

1 **THE RETURN OF THE KING**

2 Samuel 19

2 **WARRIORS & POETS**

- A verse-by-verse, story-by-story through the united kingdom period of Israel, focusing specifically on her three kings: Saul, David, and Solomon.
- In examining their reigns, we will be looking for lessons that are directly applicable to our own status as “priests and kings” unto God, but we will especially be looking for places where we see the example of Jesus as a “better king” foreshadowed by the positive or negative aspects of these temporal kings.

3 **REVIEW**

- David’s army has defeated Absalom’s army on the field of battle.
- Despite David’s orders, Absalom has been slain in battle by the hand of Joab.
- Initially despondent over the death of Absalom, David has been admonished by Joab to stop weeping over his victory before he loses the last of his servants who are loyal to him.
- Rising to the occasion, David prepares to return to Jerusalem.

4 **THE NATIONAL DEBATE**

- *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. But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"* (2 Samuel 19:9-10)

5 **THE NATIONAL DEBATE**

- After the defeat of Absalom’s army, the surviving troops flee back to their homes. Debates begin raging about the nation’s future, especially when the indecisive Israelites were reminded that David had been a pretty good king—he had fulfilled all of their expectations for a king in driving off the Philistines and giving them peace from their enemies.
- Israel, quick to desert David, is equally quick to take him back. But David’s own tribe, the people of Judah, are less willing.

6 **BUILDING BRIDGES**

- *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? You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?' 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.'"* (2 Samuel 19:11-13)

7 **A FAMILY AFFAIR**

- There has been a slowly widening political gap between Judah and the northern tribes of Israel which began as far back as the time of Joshua and will eventually culminate between the dividing of the kingdom.
- It is important to understand that Absalom’s revolt was a Judean revolt. It was not an outsider against the house of David—rather it was the house of David against the house of

David. All of the principle actors were David Absalom's family members.

8 **REACHING OUT**

- The people of Judah are now understandably hesitant to bring David back. After all, they stand to be punished the most severely if David should prove vengeful.
- David does not sit passively on the sidelines waiting for an invitation to come back to Jerusalem—instead, he reaches out to them through the priests Zadok and Abiathar, who are his chief partisans in Jerusalem.

9 **STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT**

- Part of David's strategy involves reaching out to his nephew Amasa. Amasa was the general of Absalom's army, and now David offers him the command of the captain of his own hosts in place of his other nephew, Joab.
- Despite Joab's somewhat dubious track record, he had always been loyal to David's *cause* if not his *commands*—but in the matter of Absalom, Joab went too far, and now David means to replace him.

10 **DAVID RETURNS**

- *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." 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. (2 Samuel 19:14-15)*
- David's efforts are successful, and when David crosses the Jordan back into Israel, the tribe of Judah is there to welcome him back.

11 **THREE ENCOUNTERS**

- When David fled Jerusalem, he had a series of encounters with people who were still loyal him that strengthened, encouraged, and enabled him to keep fighting even when all seemed lost.
- As David returns to Jerusalem, he has a series of three encounters which set the tone for the kind of king he will be as he is restored to his throne.

12 **MERCY TO THE REBEL**

Shimei

13 **SHIMEI**

- *And Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim, hurried to come down with the men of Judah to meet King David. 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, 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, 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. (2 Samuel 19:16-19)*

14 **SHIMEI**

- *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." Abishai the son of Zeruiah*

answered, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?" 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?" And the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king gave him his oath. (2 Samuel 19:20-23)

15 **SHIMEI**

- The men of Judah are so anxious to show their enthusiasm for David that they do not wait for him to cross the Jordan river, but rather go over to greet him and help him, his household, and his army cross.
- But several non-Judahites also cross the Jordan river to greet king David: notable among these is Shimei.
- Previously, Shimei had reviled David publicly, following him as he fled Jerusalem, mocking him, and throwing rocks at him.

16 **SHIMEI**

- Now, Shimei realizes the magnitude of his mistake. He had thought David's kingship was over, and that he could mock and revile him with impunity.
- But now, David is returning to power, and according to the custom of the day it would not be long before Shimei would be punished—with death.
- With no other options, Shimei is forced to come to the king and seek his mercy and forgiveness.

17 **SHIMEI**

- Before David could respond to Shimei's petition, Abishai points out that Shimei has "cursed the Lord's anointed"—a sin prohibited by the Torah (Exodus 22:28). He offers once again to put Shimei to death for David.
- Without disputing Shimei's guilt, David refuses to sully his day of triumph with the execution of any fellow Israelite. Distancing himself from the "sons of Zeruiah", decrees that Shimei will not die for his crime against the throne.

18 **SHIMEI**

- Shimei will eventually be punished, but on another day and for another reason.
- But Shimei is far from the only person seeking David's clemency this day.

19 **MERCY TO REBELS**

- This is one of the most significant ways in which David typifies Christ as a king: he is always looking to show mercy to rebels and to those who have betrayed him.
- Jesus is a better king than David in this way because his mercy is greater in scope and magnitude, and is more enduring, than David's mercy.

20 **MERCY TO REBELS**

- *For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now*

received reconciliation. (Romans 5:7-11)

21 **MERCY IN JUSTICE**

Mephibosheth

22 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- *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. And when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"* (2 Samuel 19:24-25)

23 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- *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. 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. 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?" And the king said to him, "Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba shall divide the land." And Mephibosheth said to the king, "Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home." (2 Samuel 19:26-30)*

24 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, makes the trek out to the Jordan to meet the king. This was at least a twenty mile trip, and Mephibosheth had the additional complication of being "lame in both feet."
- Mephibosheth has not trimmed his beard or washed his clothes since the day that David departed from Jerusalem. He comes to David professing his innocence and begging his mercy since he has been (according to his version of the story) falsely accused by his servant Ziba.

25 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- On David's way out of town, Ziba (Saul's old servant, who had been put in charge of the household of Mephibosheth when David had restored the latter to the possessions and property of Saul) had accused Mephibosheth of staying behind in the hopes that when everything blew over, he would be set on the throne.
- David had then given all of Saul's estate to Ziba since the latter had been loyal to David, and brought him provisions and beasts of burden for his journey across the Jordan.

26 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- But appearing before David now, Mephibosheth's physical condition seems to indicate otherwise. And so David asks for his story.
- Mephibosheth states that Ziba deceived him, and prevented him from gaining access to a donkey so that he could go with the king. Furthermore, Ziba had slandered Mephibosheth, spreading lies about him and his true intentions.
- Mephibosheth ends by placing his fate in David's hands, comparing David to "an angel of God" and trusting him to handle the matter wisely.

27 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- David was in a dilemma.
- On the one hand, Ziba had provided him with valuable help in time of need and proven loyal to his cause even when everyone else was against him.
- On the other hand, Mephibosheth had provided direct physical evidence and credible oral testimony to the effect that he had always been loyal to David.

28 **MEPHIBOSHETH**

- Unsure whom to believe, David eventually settles upon a compromise which will render justice to whichever man is innocent and mercy to whichever man is guilty:
- He divides the estate of Saul (which is David's by right) between Ziba and Mephibosheth.
- Mephibosheth expresses his humility and gratitude to David and insists that the only thing he cares about is the fact that David has safely returned as king.

29 **GRACE FOR A RIVAL**

- Mephibosheth is someone who by all rights David should have killed a very long time ago. Instead, David continually looks out for him, provides for his needs, and sees that justice is done for him.
- David's handling of Mephibosheth and Ziba is still very generous—Saul's estates belong to David by right, and so for David to give any of it to the heirs or servants of his enemies is a great act of mercy.
- In this case, it is an act of mercy with also satisfies David's need to act justly.

30 **MERCY AND JUSTICE**

- Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross was the only way in which the righteousness (justice) of God could be satisfied, while still extending mercy and clemency toward those who had rejected Him.
- We are "partakers" of Christ's righteousness, which—unlike Saul's estates—is infinite and infinitely divisible, because it is wholly and absolutely perfect.

31 **"PARTAKERS"**

- *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. (2 Peter 1:3-4)*

32 **HOW DO YOU APPLY THAT?**

- *For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. (2 Peter 1:5-9)*