

1  **WRECKING-BALLS**

2 Samuel 19

2  **BARZILLAI**

- *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. And the king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you with me in Jerusalem." (2 Samuel 19:31-33)*

3  **BARZILLAI**

- *But Barzillai said to the king, "How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? 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? Your servant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with such a reward? 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." (2 Samuel 19:34-37)*

4  **BARZILLAI**

- *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." 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. 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. (2 Samuel 19:38-40)*

5  **BARZILLAI**

- The third person whom David meets is Barzillai the Gileadite. Barzillai had provided David critical support during his stay at Mahanaim (17:27-29), and had now made a journey of nearly fifty miles from Rogelim to meet David as he triumphantly crossed the ford.
- David, impressed with his generosity and loyalty, invites Barzillai to Jerusalem so that he can repay his old generosity and care for the old man for the rest of his life.

6  **BARZILLAI**

- Barzillai turns David's offer down (he is, after all, eighty years old and too old to move to Jerusalem), but he passes the invitation on to Kimham, once of his relatives.
- Accordingly, David decrees that Kimham will cross over with him and will receive all of the benefits which David would have given to Barzillai.
- The existence of a site near Bethlehem named Geruth Kimham (Jeremiah 41:17)—"the hospitality afforded to Kimham"—indicates that David kept his word.
- In David's final moments, he will instruct his son Solomon to be kind to Kimham for Barzillai's sake (1 Kings 2).

7  **VYING FOR HONOR**

- *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?" 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?" 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 19:41-43)*

8  **VYING FOR HONOR**

- The men of Israel and the men of Judah basically get into an argument about whose privilege it should be to bring David back to Jerusalem—on the one hand, the Israelites claim that they have “ten shares” and were “the first to speak of bringing back our king.”
- On the other hand, David is a member of the tribe of Judah.
- Eventually, though, this sparks division in the nation of Israel, leading some to decide that they can do without the House of David all together.

9  **SHEBA**

- *Now there happened to be there a worthless man, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite. And he blew the trumpet and said, "We have no portion in David, and we have no inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel!" So all the men of Israel withdrew from David and followed Sheba the son of Bichri. But the men of Judah followed their king steadfastly from the Jordan to Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 20:1-2)*

10  **ANOTHER REBELLION**

- Sheba, an opportunistic Benjamite, sees and seizes his chance.
- Recall that Benjamin (under the house of Saul) had originally lead Israel against Judah during the civil war between David and Ishbosheth—yet another example of the rift between North and South that has been developing since the time of Joshua.
- Now, with Israel's hackles raised over the issue of honoring David, Sheba sees his chance and raises the standard of revolt against David, before David has even returned to Jerusalem.

11  **JESUS IS A BETTER KING THAN DAVID**

- Jesus is a better king than David, because He is able to keep those whom he draws to himself:
- *For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. (2 Timothy 1:12)*
- Paul was a rebel against God and a “wrecking ball” – a persecutor of Christians – until God saved him. And once God got ahold of Paul, he never let him go.

12  **THE CONCUBINES**

- *And David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten concubines whom he had left to care for the house and put them in a house under guard and provided for them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up until the day of their death, living as if in widowhood. (2 Samuel 20:3)*

13  **THE CONCUBINES**

- David is going to deal with Sheba, but first he has to address some family matters. You will recall that Absalom took ten of David's concubines as his own, disgracing his father in the eyes of all of Israel.

- David now addresses that disgrace by privately putting them in a house apart, as they were “widows”—essentially acknowledging that they are now his son’s wives, and his son is dead.

14  **DEALING WITH SHEBA**

- *Then the king said to Amasa, "Call the men of Judah together to me within three days, and be here yourself." So Amasa went to summon Judah, but he delayed beyond the set time that had been appointed him. And David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take your lord's servants and pursue him, lest he get himself to fortified cities and escape from us." (2 Samuel 20:4-6)*

15  **YOU HAD ONE JOB**

- With his house in order, David calls Amasa (who he has put in charge of the army in Joab’s place) and gives him, as his first task, the job of mustering the whole fighting force of Judah to war within three days’ time.
- Amasa takes too long and misses his deadline—and still every day David’s enemies in the North grow stronger.
- David then calls Abishai, Joab’s brother and a general he still trusts, and tells him to take David’s personal bodyguard and pursue after Sheba before the latter is able to raise a proper army or seek defense in a walled city.

16  **STAB!**

- *And there went out after him Joab's men and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men. They went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. When they were at the great stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Now Joab was wearing a soldier's garment, and over it was a belt with a sword in its sheath fastened on his thigh, and as he went forward it fell out. And Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. But Amasa did not observe the sword that was in Joab's hand. So Joab struck him with it in the stomach and spilled his entrails to the ground without striking a second blow, and he died. Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri. (2 Samuel 20:7-10)*

17  **STAB!**

- Abishai goes at David’s command, taking the bulk of David’s bodyguard with him, as well as the “mighty men” – David’s personal cadre of elite warriors – and Joab’s men and servants, including Joab himself.
- As he will soon demonstrate, even when moved from a position of generalship, Joab is still a force to be reckoned with.
- Their smaller force meets up with Amasa’s larger Judean army at Gibeon.

18  **STAB!**

- Joab sees Amasa—his cousin and the man who has recently taken his job. He walks forward to greet him and removes his sword.
- But Amasa does not notice that Joab has another weapon in his left hand—Joab’s right hand, his sword hand, was extended in a show of peace and friendship.
- Concealing a sword or dagger in his left hand, Joab approaches near enough to Amasa to give him the customary kiss, greets him, grabs him by the beard, and disembowels him with a single blow.

19  **ONLOOKER TRAFFIC**

- *And one of Joab's young men took his stand by Amasa and said, "Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab." And Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the highway. And anyone who came by, seeing him, stopped. And when the man saw that all the people stopped, he carried Amasa out of the highway into the field and threw a garment over him. When he was taken out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. (2 Samuel 20:11-13)*

20  **ONLOOKER TRAFFIC**

- The vast majority of the army is sort of shocked and stunned by what has just happened. One of the nephews of David has just murdered another one of the nephews of David, and nobody even knows how to respond to this.
- So Joab (who is probably in cahoots with his brother Abishai) makes it a loyalty issue. One of his "young men" of his bodyguard (no doubt one of the same ones who had been complicit in Absalom's killing) stands over Amasa's corpse and says, "Whoever is for David and Joab, let him follow Joab."

21  **ONLOOKER TRAFFIC**

- The implication is clear: If you're not for Joab, you're not for David. And we've all just seen what happens to people Joab doesn't like.
- But Amasa is "wallowing" in his blood there in the middle of the road, and the whole host of Judah is stopped, staring at him, jaws agape because of what has just happened.
- So the young man drags Abishai's body off of the road into a field, and covers it over with a coat.

22  **STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT**

- With Amasa's body out of the way, the people of Judah shrug and move on and follow Joab. After all, he's lead them well before now, and they don't have a lot of other options.
- And Joab? Joab gets away with murder. Or does he?

23  **DAVID'S LAST COMMAND**

- *"Moreover, you also know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, how he dealt with the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner the son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed, avenging in time of peace for blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet. Act therefore according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace. (1 Kings 2:5-6)*

24  **WHAT IS JOAB'S DEAL?**

- Joab is willing to commit any act, perpetrate any atrocity, so long as he can justify it by his loyalty to David.
- This makes Joab into a sort of human wrecking ball who pretty soon starts ignoring and outright disobeying the commands of his lord because he thinks he knows best.
- He becomes someone who tries to accomplish the work of the king by ignoring the commandments of the king.

25  **NEVER AVENGE YOURSELVES**

- As a result, Joab is protective of his own position with the king (which he has endangered by his own disobedience and folly) and suspicious of anyone (Abner or Amasa) who might get

in his way or replace him.

- *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.* (Romans 12:19-21)

## 26 HUMAN WRECKING-BALLS

- Joab's actions demonstrate an important progression for us:
  - Genuine loyalty
  - Selfish loyalty – defining worth by position
  - Attempt to maintain relationship by eliminating hostile relationships
  - Disobedience
- It's hard to do this in a genuine relationship with Jesus: it's easy to do it in a relationship with anything less than Jesus (like your position in the church or your status as a Christian)
- We don't use swords these days—we use our tongues instead
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## 27 ARGUMENT IS WAR

- Your claims are *indefensible*.
- He *attacked every weak point* in my argument.
- His criticisms were *right on target*.
- I *demolished* his argument.
- I've never *won* an argument with him.
- You disagree? Okay, *shoot!*
- If you use that *strategy*, he'll *wipe you out*.
- He *shot down* all of my arguments.

## 28 DON'T BE A "WRECKING-BALL"

- It is very important to be able to defend our faith, to "give an answer" to anyone who ask why we put our hope and trust in Jesus Christ. It is important to be able to explain our belief in the teachings and principles of Scripture.
- But we must never do it in a way that is not "seasoned with salt". We must "speak the truth" but "in love." We must remember that we can never argue a soul into the Kingdom—we can only "teach whatsoever things I have commanded you."