

Run, Cushie, Run and Tell The Whole Truth

Key Verse: Then said Joab to Cushie, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushie bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. (2 Samuel 18:21, KJV)

The book of Second Samuel gives us a moment of high drama. A civil war has just ended. A father sits waiting between two gates. His son is dead. The battlefield is quiet. But the news has not arrived. And into that terrible silence come two runners. One is famous. One is obscure. One is eager. One is faithful. One is a priest's son who runs ahead with half a message. The other is a man whose name tells us he was a black man. His name is Cushie. The text introduces him with breathtaking simplicity. Joab said to Cushie, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushie bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. That is all. No genealogy. No backstory. No great introduction. Just a man, a command, and a road. But in that brief appearance, Cushie teaches the church something unforgettable about the nature of gospel preaching. He teaches us the difference between those who run with a partial message and those who run with the whole truth.

Let me say plainly what the text implies. The name Cushie is derived from Cush, the ancient region south of Egypt, roughly corresponding to modern day Sudan and the horn of Africa. When the Old Testament calls a man Cushie, it is telling us his origin. He was a black man, an African, serving in the army of King David. This matters not for any fleshly reason but for a spiritual one. The gospel has always been for every tribe and tongue and people and nation. Cushie stands in the text as a living reminder that the kingdom of God does not recognize racial hierarchy. A black man carried the hardest news of the entire civil war. A black man told the king that his son was dead. And a black man, because he was faithful, did what even the swift and eager Ahimaaz could not fully do. He told the whole truth.

Now consider the contrast between the two runners. Ahimaaz the son of Zadok was a priest's son. He was well connected. He was eager. He begged Joab, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings. But Joab refused him. Joab understood something. The news was terrible. The king's son Absalom was dead. Joab knew that David would not receive that news as a victory. He would receive it as a wound. So Joab said to Ahimaaz, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, because the king's son is dead. But when Cushie was sent, Ahimaaz persisted. He ran anyway. He took a different route, the way of the plain, and he outran Cushie. He arrived first. He shouted, All is well. But when the king asked, Is the young man Absalom safe? Ahimaaz

could not answer. He said, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. He had speed but no substance. He had legs but no truth. He ran ahead of his commission. He wanted the glory of being first without the grief of being honest. Cushie arrived second. But when he came, he spoke fully. The king asked again, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushie answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. In other words, Absalom is dead. Cushie did not soften the blow. He did not hide the hard part. He did not try to make bad news sound like good news. He told the king exactly what the king needed to hear. He was faithful.

Here is the spiritual parallel that the church desperately needs to hear. Ahimaaz represents a whole generation of preachers who take shortcuts. They run fast. They arrive first. They shout, All is well. But when the King asks the hard questions, they cannot answer. Two groups in particular fit this description today. The first group is the preachers who spend their energies defending the doctrine of the Trinity. They have creeds and councils and complex diagrams. They can tell you about three persons and one essence. They can use words like homoousios. They run fast with their theological systems. But when you ask them to preach the identity of Jesus Christ from the King James Bible, they stumble.

For the scripture declares plainly, For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6, KJV) That same prophet Isaiah wrote, I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. (Isaiah 45:5, KJV) And the apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, declared, And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (1 Timothy 3:16, KJV) The scripture does not say a person was manifest in the flesh. It says God was manifest in the flesh. Jesus Christ is the Father manifested in human flesh. He said himself, I and my Father are one. (John 10:30, KJV) And again, He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. (John 14:9, KJV) But the Trinitarian preachers, for all their running, often cannot say that plainly. They give the king a great tumult but they know not what it is.

The second group is the health and wealth preachers. These are the fastest runners of all. They fill stadiums. They broadcast to millions. They shout, All is well. They promise prosperity. They promise healing. They promise that God wants you rich, comfortable, and free from trouble. They run by the way of the plain and they outrun everyone. But when the king asks about the death of Absalom, when the king asks about suffering and sacrifice and

taking up the cross, they have nothing to say. For Jesus said, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (Luke 9:23, KJV) And again, In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33, KJV) And Paul wrote, Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (2 Timothy 3:12, KJV) The health and wealth preachers run past these verses. They do not mention them. They say, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.

Worse still, both groups refuse to preach the new birth as the apostles preached it. On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up and declared, Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38, KJV) Not in the titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Not repeating a sinner's prayer. But in the name of Jesus Christ. The whole New Testament shows us believers being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts 8:16, Acts 10:48, Acts 19:5, KJV) And when they received the Holy Ghost, they spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4, KJV) Paul asked the disciples at Ephesus, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? (Acts 19:2, KJV) But the Ahimaaz preachers do not ask that question. They do not preach Acts 2:38. They run around it. They take the shortcut. They arrive first with a message about grace without obedience, about belief without repentance, about Jesus without the new birth. They shout, All is well. But the King is not fooled.

Now consider Cushie. Cushie is the faithful One God preacher. He does not run the fastest. He does not take the shortcut. He runs the hard road. He carries the full message. He tells the king that Absalom is dead. He does not hide the cost of rebellion. In the same way, the faithful preacher of the One God stands on the rock of scripture and declares that the LORD our God is one LORD. (Deuteronomy 6:4, KJV) He declares that Jesus Christ is that One LORD manifested in flesh. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (Colossians 2:9, KJV) He does not need three persons to explain the mystery. He simply preaches what the scripture says: God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. (2 Corinthians 5:19, KJV)

The faithful Cushie preacher also preaches the whole counsel of God concerning the new birth. He does not skip Acts 2:38. He proclaims it boldly: Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. He tells people that baptism is not a symbol but an answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:21, KJV) He tells them

that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5, KJV) He tells them that the promise of the Holy Ghost is for them and for their children and for all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (Acts 2:39, KJV).

Let me give you an anecdote. In the early 1900s, a black preacher named William J. Seymour was the human leader of the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles. He was a black man, born in Louisiana to former slaves. He had only a third grade education. He was not a fast runner by the world's standards. He was not polished. He was not wealthy. He often sat behind two wooden boxes because he had no pulpit. He was a Cushi. But from that little mission on Azusa Street, the message of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues spread to every continent. Missionaries went to India, China, Africa, Europe, and South America. They did not run fast. They ran faithfully. They told the whole truth.

Here is another anecdote. In 1973, a black preacher named G.T. Haywood died long before many of us were born. He was a Cushi. He wrote songs and preached sermons that declared Jesus is the Father, Jesus is the Son, Jesus is the Holy Ghost. He baptized thousands in the name of Jesus Christ. He did not have a television program. He did not have a mega church by modern standards. But his writings are still read. His songs are still sung. He arrived second. But when he arrived, he told the whole truth. And here is a third anecdote from our own day. In many inner cities across America, faithful pastors stand in storefront churches with small congregations. They have no stadiums. They have no broadcast deals. They have no private jets. But they preach the One God. They baptize in the name of Jesus Christ. They tell their people to seek the Holy Ghost. They tell them that suffering is part of the Christian life. They do not promise health and wealth. They promise the presence of Jesus in the fire. They are Cushis. They run the hard road. And God sees them. God records their names.

The contrast between Ahimaaz and Cushi is the contrast between popularity and faithfulness. Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain. That means he took the easy ground. He ran where the running was smooth. He arrived first. But he had nothing to say when the king asked about Absalom. The Trinitarian and health and wealth preachers run the same way. They take the easy road. They avoid difficult doctrines. They avoid the offense of the cross. They avoid the necessity of baptism in Jesus name. They avoid the necessity of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues. They preach a broad road that many can run. But when the King asks, Is the young man Absalom safe? when the King asks, Have you been

born again of water and the Spirit? they cannot answer. They saw a great tumult, but they knew not what it was.

Cushi, by contrast, ran the road that Joab sent him on. It was not the plain. It was the harder way. He arrived second. But when he arrived, he told the whole truth. He said, The enemies of my lord the king be as that young man is. He did not flinch. He did not soften the blow. He did not try to make the death of Absalom sound like good news. He told the king the truth about his son. The faithful One God preacher does the same. He tells the truth about sin. He tells the truth about judgment. He tells the truth about the new birth. He tells the truth about the necessity of repentance, baptism in Jesus name, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost. He does not promise that the Christian life will be easy. He promises that Jesus will walk with you through the fire. For the scripture says, When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (Isaiah 43:2, KJV)

Let me say this plainly. The church today is filled with Ahimaaz preachers. They run fast. They have large platforms. They are celebrated on social media. They publish books. They sell merchandise. But when you ask them, Is the young man Absalom safe? when you ask them, Must I be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins? when you ask them, Must I receive the Holy Ghost as the apostles did on the day of Pentecost? they say, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. They do not have the answer. They have not told the whole truth. But there are still Cushis in the land. There are still faithful preachers who bow to their commission and run. They may not be famous. They may not be first. They may be black men and women standing in small pulpits. They may be missionaries laboring in obscurity. They may be lay people witnessing to their neighbors. But they run with the whole message. They declare that Jesus Christ is the One God, the everlasting Father, the mighty God. They declare that repentance, baptism in Jesus name, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost are not optional but essential. They declare that the Christian life includes tribulation, but that the same Jesus who walked through the fire will walk with them.

And here is the beautiful promise. When the King returns, He will not ask who arrived first. He will not ask who had the largest platform. He will ask, Did you tell the whole truth? Did you tell my people about my name? Did you tell them to be born again of water and of the Spirit? Did you tell them that I am the LORD and there is none else? The Cushis will stand in that day and hear, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. (Matthew 25:21, KJV)

So let me ask you today. Which runner are you listening to? Are you running after the Ahimaaz preachers who tell you all is well while you have never been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins? Are you running after those who promise health and wealth while you have never received the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues? Or are you listening to the Cushis who tell you the whole truth, even when it is hard?

And let me ask you another question. Which runner are you? Are you an Ahimaaz who runs fast but speaks partial truths? Or are you a Cushy who runs faithfully with the whole message of the One God and the new birth? You do not need to be famous. You do not need to be first. You only need to be faithful. Bow to your commission and run. Tell the world that Jesus is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Tell them to repent, be baptized in His name, and receive His Spirit. Tell them that He is worthy whether He saves them from the fire or through it. Cushy bowed to Joab and ran. The church today must bow to the Lord Jesus and run. Not for fame. Not for speed. Not for recognition. But because the King is waiting between the gates, and the news of His kingdom must be carried to every tribe and tongue and nation. And yes, black people are still gifted runners. But more than that, all of God's children are called to run the race set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2, KJV)

Run, Cushy. Run and tell the whole truth.