A Message for the King

Day Twenty-One: Lessons from the Wise Woman of Tekoa

2 Samuel 14:2-20

The country is in the midst of a crisis.

The King’s sons seem to be wreaking havoc everywhere!

First one son rapes the princess, his half-sister. The King is rumored to be very angry about what his son did, but he has not yet held him accountable to the law.

Two years later, the country is stirred up again. Reports of one son killing all the other sons of the King have now been clarified. This son has killed the son who raped the princess two years ago! Now the King’s son is on the run.

It’s been three years since justice was brought down on Amnon for raping his sister Tamar. Absalom is still in hiding and the people do not know what to think. Is this another son who should be punished? What is the King going to do about this? Why has the King not sent for Absalom to have him answer for what he did to Amnon?

King David is uncertain what to do. He is grateful to Absalom for killing Amnon. Yet, he doesn’t call him back to court.

Joab, the general of David’s army, decides to do something about the problem.

He sends to the city of Tekoa and has a wise woman brought back to meet him. Joab asks this woman to help him get a message to David.
She is to dress and behave as though she is a widow who is also grieving over the death of one of her sons at the hand of her other son. Joab gives her a script to follow and sends her to see King David.

The woman does exactly as Joab tells her. She has the presence of mind to deliver the story to David and to also respond to his questions and comments appropriately.

When David agrees to help her to bring back her son and to protect him from those who seek to avenge the life of his brother, the woman points something out to him.

She tells David that his promise to help of her seems like it comes from a guilty conscience on his part. As though not having brought back his own son who has been banished, he seeks to help her with her son.

She thanks David for his kindness and for his ability to see the good in protecting her son.

Now, David is not a foolish man. He can tell there is more to all of this than meets the eye. He asks the woman whether Joab was behind her coming to see him.

She acknowledges how wise David is to see through her act. She lets him know that, yes, Joab sent her in an effort to give David a different perspective regarding Absalom and his long absence.

David goes on to do exactly as Joab hoped, and calls Absalom back home. It took him another two years to bring Absalom back to court. Eventually, though he did, and Absalom was recognized as being in favor with the King.

What a job this woman was asked to do!

Could you do the same? Play the part convincingly, in front of the leader of your nation?

Joab chose a “wise woman” for a reason. He needed someone who could do what he asked, and do so in a way that would get David’s attention without causing him to be angry.

David obviously responded better to round about admonition. Remember how Nathan brought up David’s sin with Bathsheba by telling David a story (2 Sam. 12)? David also seems one who was ready to help others in need (1 Sam. 25:14-17).
Part of being a wise woman is having learned the art of what to say. Notice in Proverbs 31:26 it says, “She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.”

In Proverbs chapters 1, 2, and 3 we learn how much wisdom protects us and guides us, when that wisdom comes from God!

We may not ever have to take a message before the “king” in the way this woman did, but we do have to deal with our men. Husbands, employers, fathers, elders, leaders in our communities.

We can learn to speak to them with respect and honor in submission, while still being confident and capable women. Abigail was such a woman (1 Sam. 25:32-35) and so was Esther (Est. 7:1-6).

This wise woman was able to hold her own before the powerful king.

Confidence is found through experience and knowledge. Each of us can grow to be a wise woman if we will grow as God tells us to. Whether it is the wisdom and instruction described in Proverbs 1:1-7 or the qualities built through diligent effort in 2 Peter 1:5-11 – we CAN grow to be a woman like her.

Proverbs 31:30 sums it up well, “Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.”

The Lord has offered you the perfect training manual – His word. Use it to grow to be a woman ready when called upon – even if it is to deliver a message for the King.

Enjoy!