

Sermon Notes

Text: 2 Samuel 20

Title: Division, Disloyalty, and Deliverance

Big Idea: When God's people fight for control instead of unity, sin multiplies—but God can still preserve His purposes through wise intervention and faithful leadership.

1) A Nation Not in Unison (2 Sam. 20:1–2)

A. The spark: Sheba's rebellion

- Sheba (“a man of Belial” / wicked man) blows the trumpet:
 - “We have no part in David... every man to his tents.”
- Israel follows Sheba; Judah stays loyal to David.

B. Why the division existed (carried over from ch. 19)

Possible causes discussed:

1. **Trust / loyalty questions**
 - “Who is truly loyal?” after Absalom's rebellion
2. **Favor-seeking / political maneuvering**
 - Israel trying to regain standing after backing the wrong side
3. **Control**
 - “If we can't have our way, we'll leave.”
 - Taking their “toys and going home”—a deeper heart issue

Principle:

Disunity is often driven less by facts and more by pride, fear, and the desire to control outcomes.

Application:

- Watch for “control language” in conflict: *If I can't lead it, I won't support it.*
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2) Consequences of Sin Touch Innocent Lives (2 Sam. 20:3)

David and the ten concubines

- David places the ten concubines in seclusion and provides for them

- “Went not in unto them” → treated as though he were “dead” to them
- They live “in widowhood” due to Absalom’s violation

Observation:

- David did not discard them; he cared for them materially
- Yet the tragedy of Absalom’s sin reshaped their lives permanently

Principle:

Sin leaves collateral damage—often on people who did not create the problem.

Application:

- Leaders must deal with aftermath responsibly, even when the situation is painful and complicated.

3) Leadership Under Pressure: Amasa’s Delay (2 Sam. 20:4–7)

A. David’s urgent command

- David orders Amasa to assemble Judah within three days
- Amasa arrives late → David pivots quickly

B. Why the delay? (speculative but plausible)

- Amasa had been appointed commander, replacing Joab
- Amasa formerly led Absalom’s forces → Judah may distrust him
- Soldiers loyal to Joab may resist Amasa’s leadership

Principle:

A title doesn’t automatically create trust. Leadership requires legitimacy in the eyes of those being led.

Application:

- If people won’t follow, the problem isn’t the mission—it’s credibility.

4) Ambition and Betrayal: Joab Murders Amasa (2 Sam. 20:8–13)

A. Joab's deception

- Joab stages the “accidental” drop of the dagger
- Approaches with friendly words (“my brother”) and strikes Amasa
- Amasa dies in the road; the army stalls in shock

B. The cover-up for momentum

- A soldier moves the body off the road and covers it
- The campaign resumes—people follow Joab

Principle:

When leadership becomes a power struggle, the mission suffers and lives are destroyed.

Application:

- Beware “internal battles” inside the camp; they weaken the ability to face the real enemy.
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5) Key Leadership Lesson

Two-front warfare

- Amasa faced:
 1. **Internal opposition** (lack of respect/loyalty)
 2. **External enemy** (Sheba's rebellion)

Principle:

A leader cannot effectively fight the enemy outside if the team is fractured inside.

Church application:

- If trust is broken, ministry stalls.
 - Disloyalty and factionalism are not “small issues”—they sabotage mission.
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6) Wisdom De-escalates Destruction (2 Sam. 20:14–22)

A. Sheba's refuge and the siege

- Joab pursues Sheba to **Abel of Beth-maachah**
- An embankment is built to assault the wall (attacking the weakest point)

B. The wise woman intervenes

- She appeals: "Why destroy a city and a mother in Israel?"
- Notes Abel's reputation as a place of counsel and peace
- Implies Joab should have sought peace first (cf. Deut. 20:10 principle: offer peace before assault)

C. Joab's condition

- "Deliver Sheba, and I'll depart."
- The city agrees; Sheba is executed; his head is thrown over the wall
- Joab blows the trumpet; the army withdraws

Principle:

A single wise voice can stop a whole city from being destroyed.

Application:

- Be the person who asks the peacemaking question:
 - "What are we really trying to accomplish?"
 - "Is there a way to resolve this without collateral damage?"
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7) Leadership Structure Restored (2 Sam. 20:23–26)

David's administration is listed:

- **Joab** — over the host (commander)
- **Benaiah** — over the Cherethites & Pelethites (elite guard)
- **Adoram** — over tribute (revenue/finance)
- **Jehoshaphat** — recorder
- **Sheva/Shisha** — scribe
- **Zadok & Abiathar** — priests
- **Ira** — chief ruler / chief minister

Noted tension:

- Joab appears restored despite murder—possibly because:

- troops followed him
- removing him could create instability

Principle:

Sometimes leaders tolerate dangerous men for “stability”—but that stability comes at a cost.

8) Closing Exhortation

- David’s throne is re-established, but division remains visible
- Family conflict, national conflict, and leadership conflict intertwine
- The chapter shows how quickly unity can fracture—and how urgently it must be guarded

Final application points:

- Don’t surrender unity for control
- Don’t fight inside the camp while the enemy advances
- Value wise peacemakers—they can save an entire “city”
- Leadership without trust invites disaster