

David
Part 23
“David returns to Jerusalem”

2 Samuel 19

9 Throughout the tribes of Israel, all the people were arguing among themselves, saying, “The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies; he is the one who rescued us from the hand of the Philistines. But now he has fled the country to escape from Absalom; **10** and Absalom, whom we anointed to rule over us, has died in battle. So why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?”

There is a dispute among the Israelites:

- One side remembers the good David has done and credits David for what he has done.
- The other side states that David has fled the country to escape Absalom and now with Absalom dead. They state he has abandoned them and they **say nothing about bringing the king back?**

Vs. 11-15

11 King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests: “Ask the elders of Judah, ‘Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his palace, since what is being said throughout Israel has reached the king at his quarters? **12** You are my relatives, my own flesh and blood. So why should you be the last to bring back the king?’ **13** And say to Amasa, ‘Are you not my own flesh and blood? May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you are not the commander of my army for life in place of Joab.’”

14 He won over the hearts of the men of Judah so that they were all of one mind. They sent word to the king, “Return, you and all your men.” **15** Then the king returned and went as far as the Jordan.

Now the men of Judah had come to Gilgal to go out and meet the king and bring him across the Jordan. Judah has gotten the word and is now on the move to restore David to the throne.

- Judah is special to David. David was first the king of Judah before becoming king of Israel. David even says in **Vs. 12** You are my relatives, my own flesh and blood. So why should you be the last to bring back the king?’
- David in his return has a heart to reconcile. Even towards Amasa, his own nephew and former captain of Absalom’s army. David says, **‘Are you not my own flesh and blood? May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you are not the commander of my army for life in place of Joab.’**”
- David models a Christ like spirit and will not march his way back into Jerusalem until “they were all of one mind”. Unlike Absalom who orchestrates and self appoints his own coronation and seat on the throne, David is a true king and he will only return if he is wanted.

Much like false kings and the True King in our lives. False kings march right in with greed and haste to take the throne of your heart; but Jesus the True King will only come when he is invited and wanted.

Vs. 16-23

16 Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David. **17** With him were a thousand Benjamites, along with Ziba, the steward of Saul’s household, and his fifteen sons and twenty servants. They rushed to the Jordan, where the king was. **18** They crossed at the ford to take the king’s household over and to do whatever he wished.

When Shimei son of Gera crossed the Jordan, he fell prostrate before the king **19** and said to him, “May my lord not hold me guilty. Do not remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. May the king put it out of his mind. **20** For I your servant know that I have sinned, but today I have come here as the first from the tribes of Joseph to come down and meet my lord the king.”

21 Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said, “Shouldn’t Shimei be put to death for this? He cursed the Lord’s anointed.”

22 David replied, “What does this have to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? What right do you have to interfere? Should anyone be put to death in Israel today? Don’t I know that today I am king over Israel?”

23 So the king said to Shimei, “You shall not die.” And the king promised him on oath.

There were three kinds of people that David encountered on his return to the throne:

The first is Shimei - The Hater

Shimei clearly opposed David in Ch. 16

Shimei showed a remarkably humble, contrite confession. He sinned greatly against David, and here he repented greatly before him.

- **Shimei’s repentance was humble** - Vs. 18 he fell prostrate before the king
- **Shimei’s repentance was honorable** - Vs. 19 “May my lord not hold me guilty. Do not remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. May the king put it out of his mind.
- **Shimei’s repentance was honest** - Vs. 20 “For I your servant know that I have sinned”

- **Shimei's repentance was put into action** - Vs. 20b "today I have come here as the first from the tribes of Joseph to come down and meet my lord the king."

When Abishai asked the question: "Shouldn't Shimei be put to death for this? He cursed the Lord's anointed."

David replied, "...**Should anyone be put to death in Israel today? Don't I know that today I am king over Israel?**" **So the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king promised him on oath.**

- David spared the life of Shimei, showing forgiveness to the man who had bitterly cursed him.

"Perhaps you have been like Shimei, who cursed king David, and you are afraid that Jesus will never forgive you. But David forgave Shimei, and Jesus is ready to forgive you. He delights in mercy. I do believe that the harps of heaven never give to Christ such happiness as he has when he forgives the ungodly, and says, 'Thy sins are forgiven; go in peace.'" **(Spurgeon)**

Vs. 24-30

24 Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, also went down to meet the king. He had not taken care of his feet or trimmed his mustache or washed his clothes from the day the king left until the day he returned safely.

25 When he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king asked him, "Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth?"

26 He said, "My lord the king, since I your servant am lame, I said, 'I will have my donkey saddled and will ride on it, so I can go with the king.' But Ziba my servant betrayed me. **27** And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king. My lord the king is like an angel of God; so do whatever you wish. **28** All my grandfather's descendants deserved nothing but death from my lord the king, but you gave your servant a

place among those who eat at your table. So what right do I have to make any more appeals to the king?"

29 The king said to him, "Why say more? I order you and Ziba to divide the land."

30 Mephibosheth said to the king, "Let him take everything, now that my lord the king has returned home safely."

The Second person is Mephibosheth - The Mystery Man

- The one who seemed to forsake David in Absalom's Rebellion.
- Ziba the servant of Saul, reported to David in Ch. 16 that "Mephibosheth is staying in Jerusalem, because he thinks, 'Today the Israelites will restore to me my grandfather's kingdom.'"
- This surely broke David's heart because David had shown great kindness to Mephibosheth, he had honored Mephibosheth as a way of honoring his dear friend Johnathan - Mephibosheth's father.
- It's funny how people changed around David based upon conditions like popularity and approval ratings. When David was in troubled times, it brought out the good, the bad and the ugly.
- When David was triumphant and strong he was honored. When he was under attack he was quickly despised by some.

Reminds me of

Proverbs 19:4

"Wealth attracts many friends,
but even the closest friend of the poor person deserts them."

- Now David gets the rest of the story directly from Mephibosheth which must have brought healing to David's heart.

Vs. 24 says “He (Mephibosheth) had not taken care of his feet or trimmed his mustache or washed his clothes from the day the king left until the day he returned safely.”

- This reveals that Ziba had misled to David about Mephibosheth.
- Mephibosheth never abandoned David in his heart.
- Truth is Mephibosheth had remained faithful and mourned the loss of David.

Vs. 31-39

31 Barzillai the Gileadite also came down from Rogelim to cross the Jordan with the king and to send him on his way from there. **32** Now Barzillai was very old, eighty years of age. He had provided for the king during his stay in Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. **33** The king said to Barzillai, “Cross over with me and stay with me in Jerusalem, and I will provide for you.”

34 But Barzillai answered the king, “How many more years will I live, that I should go up to Jerusalem with the king? **35** I am now eighty years old. Can I tell the difference between what is enjoyable and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats and drinks? Can I still hear the voices of male and female singers? Why should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? **36** Your servant will cross over the Jordan with the king for a short distance, but why should the king reward me in this way? **37** Let your servant return, that I may die in my own town near the tomb of my father and mother. But here is your servant Kimham. Let him cross over with my lord the king. Do for him whatever you wish.”

38 The king said, “Kimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him whatever you wish. And anything you desire from me I will do for you.”

39 So all the people crossed the Jordan, and then the king crossed over. The king kissed Barzillai and bid him farewell, and Barzillai returned to his home.

The Third is Barzillai - The loyal friend

Barzillai: man of iron, iron hearted

We don't know a lot about Barzillai other than this:

1. He was 80 years old
 2. He was wealthy
 3. He provided for David during his time of refuge from Absalom.
- I believe it's also fair to say Barzillai was wise.
 - The fact that he was 80 years old and was a wealthy man tells us he has seen a lot and accomplished a lot in his life.
 - Barzillai understood the ups and downs that life can bring and when David was in one of the most difficult times of his life, Barzillai was not moved by it.
 - In that hour, he remained loyal to David and lived up to his name a man of iron.
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- Another reason to believe Barzillai was wise was in the fact he was self aware.
 - Barzillai knew he was old, that his days were numbered and was content with going home. He said "Can I tell the difference between what is enjoyable and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats and drinks? Can I still hear the voices of male and female singers?"
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- Barzillai was wise to allow his son take his place and receive this reward in his place; He said "why should the king reward me in this way?"... "here is your servant Kimham. Let him cross over with my lord the king. Do for him whatever you wish."

- We don't know much about Barzillai but we do know this; he will forever be remembered in Scripture as a man wise enough to recognize the difference between the real king and the fake one. Barzillai stood with David when others abandoned him.

Vs. 39

...and then the king crossed over.

- Isn't God faithful?
- David has faced many trials and tribulations and God has once again protected him and restored him... God is faithful!

The theme remains the same in story of David... Will David keep his heart right?

It's was easier to feel sympathy for David when he is young and older King Saul is throwing spears to trying to kill him. Yet David kept his heart right with God and with Saul at that time.

Later on in David's life he experiences betrayal from his own son Absalom. Like in the days of Saul, David is again running for his life but now from someone younger than him. First from Saul who is older and now from someone younger than him.

Yet in the betrayal David keeps his heart right with God and with man. He mourned the death of Saul and he mourned the death of Absalom.

Then the three men mentioned in this chapter

- Shimei - The hater
- Mephibosheth - The mystery man
- Barzillai - The loyal friend

Each relationship was like a coin. On one side you have how they treated David while seated on the throne and the other side of the coin how they treated him during Absalom's Rebellion.

- David passed the test on every side.
- He never became bitter...
- He never avenged himself, when he could have easily done so...
- Every time David put his trust in God and God sustains David.

So David pins these words in

Psalm 18

1

I love you, Lord, my strength.

2

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

3

I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.

4

The cords of death entangled me;
the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me.

5

The cords of the grave coiled around me;
the snares of death confronted me.

6

In my distress I called to the Lord;
I cried to my God for help.
From his temple he heard my voice;
my cry came before him, into his ears.

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16

He reached down from on high and took hold of me;
he drew me out of deep waters.

17

He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
from my foes, who were too strong for me.

18

They confronted me in the day of my disaster,
but the Lord was my support.

19

He brought me out into a spacious place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.