36. The Book of 2Samuel—20:1-26 Pt.2

"Rebellion, Revenge and Reason" Pt.2

(4/9/17)

Last week, we began a study in 2Samuel 20 which we're calling, "Rebellion, Revenge and Reason".

We built this message around two main points—1. The Passage Explained; and 2. The Principles Extracted.

Last week we finished explaining the passage and we then started extracting the principles.

There are three principles embodied in three persons: 1. The Rebellion of Sheba; 2. The Revenge of Joab; and 3. The Reason of a Wise Woman

II. The Principles Extracted

A. The Rebellion of Sheba

2 Samuel 20:1-2 (NKJV)
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. But the men of Judah, from the Jordan as far as Jerusalem, remained loyal to their king.

We know definitively that Sheba was a rebel—because verse one tells us so.

But why was he a rebel—he was a rebel because he wasn't content to submit his life to God and God's king (David)—he wanted power and success for himself and all the material things that go along with it.

So he led a rebellion against David (and God) so that he could rule over the northern tribes of Israel.

Sheba was like so many today who are fighting with God by refusing to submit to His King, Jesus Christ.

They are rebels who think that happiness and fulfillment in life will become a reality if they can just have enough money, buy enough things, acquire enough power, enjoy enough pleasure, or attain enough success in life—then they will find happiness.

But the Bible says that everyone of us born into this world has been born with a 'God-shaped' void in our hearts—a void that only God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, can fill. (We studied this in detail last week)

That, then brings us to the next principle that we can glean from the passage—a principle embodied in David's general Joab.

B. The Revenge of Joab

2 Samuel 20:8-10 (NKJV)
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…

As we saw in chapter 19 verse 13—the reason Joab hated Amasa so much was because David had appointed Amasa, who had been Absalom's general, over his armies in place of Joab.

David did this to help bring the nation back together after its Civil War caused by Absalom's attempt to overthrow his father—and also because Joab disobeyed David's command to take Absalom alive.

As we said last week—this wasn't the first-time Joab killed a rival—he also killed another man named Abner.

As we learned earlier in 2Samuel—Abner had been King Saul's general.

When Saul was killed in battle, Abner got behind Saul's son Ishbosheth as king (even though he knew God had chosen David to be the next king).

They eventually had a falling out and so Abner defected to David who made him a general in his army—and an equal to Joab who was David's general at that time.

Joab deeply resented the fact that Abner had been given this position of honor in David's army.

You see, for many years Abner, as King Saul's general, had pursued David throughout the wilderness to kill him and remove him as a threat to Saul's reign—and now David has 'rewarded' him by making him a general, a man who had been an enemy to David (and Joab) for so many years.

But the real reason Joab hated Abner was because he had killed his younger brother Asahel in battle (2 Samuel 2:17-23).

And so all of this fueled Joab's hatred of Abner—a hatred that could only be satisfied thru revenge!

2 Samuel 3:27 (NKJV)
27 Now when Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him privately, and there stabbed him in the stomach, so that he died for the blood of Asahel his brother.

And then, as we read in our passage this morning, Joab killed Amasa—another rival and enemy that he also got rid of thru revenge and murder.

Joab was a man that was consumed with hatred for his enemies and someone that would do whatever necessary to get rid of them—even if it meant murder.

Many today would not do physical violence to another who has wronged them—but they wouldn't think twice about trying to hurt them in some other way.

Today one of the most common and effect ways to destroy someone is thru social media.

This (bullying) has become so brutal—that many of these people (mostly young people) have committed suicide causing all fifty states to pass anti-bullying laws.

When it comes to those who are thirty and older—law suits seem to be the preferred method of revenge—to destroy people financially.

Ours has become a very litigious society where people will sue each other for hardly any reason simply because they refuse to try to work things out with each other (revenge just feels better!).

Sometimes the revenge takes a much more violent form—just a few days ago, on the south side of Chicago, a 19 year old man walked into a restaurant and fatally shot and killed four men out of revenge.

He believed those men had shot and killed his father the day before.

And on and on it goes, in every walk of life, cutting across all socio-economic lines—people want to destroy those that hurt them or who disparage them—or even those who disagree with them on issues that are important to them.

There is an evil spirit of revenge that has taken hold of our culture—people don't want to talk or try to work things out—like Joab, all they want to do is destroy their enemies.

We see this practically every night on the news—that there is a small but vocal and even violent group of people (the Left), that hate America, that hate traditional values, that hate God—and above all else that hate Donald Trump.

These people can't be talked to or reasoned with—because they are committed to the belief that those who disagree with them are evil and must be destroyed.

In a recent show, Rush Limbaugh made an insightful observation about those on the Left and the ideology that drives them:

"The way the Left behaves today – in virtually everything that they do – do you realize how close it is to radical Islam?"…For the kind of Islamists we're talking about, the Shariah Islamists, there is no authority but Islam. To the Left, there is no authority but themselves. They respect and recognize no other authority. They don't recognize the authority of elections. They don't recognize the authority of public opinion. They don't recognize the authority of the Constitution, even though they all swear an oath.

"This behavior is very, very close to Shariah Islam, there is no authority but Islam. It's a core tenet: The ruler must be obeyed as long as he complies and enforces Shariah. And if the ruler abandons Shariah, they assassinate him, like in the case of [former Egyptian President] Anwar el-Sadat … Now, they don't do assassinations here, but if the Left's leader abandons them, you know what happens to them. They're immediately forgotten, destroyed, cast aside and ruined."

In fact, the Left…believes there is no room for disagreement…any idea outside their own is considered "illegitimate."

"There is no crossing the aisle. There is no compromise." "There is no working together to prove Washington or government works. There is only one way." ['my way or the highway']

The reason that the Left in this country has become so radical is because—their opinions, have ceased being looked at by them as opinions, and have crossed over into sacred beliefs.

In other words—their ideology has become a religion to them.

And as you all know—there is no more fervent zeal than religious zeal.

The kind of zeal that comes when you believe you are fighting for good over evil as you pledge allegiance to your god, which in their case is the god of liberalism or progressivism.

It's interesting that Limbaugh said a few months ago that, *"If liberalism was a religion then abortion would be one of its sacraments"*—well, it is and it is!

This is why the Left is so fervent in our country and has become so violent and unreasonable—it's because religious zeal is always rooted in truth (or so their followers believe) and truth is non-negotiable and so the only battle cry for liberals, as with the followers of Islam, is *'convert or die!'*

The good news is that someday soon, Jesus Christ is coming back to this world to establish a Kingdom of *real* truth (God's truth) and He will judge those who are promoting and practicing evil.

Psalm 37:1-5, 7-11 (NKJV)
1 Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass…7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret--*it* only *causes* harm. 9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth. 10 For yet a little while and the wicked *shall be* no *more;* Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it *shall be* no *more.* 11 But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

But for right now here's what God, in His Word, commands His people to do with those who have set themselves as enemies against us—

Romans 12:19-21 (NLT)
19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD. 20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." 21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

The passion to take revenge on someone who has hurt you or who is trying to hurt you when you have done nothing wrong to them is very powerful because it's rooted in our fallen nature.

In fact it's so powerful that Solomon, in the book of Proverbs, said that, *"He who controls his anger* (which would include the desire for revenge), *is a stronger man than he who conquers a city."*

One pastor had this to say—
"The world's worst prison is the prison of an unforgiving heart. If we refuse to forgive others, then we are only imprisoning ourselves and causing our own torment. Some of the most miserable people I have met in my ministry have been people who would not forgive others. They lived only to imagine ways to punish these people who had wronged them. But they were really only punishing themselves."

Proverbs 24:29 (NLT)
29 And don't say, "Now I can pay them back for what they've done to me! I'll get even with them!"

Ephesians 4:32 (NLT)
32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Colossians 3:13 (NLT)
13 Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

A classic example of how one godly man handled cruelty and injustice in his own life—is the story of Joseph (Genesis 37, 39-45—Explain).

When Jacob finally died, Joseph's brothers thought for sure he would take revenge on them.

What did Joseph say to them and how did he handle them?—

Genesis 50:15-21 (NKJV)
15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." 16 So they sent *messengers* to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 17 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we *are* your servants." 19 Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God? 20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. 21 Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

After all the years of injustice that Joseph had endured at the hands of his brothers who sold him into slavery because of envy and hatred—he still maintained a tender heart towards them.

Let me say that the secret of Joseph's mental and emotional health, in spite of all the pain his brothers had caused him, was that he refused to focus on their actions but instead he focused on God's sovereignty.

When Joseph was just a teenager God have him a couple of dreams that someday his whole family would bow down to him (that God would elevate his life to a place of power and glory).

And even though he didn't know how it would happen—he believed it was going to happen someday because God had told him it would happen.

And I believe it was Joseph's belief in God's promise and in His ability to fulfil that promise that kept him going and didn't allow bitterness and revenge to take hold in his heart.

I'm convinced that during his first 13 years in Egypt when he was a slave and then a prisoner—he hung on to the belief that this was part of God's plan for his life and that his circumstances would eventually bring him to the fulfillment of what God had promised him.

We see his faith in God's sovereignty in the face of all that his brothers had done to him by selling him as a slave in his statement to them—

Genesis 50:20 (NKJV)
20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive.

Don't misunderstand—this didn't release them of the guilt of their actions (they still needed to repent and ask God for forgiveness) but it did demonstrate that Joseph wasn't holding it against them because he saw the hand of God in all of it.

If we could just approach our lives this way how much better off we would be and how much more peace we would have. (Elaborate)

One last word on Joab—he was a man who *lived* by the sword, and he was a man who *died* by the sword. (1Kings 2)

There is an immutable law of God—*'what you sow, you will reap'* (the law of reciprocity).

God established this as a law of sowing and reaping at creation when He said, *"Let everything bring forth after its kind".*

If you sow corn you're not going to harvest wheat—if you sow tomato seeds you won't reap watermelons—it's a law of sowing and reaping—you reap <u>what</u> you sow.

Later, the Lord expanded it to include the sowing of actions and the reaping of consequences.

These consequences are not always negative—it all depends upon the actions sown whether the consequences will be good or bad.

If a husband and wife sow love, kindness, unselfishness and fidelity into their marriage—they will reap a blessed, happy and fruitful marriage.

If on the other hand they sow anger, bitterness, selfishness and unfaithfulness into their marriage—they will reap a lot of bad fruit that will poison and destroy that marriage.

If a person sows years of smoking, drinking or drug abuse into their body—they will reap lung cancer, cirrhosis of the liver or some other illness—again you reap what you sow.

Now even as the principle of sowing and reaping applies to the physical and temporal—it also applies to the spiritual and eternal—

Galatians 6:7-8 (NKJV)
7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Look, if you sow hatred and revenge towards anyone—you will reap negative consequences in your own life.

One author said,
"Banish all malignant and vengeful thoughts. A spirit of revenge is the very spirit of the devil. Vengeful thoughts make a man more like Satan, and nothing can be more opposite to the temper which Christianity was designed to promote."

1 Peter 2:21-23 (NLT)
21 For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps. 22 He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. 23 He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges righteously.