 - Averted - God uses the skills of people to accomplish His purposes

I. Unity helpful for Israel to be kingdom of priests to the nations and for Disciples to go making Disciples in the nations today, Part 1- [John 17:22-24](#)...

²² *The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;* Jesus continues saying this unity will reveal His love for the people of the world.

2 Samuel is a story of **disunity** that interfered with **Israel**^A being a kingdom of priests. Chapter 20 is filled with drama that requires some background. Look for these main characters: David, Joab, Abishai, Amasa and Sheba. Who were the antagonists-villains or protagonists-heroes?

1010 BC **David** made King over **Judah** after death of Saul and Jonathan. **Joab** was **David's** commander, **Joab**, **Abishai**, and **Asahel**, brothers, were David's nephews. [[1 Chronicles 2:13-16](#)].

Abner was both the cousin of Israel's first king, [Saul](#), and the commander of Saul's army ([1 Samuel 14:50](#)). After Saul's death **Abner** was the strong man in Israel. 1008 BC There was a civil war between **Joab** and **Abner**. **Abner** kills **Asahel**, **Joab's** brother.

1005 BC David agrees to cooperate with Abner to unite tribes, but **Joab** murders **Abner** [[2 Samuel 2:18-23](#), [3:27-34](#)]

1003 BC Tribes finally united David reigns over all 12 tribes of **Israel**

993 BC **David** seduces Bathsheba, has **Joab** murder her husband, Uriah the Hittite one of David's 37 mighty men, and marries her. **Ahithophel** was Bathsheba's grandfather.

991 BC God forgave David but promised *"the sword shall never depart from your house"* 2 Samuel 12:10a

986 BC Amnon, David's son, rapes his half-sister Tamar and **Absalom** kills his half-brother Amnon. 2 Samuel 13

976 BC **Absalom's** conspires to take the kingdom from David 2 Samuel 15. **Ahithophel** betrays David and joins **Absalom**. **Amasa** also betrays **David** and becomes commander of **Absalom's** army; he was a nephew of **David**, and cousin of **Joab**, as well as a cousin of **Absalom**, **David's** son. **David** leaves Jerusalem in humility trusting God for the outcome good or bad.

972 BC the spy **Hushai's** warning saves **David** and his army; **Ahithophel** commits suicide, Joab, **Abishai** & **Ithai** share command of the troops for David, **Joab** kills **Absalom**; 20,000 troops killed and **David** returns to Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 17-19

Wow; when I write this web of family intrigue and betrayal it is sobering. Certainly the sword never left David's house over 19 years from 991BC, there is a consequence even to confessed sin.

There was so much disunity the focus was inward to Israel rather than outward as a kingdom of priests to other nations. However, David's humility set the example for us and also his personally attracting non-Israelites like Ittai!

Notes: A- "Israel" is used in three ways: [1] for the 12 tribes of Israel that were united under Joshua, David and Solomon, [2] for what is known as the northern tribes without Judah and sometimes Benjamin and [3] the area occupied by the people returning from captivity by Babylon and Persia and the government formed in May 1948. For Tribal map of Israel in time of Joshua click [here](#); and David and Solomon click [here](#), the timeline in the upper left corner is very badly off.

II. The Grammatical-Historical Context of [2 Samuel 20](#) Part 2...In terms of grammatical structure, it is important to note that 2 Samuel 20 is a narrative with common elements. These include characters, plot structure, protagonists-heros and antagonists-villians, an introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, conclusion, imagery, etc. **Everyone has an historical story that impacts their life.** Who are the heros and villians in this story and in your story?

In historical context Absalom's death did not end the tribal tensions within Israel [[19:40-43](#)]. David's returning to Jerusalem caused **Sheba**, to call for a revolt. **Sheba** was from the tribe of Benjamin; the same tribe as Saul. Many Israelites^A joined **Sheba** in the rebellion, while the men of Judah remained loyal to their tribe member **David** [[vv.1-2](#)].

Absalom had set **Amasa** over his army [[17:25](#)], but after Absalom was slain, **David** offered to make **Amasa** commander of the army in place of his long term commander Joab [[19:13](#)]. After returning to his palace in Jerusalem, David instructed **Amasa** to recruit an army from the men of Judah within three days and report back to **David** [[vv.4-5](#)].

Amasa failed to return within three days with soldiers, possibly because of distrust in Judah over his previous defection to Absalom. David then ordered Abishai and **Joab** and Ittai to proceed with men they recruited. Amasa joined the group, but Joab used the opportunity to kill **Amasa**, either because he considered him an enemy or a competitor or both [[vv.5-13](#)]. Joab had murdered **Abner** about 15 years before [[2 Samuel 3](#)] [to the embarrassment of David], **Uriah** [at David's request], **Absalom** [David mourned his death] and now **Amasa**.

Which of the four main characters are the antagonists-villians or protagonists-heroes? Why do you think Joab killed Amasa? Why does it look like David protected Joab? What is the message for you today?

How does studying the grammatical-historical context of a passage of Scripture help us to grow in our walk with the Lord and live in a way that is pleasing to Him?

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III. The antagonists-villains or protagonists-heroes of 2 Samuel 20 and today, Part 3

2 Samuel is a narrative with 4 main characters; David, Joab, Amasa and Sheba. It is clear that **Sheba** is an antagonist but less clear with a historical context about the other four.

Joab was a nephew of David. [[1 Chronicles 2:13-16](#)] [[2 Samuel 2:18-23, 3:27-34](#)] Did Joab's family relationship with David protect him from correction or was David afraid of Joab or did he think there was no replacement?

Was **Joab** acting as a faithful servant of **David** in killing **Abner, Uriah, Absalom, Amasa and Sheba**? Did **Joab** have incriminating evidence against **David** that kept **David** from correcting Joab? An example could be **David** ordering **Joab** to murder Uriah [[2 Samuel 11:14-25](#)]. Later, **David** told Solomon that in his wisdom he should take care of **Joab** as a traitor and Solomon had him killed when he became king [[1 Kings 2:5-6, 28-35](#)].

Did **David** set up **Amasa** by asking him to recruit an army in 3 days knowing he would fail so he did not have to replace Joab?

It is possible that Joab was acting as a faithful servant of the king just as Hushai was. He might have sincerely believed that **Abner, Absalom** and **Amasa** had taken advantage of David and they could not be trusted. However he assumed authority that was not his and murdered them. **Joab** was sometimes a protagonist-hero and other times he was an antagonist-villian.

It is difficult to tell whether **Amasa** was whether a protagonist or antagonist because he defected to Absalom, but after Absalom was killed he agreed to support King David. We cannot know his motives or reasons for not coming back with an army in three days as required by David. He did join Joab's army, yet he was killed by Joab.

He reminds us of some Disciples today, we may be not sure where they stand. See Part 6 for the answer to this question for David!

In today's times of great disunity are you living in unity within the church and revealing the glory and love of Jesus to those outside? As a Disciple today, are you a protagonist-hero for King Jesus or an antagonist-villain?

IV. There was a moral inconsistency in the later part of David's reign, Part 4 - 2 Samuel 20:23-26...

Despite the positive outcome to the narrative in 2 Samuel 20, the book continues to show, how David's sin had hampered his ability to rule. Vv. [23-26](#) give a list of key leaders in David's restored administration to show that David's reign had stabilized. This list revises an almost identical list found in [8:15-18](#).

The list of chapter 20, has the following changes: [1] David's sons are no longer listed as chief ministers [contrast 8:18]. [2] The later list has a new office, the commander of forced labor+[20:24]. [3] David's name is omitted. In 8:15, David is first in the list, and he is said to have ruled with justice and righteousness.+There is none of this in the later list.

The most surprising change between the two lists is the omission of David's name and of a positive evaluation of his reign. This may mean that David was no longer fully in charge and that his actions were no longer consistently wise and just.

In an age of moral confusion and political polarization, why is it important to show wisdom, restraint, and the ability to compromise in the face of a crisis, but without compromising on biblical principles & core values?

There is a relationship between a widespread decline in moral integrity and political polarization? What can Disciples do about that?

V. A Woman's Wisdom Conquers, Part 5 - 2 Samuel 20:17-21...¹⁶ *Then a wise woman called from the city, "Hear, hear! Please tell Joab, 'Come here that I may speak with you.'"*...¹⁹ *I am of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel. You are seeking to destroy a city, even a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?"*

Joab had used the wise woman of Tekoa to send a message to David that it was time to reconcile with his son Absalom. [[2 Samuel 14](#)] Now we see another wise woman helping Joab. Joab's troops caught up with Sheba at an ancient walled city in the far northern tribal territory ^A [v. [15](#)]. Joab's army laid siege to the city and would have destroyed the wall except the wise woman negotiated with Joab, had **Sheba killed** and threw his head over the wall, and saved the city and its people [vv. [16-22](#)].

This is an example that women and men with the wisdom and knowledge from God's word, the mind of Jesus and filled by the Holy Spirit can use in peace-making! ^B

Whatever we may think of their decision to decapitate Sheba ^B, this negotiation contains important lessons. Both sides negotiated in good faith; when an agreement was reached, they did as they had promised. Both looked for an outcome that would avoid unnecessary bloodshed and destruction. Both operated within a framework that was consistent with their core moral values. They looked for common ground and compromise, but they did not compromise on basic principles.

This is an example that women and men with the wisdom and knowledge from God's word, the mind of Jesus and filled by the Holy Spirit can use in peace-making! ^C

Are you a peace-maker or strife-maker? Will you commit to being a peace-maker? What steps will you take to accomplish this commitment?

Notes: A- For location and information about Abel-Beth-maacah click [here](#); apparently it was about 100 miles north of Jerusalem; B- Warren Wiersbe said "we must keep in mind that we're dealing with law, not grace, and Israel, not the church. The law of Moses required that an unsolved murder be attoned for by sacrifice [Deuteronomy 21:1-9]", so how much more a known insurrection leading to loss of life. For the Christian just war theory: [Christian just war tradition from ERLC of SBC](#); C- Peace-making links [here](#)

VI. Was David an antagonist-villain or protagonist-hero for God? Part 6

Like Disciples today David was not perfect. When he sinned with Bathsheba and murdered her husband he was tormented for a year or so until confronted by Nathan. David confessed that he had sinned against God and God forgave him but said "*the sword will never depart from your house*".

Afterward I believe that David primarily acted with humility, honesty and recognition of his own sins and that he could escape the consequences. Therefore, he left the correction of his children and subordinates to God. He gave loyalty and trust to his King, the Lord God. He acted with humility when he left Jerusalem as Absalom deposed David. Read Psalm 55 that might have been written by David because of the betrayal of his trusted advisor, Ahithophel.

David is specifically noted as the author of 73 psalms in the titles of the psalms and in 2 scripture in the NT. ^{AA}

You cannot read these Psalms and David's story in the Bible without acknowledging the following: David was [1] filled with the Spirit continually just like we are today, had an intimate relationship with God and was a student of God's word, [2] humble, [3] suffering greatly as a result of his sins, [4] **not stubborn, demanding his own way, but yielding to others**, [5] did not try to impose his will on others, [6] recognized that many of his problems resulted from his sin, [7] aware his family members and associates who sinned or betrayed God and him had to learn for themselves and were responsible for their actions, [8] knowing that he could not escape the consequences of his sin but could be kind, patient, trusting in God, [9] kind to Jonathan's crippled son, [10] welcoming of non-Israelite tribe members into his army, fulfilling the command to be a nation of priests to the outside world^A, [11] aware that his kingdom would endure forever. This was fulfilled by the birth of Jesus from his descendents and today by His spiritual descendents, [12] David is one 16 OT people listed by name in the [Hall of Fame in Hebrews 11](#),^B

Therefore, I believe David was a primarily a protagonist-hero for God though he did not finish as strong as desired! What can you learn from David's humility to improve as a protagonist-hero for Jesus and to finish strong? What could David and sinners today do to finish strong?

Notes: **AA-** These include [Psalms 3- 9](#); [11- 41](#); [51- 65](#); [68- 70](#); [86](#); [101](#); [103](#); [108- 110](#); [122](#); [124](#); [131](#); [133](#); and [138- 145](#). In addition he is credited in the NT with 2 more; [Psalm 2](#) is attributed to David in [Acts 4:25](#), and [Psalm 95](#) is attributed to David in [Hebrews 4:7](#).

A- Examples of people outside the 12 tribes of Judah with David: Cherethites and Pelethites [[2 Samuel 15:18, 20:23](#)], Ittai the Gittite [[2 Samuel 15:19-22, 18:2](#)] A nation of priests first the Israelites then today's Disciples [[Exodus 19:6, Matthew 21:43, 1 Peter 2:5, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8](#)], Uriah the Hittite [[2 Samuel 23:8, 39...](#) ⁸ *These are the names of the mighty men whom David had:...* ⁹ *Uriah the Hittite; thirty-seven in all*]

B- In addition to the 16 named in Hebrews 11, eleven other heroes of faith are implied but not named, including Moses parents [[11:23](#)], Daniel, Jeremiah, Hezekiah, Zechariah, Isaiah, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, widow of Zerahphasth, etc. [[11:32d-38](#)] [see list in Hall of Fame link [here](#)].

VII. Summary and application 2 Samuel 20 and the back-story:

I. Unity helpful for Israel to be kingdom of priests to the nations and for Disciples to go making Disciples in the nations today, Part 1- [John 17:22-24](#)..

1. Wow; when I write this web of family intrigue and betrayal from 2 Samuel 1-19 it is sobering-so much disunity. Abner **kills** Joab's brother, Joab **murders** Uriah at the order of David, Amnon **rapes** sister, Absalom **kills** his brother Amnon, Ahithophel & Amasa **betray** David, Ahithophel commits **sucicide**, Joab **kills** Absalom even though David said not to, Joab **murders** Amasa. Certainly suffering and the sword

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There was so much disunity in Israel the focus was inward rather than outward to be a kingdom of priests to other nations. However, David's humility and outreach set the example for us and also his attracting non-Israelites like Iltai!

II. The Grammatical-Historical Context of [2 Samuel 20](#)

2. How does studying the grammatical-historical context of a passage of Scripture help you to grow in your walk with the Lord and live in a way that is pleasing to Him?

III. The antagonists-villains or protagonists-heroes of 2 Samuel 20.

3. Which of the four main characters Joab, Amasa, Sheba, and David are the antagonists-villains or protagonists-heroes of chapter 20?

Why do you think Joab killed Abner, Absalom and Amasa?

Why does it look like David protected Joab?

What is the message for you today?

IV. There was a moral inconsistency in the later part of David's reign, 2 Samuel 20:23-26...

4. In an age of moral confusion and political polarization, **why is it important to show wisdom, restraint, and the ability to compromise in the face of a crisis, but without compromising on core principles?**

Is there a relationship between political polarization and a widespread decline in moral integrity? What can we do about that?

V. A Woman's Wisdom Conquers - 2 Samuel 20:17-21...

5. [2 Samuel 20:16-22](#) is an example that women and men; with wisdom and knowledge from God's word, the mind of Jesus and filled by the Holy Spirit; can use in peace-making! [For Peace-making links [here](#).]

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You cannot read David's 75 Psalms and his story in the Bible without acknowledging the following: **David was predominately:** [1] filled with the Spirit continually just like we are today, had an intimate relationship with God and was a student of God's word, [2] not perfect, but humble, [3] suffering greatly as a result of his sins, [4] **not stubborn, demanding his own way, but yielding to others,**

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Finally, I believe David was a primarily a protagonist-hero for God though he did not finish as strong as desired!

6. What can you learn from David's humility to improve yourself as a protagonist-hero for Jesus and to finish strong?

What can you and I do to finish strong despite our past and current sins?

7. In today's times of great disunity are you living in unity within the church and revealing the glory and love of Jesus to those outside?

As a Disciple today, are you primarily a protagonist-hero for King Jesus or an antagonist-villain fighting God?

8. Memory Verse - Acts 5:39 Gamaliel, probably an unbeliever in Jesus said: *"For if this teaching or movement is merely human it will collapse of its own accord. But if it should be from God you cannot defeat them, and you might actually find yourselves to be fighting against God!"* [[Phillips Translation](#)]

