

II SAMUEL

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Samuel chapter 19 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw the revolt of Absalom to take the throne away from his father David fail. Yes, David left the city of Jerusalem because he did not want a blood bath in the city and he felt this was God's punishment on him for his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah.

Now that Absalom was on the throne he was getting counsel from two men. First there was Ahithophel, David's close friend who turned against him and he not only told him to have sex with the concubines of David that he left behind, showing that he cut all ties with David and he was now the king, but also that Absalom should gather 12,000 men and attack David before he can gather forces together to fight back. And the reality was, only David needed to die and the battle would be over for it was a battle for the kingdom. Good advice.

Then Hushai, who was one of David's spies, tells Absalom to go and gather all the armies of Israel together and he should lead them into battle and kill David, but not to go with just a few men, that would be disastrous. And Absalom listened to this counsel of Hushai, who then gets word to David on what is going on and David now has the time to prepare for war. For Ahithophel, he knew this was a bad idea and David would win and thus, he got his house in order and killed himself!

As the battle went on in the woods of Ephraim, on the east side of the Jordan River, twenty thousand men of Absalom died in one day. Thus, Absalom high tails it out of there on a mule and as he was riding his hair got caught in the trees and left him hanging there. One of David's men saw him and reported what he saw back to the commander of David's army, Joab and he was upset that this man did not kill Absalom. So he grabs three spears and thrusts Absalom through, but he is not dead and ten of Joab's men finish the job and threw him on the ground, placing stones over him.

When David gets word that his men were victorious he does not ask how his men were doing but how his rebellious son was doing, Absalom. And he was told that Absalom was dead. And this is where we left off last time as David heard this news and we read in II Samuel 18:33, **“Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: ‘O my son Absalom — my son, my son Absalom — if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!’”** That is where we will pick up our study this evening in II Samuel chapter 19, starting in verse 1, as David is mourning over the death of his son Absalom on the heels of his victory over Absalom's troops.

II SAMUEL 19**VERSES 1-3**

1. What a sad picture this is. David's men risked their lives, fighting against an army that outnumbered them greatly and yet they won the battle, victory was theirs for the glory of God and for the nation itself! They should have been celebrating but instead, they came home to Mahanaim like they lost the battle, as if they were in retreat. Why were they acting that way? Because their king, David, the one they risked their lives for, was mourning and grieving over the death of his son Absalom in this battle but keep in mind it was Absalom that started this fight and tried to usurp the kingdom away from David. Thus, David should have been mourning over the men he lost in battle and rejoicing with those who have come home victorious, but he has it reversed and it is affecting the nation.

2. That is a good lesson for us. As Christians, people will look to us, even though they might not admit it and many times, by our actions, they will follow along. May we live lives that are honoring to the King of kings and Lord of lords allowing people to see the hope and joy that is in us because it overflows in our actions!

VERSES 4-7

1. Joab is pretty harsh here with David but I think he needed to be. David was so self-centered that he was hurting the people who risked their life for him. In fact, Joab tells David that by his actions it seems that David would have rejoiced if all his men were killed and Absalom was still alive! He was letting his feelings master his life instead of the Lord who could fill his life with a peace that surpasses all understanding. You see, it is not that God does not want us to feel or have any emotions, but David let this control his life and because of that, it was affecting the nation. Joab wants David to get up and get out there and let the people know that you are blessed by the victory and you need to encourage them. And Joab warns David that if he doesn't, he will lose these people, they will not follow him anymore!

2. And just think about this for a minute, as Trapp points out when he wrote, "Who ever heard David cry out in godly sorrow, O Uriah, would God I had died for thee!" You see, Uriah was a godly man, a mighty man of God, a soldier for David and yet David had him killed to cover his sin and there was no mourning for him. On the other hand, Absalom, yes his son, but keep in mind that Absalom wanted to murder David and take the throne away from David, which he did do for a time and David is mourning and mourning over his death! Will David snap out of this? Let's read on and see!

VERSE 8

1. This is where David should have been when they returned home in victory, not isolating himself and mourning over Absalom. The city gate was the place of authority and by David sitting there he was telling the people that what they had done, the sacrifices they made, he appreciated and he was their king. But also notice, the people were in their tents, depressed, discouraged but that all changed when David sat at the gate, the people responded to what he was doing.

VERSES 9-10

1. How fickle is man? Much of the nation had sided with Absalom as he usurped the kingdom from David, and now that Absalom is dead, they go back to the true king, to David. You see, they recognized all that David had done for them and when their bridges were burned you might say, when they had no one else to turn to, they turn to David and they are asking themselves why no one has brought him back to Jerusalem yet, why is he still being treated as an outcast when he is our king!

2. How often we turn to the various kings in our lives, those that we allow to rule over our lives and when our lives are a mess, when things fall apart, when these kings die and we have no one else to turn to, we turn back to the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ! How much better it is not to turn from Him, not to let anyone or anything else rule your life except Him!

VERSES 11-14

1. All the tribes were ready to receive David back except one, Judah! How can that be when David was from the tribe of Judah? We don't really know but David was not going to force himself on anyone. He wanted them to call on him to be their king once again and thus, he sends Zadok and Abiathar the priests to speak to the men of Judah and they welcomed David back, they were not forced to receive him!

2. Now this is interesting because we see David going to demote Joab for his inability to follow orders, or to only follow those orders that he wanted to do. And the last straw was when Joab killed David's son Absalom, when David specifically told him to spare his son. But don't think that Joab is going to take this demotion lying down, for we will see this lose canon fire his deadly shot once again.

3. How does this relate to us? God is not going to force His reign on us. We must come to Him, freely, it must be our choice, we are not forced into a relationship with Him, but we are wooed you might say by the Holy Spirit just as the people were wooed by Zadok and Abiathar. And once we are saved, the Holy Spirit continues to work in us, drawing us closer to the Lord, sanctifying us as that old flesh nature is being crucified every day and we allow Jesus to reign in our lives!

VERSE 15

1. And so we see Judah accept David back and they went to Gilgal to escort him across the Jordan River and back home to Jerusalem. If you remember, Gilgal was the first campsite for the children of Israel as they crossed over the Jordan River into the land of Canaan. It was their base of operations located by the Dead Sea, close to the city of Jericho and Ai. It was also one of the places where Samuel ministered at as he traveled on his yearly circuit from city to city. (I Samuel 7:16). And it is the place where Saul was confirmed as the first king in Israel. (I Samuel 15:11).

VERSES 16-23

1. Do you remember this character Shimei? He was the one who greeted David as he left the city of Jerusalem, heading towards Mahanaim, as Absalom was coming to usurp the kingdom from David and David just left. As David was leaving, crossing over the Mount of Olives Shimei greeted him with cursing and throwing stones down upon David and his men. And he was telling David that he is getting what he deserves because he took the kingdom by force from his relative Saul. We said before that this was nothing more than lies from this self-appointed prophet. Now he is the first to rush and greet David on his return to the city of Jerusalem. But Shimei's words are empty here for his true feelings were already exposed. He is only being loyal to David to spare his own life! Imagine, after all the humiliation that he poured out upon David, he now has the nerve to say to David, "Don't take what I said too seriously!"

2. Now when Shimei first cursed David, Abishai wanted to go and take this guys head off, but David restrained him. Again, he wants to kill this guy for his actions. It seems that both Joab and Abishai had no self-control. They were both cut from the same cloth you might say, and their actions reflected their warrior hearts. You surly did not want to rock the boat with these guys in it or you would not be in that boat too long.

3. Now notice David's response here. David saw this time as a time to rejoice, and he refuses to have Shimei put to death. But David did not truly forgive Shimei, for he is going to instruct his son Solomon to put him to death. David never forgot what Shimei did to him. This amnesty that was granted to Shimei was apparently conditioned on his continued loyalty. When David was near death, he ordered Shimei to be put to death by his son Solomon, (1 Kin. 2:8, 9, 36–46). David could not put Shimei to death himself because of his oath; however, his son could do it if there was a just cause.

VERSES 24-30

1. Please don't be confused when it says that Mephibosheth was Saul's son, he was Saul's grandson the son of Jonathan. The reason it says this is that there is no Hebrew word for grandson. And you remember the story of Mephibosheth. When he was five years old, after his grandfather and father were killed in battle, his nurse picked him up to run away and she tripped and fell and probably broke both his legs that never set right and he was lame in his legs, he couldn't walk right, (II Samuel 4:4).

As David is made king over Israel he seeks out any descendants of Saul, not to put them to death, but to show kindness to them and Mephibosheth was the only one left. And David restores Mephibosheth, allows him to eat at the king's table, (II Samuel 9:1-13). Now when David was leaving Jerusalem, because Absalom was usurping the throne from him, Mephibosheth never came out to see him or go with him and Mephibosheth's servant, Ziba slandered him. He told David that he was glad to see this happen to David and now the kingdom could be restored to him but that was not true. Ziba lied to David! And Ziba gained in this for David gave to Ziba all of the land he gave to Mephibosheth!

And now David confronts Mephibosheth, wanting to know why he would do such a thing and Mephibosheth tells David that Ziba lied to him, that he thought Ziba was representing him and in reality he was only representing himself! Now, who is telling the truth? I believe it was Mephibosheth because as David listens to what he says, David is unsure and tells Mephibosheth to divide the land with Ziba and he tells David, **“Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house.”** II Samuel 19:30. In other words, Mephibosheth was satisfied with David reigning back in Jerusalem, he did not need anything else and that is why I feel he was telling the truth. If he were lying, he would take everything he could get! David's reign was more important to him than any personal enrichment; it was not about him but David!

2. Listen to how Morgan puts this. He wrote, “For his own enrichment this man cared nothing at all. It was everything to him that his king should come into the possession of his kingdom in peace . . . It is to be feared that too often we are more concerned about our rights than about His. It is a great and glorious thing when our loyalty and love make us far more concerned about the victories of our Lord, than about our own unquestioned rights. Yet that should be the normal attitude of all who sit at the King’s Table.” May we have that perspective, where we are satisfied in the Lord and His reign in our lives!

VERSES 31-39

1. Barzillai was one of the three men that came to David and assisted him in the wilderness, as he fled from Absalom. He provided food and bedding for David and his men. And now that David is returning home as king David wants Barzillai to accompany him back to Jerusalem and to enjoy the comforts of the palace. But Barzillai tells David that he is an old man and all those blessings of living in the palace would be wasted on him. Barzillai tells David he would rather remain in his own city and die there. His only request was that his son Chimham, and we are told that this is his son in I Kings 2:7, be allowed to go with David and that he would receive all the blessings that were meant for him.

VERSES 40-43

1. How sad a picture this is. This should have been a day of rejoicing, of celebration as the kingdom is restored back to David and instead, there is conflict, anger, dispute, why? The reason is as simple as this; the other tribes of Israel are upset with Judah because they escorted David back to Jerusalem. And we are seeing the birth of internal strife once again between the nations. This should have been a time of healing and restoration, but instead we are going to see division. Paul tells us in Galatians 5:13-15 that if we allow disputes and quarrels to grow they will only lead to divisions and they will consume our lives. He wrote, **“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!”**

What can be done to prevent this from happening? The remedy is to love each other and to walk and be lead by the Spirit of God. The divisions are a result of walking in the flesh, not the Spirit! Paul continues on in Galatians chapter 5, **“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”** Galatians 5:16-26. May we not forget that! Are we being driven by the flesh or lead by the Spirit? You will know by what flows from your life!

2. Is this internal strife going to continue on? Let's read on and see in II Samuel chapter 20.

II SAMUEL 20

VERSES 1-2

1. He we see Sheba, from the tribe of Benjamin as Saul was, this self-appointed leader; take advantage of the situation that David was in. We just read that 10 tribes in Israel were not happy with David and how he was brought back into power, they felt they had no real say in it, they wanted to bring him back and not just Judah. And this small wedge between the nation was now driven bigger and deeper by Sheba because he refused to surrender to the sovereignty of David as King. He saw David's upbringing as simple, the son of Jesse a humble farmer. He did his own thing and he got many to follow. We now see civil war about to break out as these 10 tribes come against David and only Judah is with David.

VERSE 3

1. What is this all about? Remember back in II Samuel 16:20-22, **“Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, ‘Give advice as to what we should do.’ And Ahithophel said to Absalom, ‘Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong.’ So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.”**

These ten concubines that David left behind to care for his home when he fled from Absalom were forced to have sexual relations with Absalom so all could see and this would show that Absalom is now the king and there is no hope for David to return, no reconciliation in this matter. Now David is back home and he is caring for these women but he does not have sexual relations with them anymore. You might say that they were in state of widowhood until they died! Clarke summarizes it like this, “He could not well divorce them; he could not punish them, as they were not in the transgression; he could not more be familiar with them, because they had been defiled by his son; and to have married them to other men might have been dangerous to the state.” You see, these women suffered because of the sin of Absalom; look at how it affected them and also because of the sin of David. Sin is truly against the Lord but it does affect those around us!

VERSES 4-5

1. Remember that Amasa was Absalom’s military leader, the commander of his army and now that Absalom is dead, David wanting to heal relationships and stick it to Joab his own military leader, places Amasa in charge of his army instead of Joab. And David tells Amasa to gather the men together within three days because he wanted to deal with this rebellion of Sheba before he could launch a revolt against him! So Joab is demoted, Amasa is now in charge and for whatever reason Amasa is taking his time gathering these men. Was he lazy? Was he not a good commander? Did he just not care? We don’t know but for whatever reason, he delayed completing the commands of the king!

VERSES 6-7

1. David understands the seriousness of the situation and does not want to wait for Amasa to get it together. Thus, he calls for Abishai, not Joab, remember he was demoted, and also keep in mind that they were brothers. Thus, Joab joins forces with Abishai to get Sheba before he is able to establish himself and put together an army. Remember, it was the nation of Israel against just Judah here.

2. Now who are these Cherethites and Pelethites? The Cherethites and Pelethites seem to be an elite group of fighting men, like the Navy Seals or the Green Berates, and also served as David's bodyguards and they were from the area of southern Philistine territory, and they sided with David!

VERSES 8-10

1. Before Abishai and Joab go after Sheba, Joab has a little unfinished business with Amasa, who just happened to catch up with them in Gibeon, which is about 6 miles northwest of Jerusalem. Now as Joab goes to bow down before Amasa, a sign of respect, his sword falls from his sheath to the ground. As Amasa is focused on that Joab pulls him to himself to kiss him, another sign of respect, and in all the distractions he did not see the dagger in Joab's hand. And Amasa had no idea that Joab wanted to kill him, in fact, he was showing him brotherly love and yet, as he did this he plunges this dagger into the abdomen of Amasa, killing him on the spot or at least mortally wounding him. As I said, Joab was not going to let anyone remove him from leadership in David's army. He had no problem working with his brother Abishai but with this traitor who came back to David to be in charge of him, no way and he took care of that problem. But also understand that Joab and Amasa were cousins, sons of 2 of David's half-sisters (I Chronicles 2:10-17). Joab was the son of Zeruiah and Amasa the son of Abigail. So now he and his brother Abishai go after Sheba. But before they go too far, there still is this problem of Amasa lying there, as we will see in a few minutes.

VERSE 11

1. Now look at this verse very carefully because we as Christians do this all the time. We have heard the phrase, “Guilt by association.” Well this might be called, “Good by association.” In other words, they are saying that if you follow after David, that is good, then you also must follow Joab. How does that even relate to us today? Well, today we might say something like this, “Whoever is for Christ is for the Republican party,” or “Whoever is for Christ is for gun control,” and the list goes on. That is not true, but by linking it to Christ, we make it sound good! We must be careful because, as we see here, what Joab did was wrong, he was not honoring king David but his own fleshly desires and now there was going to be a following. Yes, Joab was a good military leader, but he was not a godly man!

VERSES 12-13

1. As the soldiers passed by they stopped in horror as they saw the body of Amasa lying there, wallowing in his blood! That tells me he was still alive and rolling or moving ever so slightly, there was still life in him. Thus, as these men saw this it prevented them from pursuing Sheba. So a man moves the body and covers it, and these soldiers then follow after Joab in pursuit of Sheba. Again, how cold, how heartless this was. Even if he was now dead, not even a burial for him. And there are some commentators that feel that this man who did this was none other than Joab. It could be but we are not sure!

VERSES 14-15

1. Here we see Joab and Abishai gather more troops and they go after Sheba to kill him and put down this rebellion against David! Not everyone in Israel was with Sheba. And they located Sheba, who had hid himself behind the walls of the city of Abel of Beth Maachah, which was in the northern part of the land. And Joab builds a siege mound to attack the city. And these cities were many times built on a hill, with a valley below. That made it very difficult to attack the city. So the troops built a siege mound, or piled up mounds of dirt, making a ramp up to the city gate and then they could ram the gates down. But look at what happens next with Sheba, what kind of following he really has.

VERSES 16-19

1. This woman knows the city is in for trouble and she seeks peace in this situation. And obviously she was a woman who was respected in the city for she was speaking for the people. And she tells Joab that this is a historical city, in that many come to hear the counsel of the wise men of the city. And if that was not enough, then spare the destruction of this city for the sake of the mothers of Israel. She is looking for peace and not for war and at this point, and she does not even know the reason that Joab and his men are attacking the city, but she will find out in a minute!

VERSES 20-22

1. Joab sounds like such a nice and gentle man, but keep in mind that he just killed Amasa in cold blood. He tells this woman that it is not his intention to destroy the city or its people but all he wants is Sheba, the man who is rebelling against the king, against David! Once she finds out what he wants she tells the people and they cut off Sheba's head and toss it over the wall and Joab catches it. Now in the English we miss out on what this woman said to Joab, it goes something like this, "Nice catch!" No, but in those days, people had their heads cut off pretty often it seems. And by this woman's wisdom, the city and the people were spared!

2. There are a couple of principles we gain glean from this. First of all, if you want to get ahead by rebellion, through selfish and vain ambition, be careful because you will lose your head like Sheba. Not only that, but listen to what Trapp has to say regarding this and how we can apply it to our lives. He wrote, "Every man's breast is a city enclosed. Every sin is a traitor that lurketh within those walls. God calleth for Sheba's head, neither hath he any quarrel to us for our person, but for our sin. If we love the head of our traitor above the life of our soul, we shall justly perish in the vengeance." Another good lesson for us, God wants us to let go of our sin, give it to Him as He is working on making us more like Him each and every day!

VERSES 23-26

1. Now this is interesting because we see Joab come back as the self-appointed commander of David's army, even over his brother Abishai. How did that happen? I think Joab was a tough dude and who was going to go up against him? No one was, not even his brother as I have said. And yes, David is silent about this now, but on his death bed, as he ties up the loose ends of his administration, he tells his son Solomon to kill Joab. As we have said before, Joab did what he wanted. He was a great warrior but he disobeyed David's commands if they did not agree with his. And Joab killed two righteous men, at least more righteous than him, during peacetime, Abner and Amasa, and he also killed David's son Absalom. Thus, he should have been put to death for these actions, but David allowed him to live for now.

2. Here is a list of David's administration, at least part of it. When we get to II Samuel chapter 23 we will see David's mighty men spoken of and that is a great section, many spiritual applications for us. And this is important. David's greatness came from the Lord, of course but he was not doing this all by himself. David had faithful men; he assembled an effective team to oversee the affairs of the kingdom! I think that is a great principle for us as we are serving the Lord. For me, I can't do this on my own. Yes, this is the Lord's church, He is the head, but He has placed me as the shepherd and I believe that God has given to me faithful men and women who are willing to serve in the body of Christ here at Calvary Chapel Manitowoc. It is a team effort you might say!

3. Now the last 4 chapters of II Samuel are not in chronological order but are an overview of some of the events that transpired during the reign of David. It is like the last 5 chapters in the book of Judges, just an appendix to events that happened during this time. And we will see that as we continue on in II Samuel over the next few weeks. As I close let me leave you with these words from J. Vernon McGee. He wrote regarding all that David was going through,

Through all of these trials David is not crying aloud, nor is he whimpering. He knows that the Lord is dealing with him in the woodshed. Don't think that David got by with his sin, friend. He was severely punished. However, David loved God. Underneath the faith that failed was a faith that never failed. That's David, God's man, a man after God's own heart.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible Vol. II, p. 235

Folk's, we are going to fail but God's desire is that we repent and we get back up and continue on in our faith journey! May we be men and women after God's own heart!