

2 Samuel 14.1-23 chiasm

A (vv. 1-4): Now Joab son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's mind was on Absalom. Joab sent to Tekoa and brought from there a **wise** woman. He said to her, "Pretend to be a mourner; put on mourning garments, do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead. Go to the king and speak to him as follows." **And Joab put the words into her mouth.** When the woman of Tekoa came to the king, **she fell on her face to the ground and did obeisance**, and said, "Help, O king!"

B (vv. 5-7): The king asked her, "What is with you?" She answered, "Alas, I am a widow woman; my man is dead. Your slave had two sons, and they quarrelled with one another in the field; there was **no one to rescue them**, and one struck the other and killed him. Behold, **x the whole clan has risen against your slave. They say, 'Give up the man who struck his brother, so that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he murdered,** even if we **destroy the heir** as well! Thus they would quench my one remaining ember and leave to my man neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth."

C (vv. 8-12): Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you." The woman of Tekoa said to the king, "On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and his throne be guiltless." The king said, "If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again." Then she said, "Please, may the king remember YHWH your God in mind, so that the avenger of blood may kill no more, and my son not be destroyed." He said, "As YHWH lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground." Then the woman said, "Please let your slave speak a word to my lord the king." He said, "Speak."

B' (vv. 13-17): The woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again. We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up. **But God will not take away a life; he will devise plans so as not to push away a banished one.** Now I have come to say this to my lord the king because **the people have made me afraid**; your handmaid thought, 'I will speak to the king; it may be that the king will make the word of his slave. **For the king will hear and rescue his handmaid** from the hand of the man who **would destroy both me and my son off from the heritage of God.**' Your slave thought, 'The word of my lord the king will set me at rest'; for my lord the king is like the angel of God, discerning good and evil. YHWH your God be with you!"

A' (vv. 18-23): Then the king answered the woman, "Do not withhold from me anything I ask you." The woman said, "Let my lord the king speak." The king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?" The woman answered and said, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, one cannot turn right or left from anything that my lord the king has said. **For it was your slave Joab who commanded me; it was he who put all these words into the mouth of your slave.** In order to change the course of affairs your slave Joab did this. But my lord has **wisdom** like the **wisdom** of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth."

Then the king said to Joab, "Very well, I grant this; go, bring back the young man **Absalom** **Joab prostrated himself with his face to the ground and did obeisance**, and blessed the king; and Joab said, "Today your slave knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his slave." So Joab set off, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.