

Sunday Night Message

July 26, 2020

2 Samuel 19 – The Return of the King

Topics – David;

Series – *2 Samuel*

Introduction

We have been studying the rebellion of Absalom for the past several weeks (2 Samuel 13 – 18). It really began with David's sin with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, Urijah the Hittite. According to the Law, David was worthy of death for both the adultery and the murder; but God spared his life. The consequences, however, were perhaps more serious than just the death of one man (See 2 Samuel 12:1 – 12). David's family paid a heavy price, and the nation of Israel also suffered greatly; all because of the sin of one man.

Preaching Point – Think before you act. You won't get away with your sin (Numbers 32:23), and your sin will likely negatively affect more people than just you.

Here in chapter nineteen, we will see the return of David to his capital city, Jerusalem. Absalom has been killed, and his army has surrendered. David is now coming back as the conquering king. His victory, however, is bittersweet because the defeated enemy was his own son, and deep down, David knows that all of these problems began with his own sin.

A Picture – We can see a picture of Christ here in this passage. Christ will return and reign in Jerusalem when all rebellion is put down.

I. **The Rebuke from Joab (vs. 1 – 8)**

Absalom was a traitor whose rebellion caused the death of many people in Israel. However, Absalom was still David's son. When David heard about the death of Absalom, he mourned as any father would. McGee believes that David mourned as he did, perhaps because he was not sure if Absalom was saved: "David's heart broke. Why? He was not sure of the young man's salvation; he was not sure where his son was."¹ David also knew that Absalom's rebellion was a reflection on his fatherhood. David was a great king, but a poor father.

David's men had just fought, and many of them died, in order to get the kingdom back for David. The men had won a great victory, but their victory felt more like a defeat because of the way David was grieving. His men entered the city like a defeated army, instead of those that had just won a glorious victory. It should have been a time of great celebration.

Practical Point – we are living in a day when the doing of right is condemned instead of rewarded, and the doing of evil is not only going unpunished, but is rewarded and encouraged.

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20)

¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 2 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 230.

Joab is the practical one in David's cabinet. He looks past the emotion and understands that David's grief at the loss of his rebellious son could cause David's men to rebel against him. Joab's rebuke was really a threat, because he stated that everybody (including Joab) would turn against David, if David did not honor his brave men.

Wiersbe said: "... leaders must still lead, even if their hearts are broken; that's one of the prices that leaders must pay."²

David had to put his feelings aside, and put on a brave front, and celebrate the great victory that his men fought to give him.

The gate that David sat in to review his troops was in Mahanaim. David's sitting in the gate also indicated that David was returning to his duties as the king.

II. The Repentance of Judah (vs. 9 – 15)

Both Israel and Judah were hesitant to immediately reinstate David as their king. The fact that God had used David to secure victories against all of their enemies was in his favor, and also considering that Absalom was now dead. David also had Abiathar and Zadok speaking on his behalf. The clincher seemed to be when he offered Joab's job to Amasa. By doing so, he was offering a pardon to all of the people that had formerly conspired against him. David was striving for unity.

This was also partially in retaliation for Joab's disregard of David's orders to keep Absalom alive. Amasa was related to Joab, but had fought for Absalom. However, this is not going to sit well with Joab (see 2 Samuel 20:8 – 10).

Joab did defy the king by killing Abner and Absalom, and David knew that Joab was capable of killing him as well. Joab had been gaining more and more favor with the men as David was no longer going out to battle with them (2 Samuel 21:15 – 17).

Both Israel and Judah agree to accept David's terms and welcome him back as their king.

Notice that David met the leaders from Judah at Gilgal. Gilgal was a place of great significance. Gilgal was the first place the Israelites camped when they crossed the Jordan before conquering Jericho; and Gilgal was where the people of Israel met with Samuel and Saul and renewed the kingdom, making Saul the king (1 Samuel 11:14 – 15).

III. The Remorse of Shimei? (vs. 16 – 23)

Shimei is the first one to welcome David. Shimei was the guy who cursed David and his men, and threw rocks at them, when they were headed out of the city back in 2 Samuel 16:5 – 14. David showed tremendous graciousness and mercy by not having this man put to death. David was trying to unify a kingdom. He was trying to win the people of God back to himself.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Restored*, "Be" Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2002), 118.

Shimei should have been put to death for speaking against the ruler of God's people (Exodus 22:8), but David was very gracious and forgiving. David had to hold Abishai back from killing him now twice. David knew that Shimei was a rebellious and evil man, however, and had his eye on him for the remainder of his reign.

David would also warn his son, Solomon about Shimei:

"And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood." (1 Kings 2:8-9)

Solomon would watch Shimei carefully, and when Shimei crossed the line, he had him put to death (See 1 Kings 2:36 – 46).

Notice that Ziba was also with Shimei. Back in chapter sixteen (vs. 1 – 4), we said we were not sure who the bad guy was – Mephibosheth or Ziba. But, here we see Ziba keeping bad company, by hanging around with Shimei.

Notice the phrase, "house of Joseph" (v. 20). This is interesting. Shimei was from tribe of Benjamin, and Benjamin was Joseph's brother. Eventually, however, the entire ten northern tribes – all but Judah and Levi, would be referred to as Ephraim, who was the son of Joseph.

IV. The Return of Mephibosheth (vs. 24 – 30)

Mephibosheth was actually the grandson of Saul who was graciously taken in by David back in chapter nine. According to Ziba, the reason why Mephibosheth did not leave with David out of Jerusalem was because Mephibosheth was seeking an opportunity to take over the kingdom for himself. We talked about this back when we covered 2 Samuel 16. We do not have dogmatic proof from the Scripture as to who was telling the truth, Ziba or Mephibosheth, but my money is on Mephibosheth. He certainly demonstrated the outward actions of somebody who was mourning.

David had already promised Mephibosheth's land to Ziba, but here he reconsiders and divides the land between them. David is trying to make everyone happy here. He is trying to unite the kingdom. David seems to be taking the easy way out. John Butler said: "David's sin was still hindering him from consistent good government."³

It could be, however, that David was testing Mephibosheth's reaction in order to determine his guilt or innocence, just as Solomon had done when the two harlots fought over the baby (1 Kings 3:16 – 28).

V. The Refusal of Barzillai (vs. 31 – 40)

³ John G. Butler, *Analytical Bible Expositor: I & II Samuel* (Clinton, IA: LBC Publications, 2010), 789.

Barzillai was a wealthy old man that supplied David with food and supplies when David had fled Jerusalem and crossed over the Jordan River. He was from Mahanaim (See 2 Samuel 17:27 – 29). David offers him a place in his kingdom, but Barzillai refuses, expresses his desire to live out the remainder of his days at his home on the eastern side of the Jordan. He does accompany David all the way to the Jordan River before turning back home.

Practical Point – At 80 years old, Barzillai could have stayed out of the battle between David and Absalom. However, he made it very clear whom he supported. He risked his life for a cause at eighty. You are never too old to fight for right in whatever you still can. You can pray; you can support the cause of right.

Barzillai offers to give David “Chimham” in his place, and David accepts. Chimham may have been Barzillai’s son (See 1 Kings 2:7). At the same time that David warned Solomon about Joab and Shimei, he also asked him to remember and be a blessing to the sons of Barzillai.

We know nothing else of Chimham except that there is a place near Bethlehem that bears his name (Jeremiah 41:17). Bethlehem is in the land of Judah.

VI. The Rift Between Israel and Judah (vs. 41 – 43)

We see here further evidence of a developing rift between the northern tribes and the tribe of Judah. (Note – the tribe of Levi was not given any land.) This will lead to another revolt led by Sheba in chapter twenty, that David will put down. Solomon manages to keep the nation together after the death of David, but the kingdom will eventually split in Rehoboam’s day (see 1 Kings 12)

