

God the Outcast Returner

2 Samuel 14:12 - 17

Nutshell: The woman has gained David's agreement on the Law's weighting towards restoration, but now he must agree with it in his own situation.

We all believe in restoration through the Cross, but do we walk in reconciliation towards one another?

I. Context: The wise woman speaking to David.

II. Text

2 Sam 14:12 And the woman said, "Please let your servant discuss a matter with my lord the king."

And he said, "Speak."

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

Review

- A. The Book of Kingdoms, our 1 & 2 Sam + 1 & 2 Kings, is the story of Israel's kings, beginning with the prophet Samuel, who anointed both of the first two kings, Saul and David
 1. Samuel warned Israel vs. having a king, 1 Sam 10:19, Hos 13:11
 2. **Saul** demonstrated *man's* kind of rule. God previewed *His* version of king through **David**, 1 Sam 13:14
- ✿ B. 1 Kings 15:5 says David kept God's commands *except* in the Bathsheba incident. **2 Chron 17:3** indicates a *better pre-sin David*.
- C. David was God's chosen king, a *picture* of Messiah, but *not* the Messiah; a *reference point* for later kings of Judah, 2 Kings 14:3
 1. David was anointed king over **Judah**, 2 Sam 2, then **Israel**, 5:1-5.
 2. Trouble between the two begins in 2 Sam 2:12-32.
- D. **DAVID'S WAITING BUSINESS AS KING***
 1. Conquer Jebus (Jerusalem), where Goliath's head was, 1 Sam 17:54
 2. Retrieved the Ark from its 'wanderings', 6:1-19; tragically wrongly, 1 Chron 15:2; then rightly & joyfully

3. Plan a permanent form for the Tabernacle, the Temple.
 - ★ 4. God chose **Abraham** to bless all nations. Now He chose **David's** line to bring forth the King of all nations
 5. 1 Sam 20:14 oath in 2 Sam 9. *OBLIGATIONS CAUGHT UP.
- E. David's sin and its consequences
1. David murdered to cover adultery, Ch 11. Now David, though forgiven, *would see continued violence*, ch 12
 2. David's son died, *not*, per Deut 24:16, as a cohort. He was 'replaced' by Solomon/ Jediah, "adored" by God.
 3. Chap 13, Amnon was lovesick over his half-sister, Tamar
 - a. By deceit, he raped her, then appallingly dumped her
 - b. Absalom took his heroic sister in but advised silence
 4. After 2 yrs., Absalom killed Amnon, then fled
 5. After 3 more years, Joab could see, 14:1, that David's heart was on Absalom (13:39 also after the 3 yrs.)
 - a. So he gave a wise woman props and a script
 - b. Making a 3-stage case, she has set up her real request

Kid-speak: Last time, someone came to help David see that he should bring Absalom back from being kicked out. It was somebody from Tekoa. Who was it? A wise woman.

F. *In 2 Samuel 14:12-17, The woman brings David's decision for her back to his own situation, pressing home the duty of restoring Absalom.*

Outline:

- I. May I Proceed Beyond My Original Concern? v 12
 - II. You are a Guilty Party per this Case You Just Decided, v 13
 - III. God Makes a Way to Bring Back Outcasts, v 14
 - IV. The People Can See that Absalom Should be Restored, v 15
 - V. You Resolved My Case. Surely You'll be Consistent, v 16-17
- G. Last time, we saw the wise woman flawlessly deliver the script Joab had given her. As designed, her speech made three points, receiving David's expected response after each:
1. Present a basic case with an unstated appeal
 2. Clarify the legal give-and-take
 3. Secure David's pledge of maximum enforcement
- H. This was a complicated matter, because Absalom legally

should have been executed

1. Yet there was a less notable, but, in this case, more important law that was being overlooked
 2. The woman's previous questions brought out, and David enforced, the necessity of preserving a family line over an avenger of blood demanding his rights
 3. Now the woman moves to her next phase of argument: the application to David's case
- I. 2 Sam 14:12, "And the woman said, 'Please let your servant speak a matter with my lord the king.'"
1. Here she reveals that she has something further to say
 2. David allows her to go beyond her original case: "Speak."

2 Sam 14:13 And the woman said, "Then to what *end* have you contrived such as this concerning the people of God? Yes, the king is speaking this matter as a guilty *party*, in that the king has not brought back his *own* outcast."

- J. Bam. The purposed lesson hits its intended target.
1. As when Nathan said, after his story, "You are the man."
 2. David has not brought back Absalom
- K. What are the analogies between her story and David?
1. She had a family. David had the whole "people of God" to consider
 - a. Israel as the focal point is important
 - b. She speaks of David's outcast, but mainly because Absalom was Israel's outcast
 2. Her family had been disrupted by deliberate violence from within. So had David's/ Israel's.
 3. She had an outcast son as a result. So did David/ Israel.

Kid-speak: The wise woman had told David a story about *her* son, but who was the story really about? David's son, Absalom.

- L. David has already judged that preservation of family line honors the sixth command more than deserved capital punishment, at least within certain parameters (last time)
1. Now she is making the connection, even though David had other children left, and she only had the one
 2. He did have an outcast son who, in terms of "the people of

God,” was next in line for the throne
M. David’s decision in her case now painted himself as “guilty”

2 Sam 14:14 For dying we die and *are* as water which is spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up. But God does not lift a soul, but has contrived contrivances so that the outcast is not cast out from Him.

N. Grammatical particulars

1. There ain’t no meanin’ without the grammar. It’s not the main point, but it’s the only way to get there.
2. God not “lifting a soul” is curious
 - a. Some equate it to “lifting a face,” which is a Hebraism for favoritism
 - b. Others equate it to taking a life; lifting a soul away
 - c. But neither meaning is found with this phrase elsewhere
 - d. Deut 24:15; 25:1; 86:4; 143:8; Jer 22:27: 44:14 are all of desiring something
 - e. Ps 24:4 and Hos 4:8 are of “lifting the soul” to evil; desiring evil
 - f. But if it were about desire in our v, it should say God doesn’t lift “His” soul
 - g. Prov 19:18 is the oddball, meaning to hold back emotionally. Again, that would be lift “His” soul here.
3. All in all, “taking a life” seems to fit the best
4. “Contrive” is the same for David “contriving” in v 13

Kid-speak: What did the lady say that God does with people who got kicked out? He brings them back!

- O. On first blush, “we all die” sounds like an insipid argument. It sounds like emotional cajoling for a weak case.
1. But she is not arguing emotionally
 2. She is saying that death is permanent. “Dying we die,” with emphatic doubling (a usual type of emphasis)
 3. Adding the spilled water simile. The ground soaks it up and it is irretrievable. *We* return to dust and are irretrievable (until the body’s resurrection)
- ☆ 4. But God has always had means for retrieving us!
- a. Even after, “Eat the fruit, and dying you shall die”
 - b. He immediately began making bridges back (all leading

to *the* Bridge)

- c. His Law can even allow the suspension of a murderer's capital punishment
- P. But the correspondence to David's case is at issue
1. The way David responds, he might only partially agree with her. He will bring Absalom back, but not all the way back.
 2. Apparently trying to preserve some negative consequence for the murder, he tried to satisfy both precepts
 - a. Which he *hadn't* done in deciding her case
 - b. *Her* son was *fully* freed and restored
 3. David likely will conclude that her case doesn't line up with his exactly. Here are some possible caveats. ↓
- Q. "God does not take a life" [lit. "lift a soul"]
1. That is, consider the cases in which God does not take a life where he might have
 - a. Many scholars point to Cain and Abel as the woman's (Joab's) main template, one son killing the other
 - b. But against that, God's decision against Cain's capital punishment had unique features
 - c. *Though* one such feature may indeed have been Cain's (or Adam's) family line
 - d. The commentators, however, simply see God's dismissal of Cain's death as an act of fiat, which to me makes it less fitting here
 2. *Though* God's dismissal of *David's* death penalty for *his* murder and adultery was perhaps a similar decision
 - a. Still, since God is the final 'appellate court,' *His* decisions would presumably not parallel David's exactly
 - b. Parallel enough, though?

Kid-speak: Sometimes, when somebody deserves to die, God doesn't put them to death. Does that include you and me? Yes, if we believe in Jesus.

- R. Doesn't this help demonstrate the impossibilities facing human monarchy and why God didn't want Israel to have a king?
1. With judges, God could remain the final appellate court. Mistakes would be more easily set right.
 2. But with kings, the same mistakes would be more permanent and difficult to rectify

- S. “But He has devised plans [lit., contrived contrivances” or “devised devices”]
1. The woman implicitly asks the astute Law student (David) to remember the numerous times and ways that God mitigated just sentences to more lenient consequences
 2. Starting with- hey, we’re all still here! Lam .
- T. “So that the outcast is not cast out from Him”
1. Using two forms of the verb “cast out”
 2. Meaning that even when men are justly cast out, God’s mercy has not necessarily departed from them
 - a. Deut 30:4 uses the same word
 - b. Promising a return from God casting Israel out
 3. Or in different words, when God sanctioned the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael, Gen 21:12, but then heard and rescued them, Gen 21:17
 4. Now the woman will make a firmer connection between her case and David’s

Kid-speak: What is the biggest plan God used to bring bad people back to Him? The Cross!

2 Sam 14:15 “And now the reason I have come to tell this matter to my lord the king *is* because the people made me afraid. And your servant said, Please let me speak to the king; it may be the king shall perform the word of his servant.”

- U. “The people made me afraid”
1. “The people” for the second time
 - a. The outcast was mentioned in a favorable manner in relation to the people, v 13
 - b. That is, it was *against God’s people* that David has kept Absalom an outcast
 2. As her relatives had made her afraid, so the people’s view of Absalom or David frightened her
 - a. In context, meaning that they thought Absalom should be restored
 - b. And there would be unrest (see “rest,” v 17) until he was
 3. So, understanding the situation, she thought that she might be able to ‘contrive her own contrivance’ (borrowing previous terms) to get the king to satisfy the people’s (in her mind) just desire concerning Absalom

2 Sam 14:16 "For the king has heard, to deliver his servant out of the fist of the man seeking to eliminate me and my son together, out of the inheritance of God."

- V. She returns to her parallel case, in which David demonstrated the justice of the people's desire concerning Absalom
1. One man would have been assigned as avenger of blood to eliminate her son
 2. And, surprisingly, David was effectively the one man who was keeping as outcast someone whom everyone perhaps felt had (on some level) justifiably eliminated a rapist who had gotten off on a technicality (per several commentators)

2 Sam 14:17 "And your servant said, 'The word of my lord the king will now be restful.'

For as the Angel of God, so is my lord the king to hear the good and the evil. And Yahweh your God is with you."

W. Words and phrases

1. This could also be a prayer she prayed, "May the word of my lord the king be restful"
2. The words "restful" and "inheritance" (previous v) are also together in Deut 12:9
3. "Angel/ Messenger of God" is also, I believe, used of the Son in Gen 31:31, Exod 14:19, Jdg 6:20; 13:6, 9
 - a. Same as "Angel of Yahweh," Gen 22:11, 15, where He calls Himself Yahweh in v 16
 - b. Which was also who found Hagar, was in the burning bush, Exod 3:2, blocked Balaam, Num 22:22-35, spoke to Israel, Jdg 2:1, to Gideon, 6:11, to Samson's dad, 13:13
 - c. These were the instances they knew about
4. I.e., David had adopted a Divine perspective, as we should, 1 Cor 2:16, "We have the mind of Christ."

Kid-speak: Is Jesus trying to teach us to think the way He does? Yes.

X. "The word of my lord the king will now be restful," as in her case, so in Israel's case

Y. "To hear *both* the good and the wrongful"

1. If something was pleasing to God, David would know it from

the Law

2. If something was off, David would detect that too
3. “Hear,” of listening to a case to decide it
- Z. “And Yahweh your God is with you”
 1. She agrees with Joab’s assessment that, though David had lost a step, he was still God’s man
 2. David could be counted on to act justly

IV. How does this relate to Christ?

Israel herself is outcast now, but Christ will bring her back.

V. For the Walking Wounded (1Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”) God’s bridges have spiritually handicapped lanes.

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VI. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong? How have I lost righteousness?**

Do I read the Law in my heart as a restorative document?

VII. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”): **How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?**

I will prefer to be a restorer more than to be right.

VIII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?** Having been *included in* God’s plan of reconciliation, may we *walk in* reconciliation towards on another.

Vision: Especially now, being co-heirs with Christ, there is nothing of our former rebellion that is remembered against us. That is why it is especially grievous for us to be censorious.

“Speaking the truth in love” should make us seriously consider how we DRAW LINES and GRADE OTHERS, especially about being inside the body or out.

Micah 6:8 is “do” judgment, not “enforce” judgment. “Do judgement” *yourself*. It’s followed by “love mercy,” because that’s how you treat *others*.

Mercy truly does exult over judgment, Jms 2:13.