

# **The Life of David**

## **David Returns to Jerusalem**

*2 Samuel 19:8-43*

**Rev. Freddy Fritz**

November 15, 2020

## David Returns to Jerusalem

### Scripture

Absalom, King David's third son, staged a rebellion against his father. David fled from Jerusalem and was able to gather loyal supporters to himself. In the ensuing battle, Absalom and his army were defeated. Twenty thousand soldiers died and Absalom himself was also killed. David mourned for his son, Absalom. But then it was time for David to return to Jerusalem and reestablish the kingdom under his rule. Today's lesson is about David's return to Jerusalem and the grace he extended to those along the way.

Let's read about David's return to Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 19:8-43:

**<sup>8</sup>...Now Israel had fled every man to his own home. <sup>9</sup>And all the people were arguing throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies and saved us from the hand of the Philistines, and now he has fled out of the land from Absalom. <sup>10</sup>But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"**

**<sup>11</sup>And King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar the priests: "Say to the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his house, when the word of all Israel has come to the king? <sup>12</sup>You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?' <sup>13</sup>And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me and more also, if you are not commander of my army from now on in place of Joab.' " <sup>14</sup>And he swayed the heart of all the men of Judah as one man, so that they sent word to the king, "Return, both you and all your servants." <sup>15</sup>So the king came back to the Jordan, and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the**

king and to bring the king over the Jordan.

<sup>16</sup> And Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim, hurried to come down with the men of Judah to meet King David. <sup>17</sup> And with him were a thousand men from Benjamin. And Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan before the king, <sup>18</sup> and they crossed the ford to bring over the king's household and to do his pleasure. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was about to cross the Jordan, <sup>19</sup> and said to the king, "Let not my lord hold me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. Do not let the king take it to heart. <sup>20</sup> For your servant knows that I have sinned. Therefore, behold, I have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king." <sup>21</sup> Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed?" <sup>22</sup> But David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be as an adversary to me? Shall anyone be put to death in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" <sup>23</sup> And the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king gave him his oath.

<sup>24</sup> And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. He had neither taken care of his feet nor trimmed his beard nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came back in safety. <sup>25</sup> And when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" <sup>26</sup> He answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me, for your servant said to him, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go with the king.' For your servant is lame. <sup>27</sup> He has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what seems good to you. <sup>28</sup> For all my father's house were but men doomed to death before my lord the king, but you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right have I, then, to cry to the king?" <sup>29</sup> And the king said to

him, “Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba shall divide the land.”<sup>30</sup> And Mephibosheth said to the king, “Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home.”

<sup>31</sup> Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim, and he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan. <sup>32</sup> Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. He had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. <sup>33</sup> And the king said to Barzillai, “Come over with me, and I will provide for you with me in Jerusalem.” <sup>34</sup> But Barzillai said to the king, “How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? <sup>35</sup> I am this day eighty years old. Can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? <sup>36</sup> Your servant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with such a reward? <sup>37</sup> Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham. Let him go over with my lord the king, and do for him whatever seems good to you.” <sup>38</sup> And the king answered, “Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you, and all that you desire of me I will do for you.” <sup>39</sup> Then all the people went over the Jordan, and the king went over. And the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own home. <sup>40</sup> The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him. All the people of Judah, and also half the people of Israel, brought the king on his way.

<sup>41</sup> Then all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, “Why have our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David’s men with him?” <sup>42</sup> All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, “Because the king is our close relative. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king’s expense? Or has he given us any

gift?”<sup>43</sup> And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, “We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?” But the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel. (2 Samuel 19:8-43)

## Introduction

Pastor Matt Chandler writes about a time he and a couple of his friends invited a young woman named Kim to a gospel concert. Matt was hopeful that Kim would come to Christ that evening; however, what occurred was a “train wreck.” Chandler writes:

The preacher took the stage, and disaster ensued....He gave a lot of statistics about STDs. There was a lot of, “You don’t want syphilis, do you?”....His big illustration was to take out a single red rose. He smelled the rose dramatically...caressed its petals, and talked about how beautiful this rose was and how it had been fresh cut that day. [Then] he threw the rose out into the crowd, and he encouraged everyone to pass it around. As he neared the end of his message, he asked for the rose back....[But by now] it was broken and drooping, and the petals were falling off. He held up this now-ugly rose for all to see, and his big finish was this: “Now who in the world would want *this*?” His word and his tone were merciless. His essential message, which was supposed to represent Jesus’ message to a world of sinners, was this: “Hey, don’t be a dirty rose.”

Matt didn’t hear from Kim for a few weeks, until one day her mother called Matt to inform him that Kim had been in an accident. Matt immediately went to visit her. He writes that in the middle of their conversation, seemingly out of nowhere, she asked him, “Do you think I’m a dirty rose?” Chandler writes that his heart sank inside him. But he began to explain to her the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus wants the rose. It is Jesus’ desire to

save, redeem, and restore the dirty rose.<sup>1</sup>

King David had just experienced rebellion, betrayal, anger, and rejection. However, he had won the battle against his rebellious son, Absalom. Now that he was set to return to Jerusalem, many wondered how David would treat those who had opposed him. Would he treat his opponents with harshness and disfavor? They certainly deserved it. However, instead of deserved harshness and disfavor, we see David displaying grace and mercy to others upon his return to Jerusalem.

### Lesson

Second Samuel 19:8-43 shows us the grace of the returning king.

Let's use the following outline:

1. Grace Is Given to the Unable (19:8-15, 41-43)
2. Grace Is Given to the Angry (19:16, 18-23)
3. Grace Is Given to the Betrayer (19:17-18, 26-27, 29)
4. Grace Is Given to the Disabled (19:24-30)
5. Grace Is Given to the Generous (19:31-40)

#### I. Grace Is Given to the Unable (19:8-15, 41-43)

First, grace is given to the unable.

Verse 8b says, **“Now Israel had fled every man to his own home.”** All those in Israel (that is, the ten northern tribes) who had supported Absalom in his rebellion against David and his kingdom fled back to their homes. They affirmed that David—not Absalom—had delivered them from their enemies and from the Philistines. Moreover, Absalom, whom they had anointed as the replacement king, was now dead. So, they argued among themselves about bringing David back as king over all Israel. But they

---

<sup>1</sup> Matt Chandler, *The Explicit Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2012), 206-208.

had been part of the rebellious army that had tried to kill David.

Commentator Richard Phillips summarizes their predicament, “The problem was how to approach David and secure his favor once again.” Phillips continues, “The Israelites’ situation with respect to David was similar to the sinner’s quandary with God: having offended our Lord in rebellion and sin, we question what we can do to regain his lost favor. The indecision of the Israelites mirrors our own futility in reconciling ourselves to the throne of God.”<sup>2</sup>

The good news for the people of Israel is that David took the initiative to do what they were unable to do for themselves. (He organized a meeting with his own tribe, the people of Judah. Later, the people of Israel complained that the people of Judah did not invite them to meet David, as we read in verses 41-43.) However, my point is that David extended grace to the rebellious people of Israel. They deserved his disfavor but he gave them grace.

## II. Grace Is Given to the Angry (19:16, 18-23)

Second, grace is given to the angry.

David arrived at the Jordan River on his return to Jerusalem. Now, you may recall that on his flight from Jerusalem, Shimei angrily hurled curses and stones at David at Bahurim (2 Samuel 16:5-8). Perhaps Shimei expected David to be defeated. But now David was victorious and returning to Jerusalem. So, Shimei had to rethink his relationship to David. Verse 16 says, **“And Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim, hurried to come down with the men of Judah to meet King David.”** As soon as Shimei saw David, we read in verses 18b-20a, **“And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was about to**

---

<sup>2</sup> Richard D. Phillips, *2 Samuel*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Iain M. Duguid, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2018), 338.

**cross the Jordan, and said to the king, ‘Let not my lord hold me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. Do not let the king take it to heart. For your servant knows that I have sinned.’ ”**

Some think that Shimei’s repentance was not true repentance. He mistakenly thought that David would lose the battle against Absalom. But David was actually victorious and now Shimei was merely trying to save his skin. Abishai, one of David’s generals, certainly thought that Shimei’s repentance was fake. Once again, he wanted to lop off his head. But David would not allow it. In fact, David said to Shimei, **“You shall not die.” And the king gave him his oath (19:23).**

Yes, it was true that Shimei had once been angry against God’s anointed king on earth. But David now saw a man who confessed to him his previous sin of anger.

So, David extended grace to the sinner that confessed his sin.

### **III. Grace Is Given to the Betrayer (19:17-18, 26-27, 29)**

Third, grace is given to the betrayer.

Now Shimei did not come alone to David. In addition to the thousand Benjaminites who were with him, **“Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan before the king, and they crossed the ford to bring over the king’s household and to do his pleasure” (19:17b-18a).** This is all that is said about Ziba.

We recall that Ziba met David when he fled from Jerusalem (2 Samuel 16:1-4). Ziba had a couple of donkeys with food and wine for David and his men. This was a risky trip because Absalom was about to capture Jerusalem. Ziba was at that time the servant of Saul’s grandson, Mephibosheth. When David asked Ziba where Mephibosheth was, Ziba betrayed his master by saying that he stayed in Jerusalem in order to regain the kingdom for himself.



Without hearing Mephibosheth's side of the story at that time, David gave all that belonged to Mephibosheth to Ziba.

In a short while, David would also meet and hear Mephibosheth's side of the story. Rather than punish Ziba for betraying his master, David returned the previous award to Ziba back to the original arrangement (*cf.* 2 Samuel 9:10), as he said in verse 29, **"I have decided: you and Ziba shall divide the land."** That is, Ziba, his sons, and servants would farm the land and they would share the produce in such a way as to provide for Mephibosheth.

David could have punished Ziba for his betrayal. But he had helped David and seemed willing to do so again. So, David extended grace to one who had betrayed his master.

#### **IV. Grace Is Given to the Disabled (19:24-30)**

Fourth, grace is given to the disabled.

Verse 24 states, **"And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. He had neither taken care of his feet nor trimmed his beard nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came back in safety."** David wanted to know why Mephibosheth did not leave Jerusalem with him. Mephibosheth, who was crippled in his feet and dependent on others for help, told David that Ziba had deceived him when he left without him to bring the food and wine to David. Mephibosheth's bedraggled appearance gave proof of his loyalty to David. Moreover, Mephibosheth affirmed that he really did not care about property and wealth; he simply wanted King David back in Jerusalem, as he said in verse 30, **"Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home."**

Mephibosheth loved David. We remember that Mephibosheth was David's best friend, Jonathan's, son. David had previously allowed Mephibosheth to eat with him. Now that David had returned, Mephibosheth was delighted. And David once again

extended grace to one who was disabled.

## V. Grace Is Given to the Generous (19:31-40)

And fifth, grace is given to the generous.

Verses 31-32 state, **“Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim, and he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan. Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. He had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man.”** David wanted Barzillai to join him in Jerusalem. But Barzillai said that he was too old. He simply wanted to spend his last days in his own home. Barzillai offered for Chimham to go with David. David accepted Barzillai’s offer and promised to do for Barzillai whatever he desired of David.

Commentators point out that David was faithful to his promise to Barzillai. Four hundred years later, the prophet Jeremiah said that after the death of Gedaliah, some Israelites fled to a place called “Geruth Chimham near Bethlehem” (Jeremiah 41:17). Apparently, David gave Chimham some property near Bethlehem. It could have been some of his own family’s property.

Barzillai had been generous to David and his followers in their time of great need. Now, David was generous to Barzillai. David extended grace to the generous.

## Conclusion

Therefore, having analyzed David returning to Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 19:8-43, let us respond by receiving the grace of our returning King Jesus.

David Slagle of Decatur, GA tells a story about his being from the South and his love of ribs. He and some friends drove 50 minutes to a restaurant that had amazing ribs. The place was

packed, and the food was great. It was “all you can eat rib night.” Rib bones were piling up as fast as the line to get in.

But, as you know, eating ribs is a messy business. Barbecue sauce gets on your face, fingers, and clothes. Dirty napkins pile up next to half-eaten bowls of baked beans and coleslaw. When David and his friends had eaten all they could, they paid their tab and left.

That’s when he reached into his pocket for his car keys and came up empty. He hoped that he had left his keys in the ignition. But they were not there. His key ring had not only his car keys but also the keys to his house and his office. He realized that his keys had slid off into trash can, along with leftover bones, corn cobs, coleslaw, and barbecue sauce.

That is when he realized that he was going to have to go through the trash cans to find his car keys. He fished through bones, beans, barbecue, corn, cake, coleslaw, and a host of saliva-soaked napkins. A shiny layer of trashcan slime coated his arms before he finally grasped hold of those precious keys.

David Slagle concludes by saying, “I think about our dumpster-diving God. I mean no disrespect by calling him that. On the contrary, I have a soaring adoration for the infinite God who left a pristine, sinless heaven to search through the filth and rubbish of this fallen world for something precious to him—me.”<sup>3</sup>

David’s actions point to his Greater Son, Jesus Christ. Instead of deservedly receiving his harshness and disfavor, Jesus offers us grace. We are the unable, the angry, the betrayer, the disabled, and, yes, even the generous to whom he gives his love and mercy and grace. Just as David returned to Jerusalem, Jesus is one day also returning to Jerusalem. Let us respond by receiving the grace of our returning King Jesus. Amen.

---

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2008/november/16248.html>.

# Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church  
is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ  
and membership in his church family,  
develop them to Christlike maturity,  
equip them for their ministry in the church  
and life mission in the world,  
in order to magnify God's name.*

## Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can  
be found at:

1. [www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons](http://www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons).
2. [www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp](http://www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp).
3. [www.sermonaudio.com/source\\_detail.asp?sourceid=Fred-dyFritz](http://www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=Fred-dyFritz).

## Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church (PCA)

*Answers for Life!*

Address: 19911 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, FL 33647

Telephone: (813) 973-2484

Fax: (813) 973-4673

Email: [Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org](mailto:Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org)

Web site: [www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org](http://www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org)