

# 2 Samuel 19 Commentary

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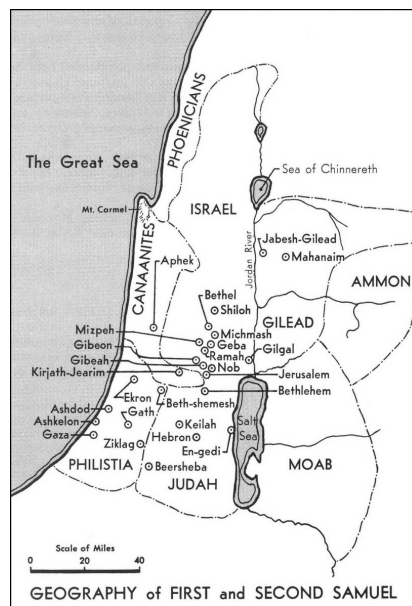
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## TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES

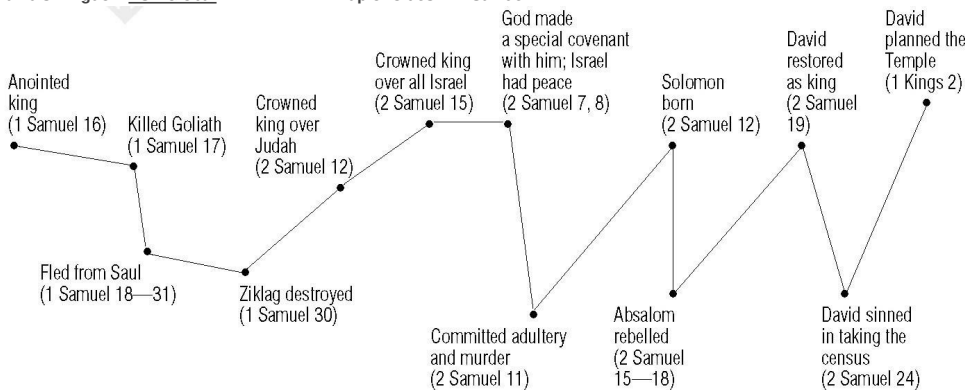
1107	1011	971	931	853	722	586	
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17 18-25
1Chr 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36

**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931 BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931 BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.



Map of David's Kingdom-ESV Global

Map of Cities in 2 Samuel



**2 Samuel 19:1** Then it was told Joab, "**Behold**, the king is weeping and mourns for Absalom."

- 2Sa 18:5,12,14,20,33 Pr 17:25
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passage:**

2 Samuel 18:33 The king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And thus he

said as he walked, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

## JOAB INFORMED OF KING'S REACTION

**Then** - When is then? In light of David's reaction to Absalom's death. One might also ask "where is then?" In other words, where are the events described in chapter 19 taking place? David has not returned to Jerusalem but is still in Mahanaim.

**it was told Joab, "Behold, the king is weeping and mourns for Absalom"** - Here is Joab who plunged three spears into David's son in disobedience to David's clear orders!

**Guzik** - This was not good. David's loyal and sacrificing supporters won that day for the glory of God and the good of Israel. Then they felt bad about the victory because David was overcome with excessive weeping and mourning for Absalom. There is such a thing as excessive mourning – mourning that is basically rooted in unbelief and self-indulgence. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13, Paul warned Christians: I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. Some Christians sorrow at times of death or tragedy like those who have no hope in God and this is wrong to do.

**Spurgeon** - If your dear ones are dead you cannot restore them to life by your unbelief; and if they still survive, it will be a pity to be downcast and unbelieving when there is no occasion for it. 'Your strength is to sit still.' Remember that you are a Christian, and a Christian is expected to be more self-possessed than those who have no God to fly to.

**2 Samuel 19:2** The victory that day was turned to mourning for all the people, for the people heard it said that day, "The king is grieved for his son."

- **turned:** Pr 16:15 Pr 19:12
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE PEOPLE FOLLOW DAVID'S LEAD

**The victory that day was turned to mourning for** (term of explanation) **all the people, for the people heard it said that day, "The king is grieved for his son."** - The war won but the victor mourning. There should have been rejoicing, but instead there was sadness. The NLT gives a good sense "As the troops heard of the king's deep grief for his son, the joy of that day's victory was turned into deep sadness."

**John Burroughs** - The heaviest thing in the world is a heavy heart.

**2 Samuel 19:3** So the people went by stealth into the city that day, as people who are humiliated steal away when they flee in battle.

- **into the city:** 2Sa 19:32 17:24
- **stealth:** Ge 31:27
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE AGONY OF VICTORY!

**So the people went by stealth into the city that day, as people who are humiliated steal away when they flee in battle** - The NLT paraphrases it stating that the troops "crept back into the city as though they were ashamed and had been beaten in battle." David's grief and failure to receive the victory affect his followers, especially his troops, making them feel ashamed they had won a great victory! Imagine their morale.

**2 Samuel 19:4 The king covered his face and cried out with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!"**

- **covered:** 2Sa 15:30
- **O my son:** It is allowed by competent critics that the lamentation of David over his son, of which this forms a part, is exceedingly pathetic; and Calmet properly remarks, that the frequent repetition of the name of the deceased is common in the language of lamentation. 2Sa 18:33
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passage:**

2Sa 18:33 And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And thus he said as he walked, "**O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom!** Would I had died instead of you, **O Absalom, my son, my son!**"

## DAVID'S LOUD LAMENTING

**The king covered his face and cried out** ([za'aq](#); Lxx - [krazo](#) - scream) **with a loud** (gadol - great in intensity) **voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!"** - Compare 2Sa 18:33 for repetition of "Absalom" and "my son," indicating David's multiplied, deep distress.

Sorrows are visitors that come without invitation.  
-- C H Spurgeon

**Guzik** - David could not stop singing this song. He was still locked into his excessive mourning and lack of perspective. He was mastered by his feelings, and feelings were never meant to master us. God is not against feelings – not at all. Many Christians lack deep and profound feeling and experience in their walk with God. At the same time, feelings were never meant to have mastery over us. David's problem was not in what he **knew** – Absalom's tragic death and David's own role in it. David's problem was in what he **forgot** – that God was still in control, that a great victory was won, that he had many loyal supporters, and that God showed great grace and mercy to him. When someone is overcome by tragedy or sorrow, the problem is not in what they know, but in what they forget.

**Trapp** asks "Who ever heard David cry out in godly sorrow, O Uriah, would God I had died for thee!"

**Chisholm** on **cried out**. Tamar's vindication continues here (2Sa 13:31 - "tore his clothes. Tamar's vindication begins. In the aftermath of her rape, she tears her robe, the symbol of her virginity, to express her outrage and grief 2Sa 13:18-19. Now David, **who has not defended her honor**, tears his garments in sorrow over the news of Amnon's death."). Following her rape, she wept aloud ([za'aq](#), Same verb in 2Sa 13:19); now David cries out ([za'aq](#), 2Sa 19:4) over the death of his son. **The Lord's discipline, once decreed, is inescapable.** The prophet Nathan announced David's punishment: the sword would not depart from David's house, and the Lord would bring calamity on David from within his own household (2Sa 12:10–12). David himself even imposed his own penalty: fourfold payment for the "lamb" he stole (2Sa 12:6). He paid the first two installments when the infant died and when Absalom murdered Amnon. In this episode we read of the third installment as Joab, who played an important role in David's murder of Uriah, ruthlessly kills Absalom. David has commanded his three generals to spare Absalom's life, but in the providence of God Joab, not Abishai or Ittai, receives the report of Absalom's whereabouts and, in his typical fashion, does what he deems to be in David's best interests. ([Teach the Text - 1-2 Samuel](#))

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**Cried out** ([02199](#)) [za'aq](#) means to cry out, to call out for help (especially when in distress), to appeal (even making public sounds of physical and/or emotional anguish - Ex 2:23, 2Chr 20:9, Job 35:9). Za'aq can be summoned in the sense of to be assembled (Jos 8:16; Jdg 6:34, 35; 18:22, 23) Finally, za'aq can mean to issue a proclamation by sending out an official written document with instructions or principles (Jonah 3:7) **Za'aq in 2 Samuel** - 2Sa 13:19 = crying aloud; 2Sa 19:4 = cried out; 2Sa 19:28 = complain; 2Sa 20:4 = call; 2Sa 20:5 = call;

**2 Samuel 19:5 Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, "Today you have covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who today have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives, and the**

- **saved:** Ne 9:27 Ps 3:8 18:47,48
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JOAB REPROVES DAVID'S INTENSE MOURNING

Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, "Today you have covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who today have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines - Joab is saying David's intense ongoing lamenting is making his soldiers feel ashamed, as if they had done something wrong in saving his life and his family.

**Guzik** - Joab gave David a stern wake-up call. "David, your excessive mourning is selfish. It isn't all about you. These loyal, sacrificial supporters of yours deserve to feel good about their victory and you are making them feel terrible. Snap out of it."

2 Samuel 19:6 **by loving those who hate you, and by hating those who love you. For you have shown today that princes and servants are nothing to you; for I know this day that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased.**

- **today** 2Sa 3:24,25 Job 34:18 Pr 19:9,10 Ac 23:5
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## EFFECT OF VICTORY OPPOSITE OF EXPECTED

**by loving those who hate you, and by hating those who love you** - Joab is telling David that his intense mourning for Absalom who sought to kill him is tantamount to hating the ones who love him.

**For you have shown today that princes and servants are nothing to you** - Joab continues saying that David's behavior has made it clear that his commanders and soldiers mean nothing to him.

**for I know this day that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased** - Joab adds that he thinks David would be pleased if all his commanders and men had died and Absalom was alive.

**Guzik** - This is a sharp truth delivered with precision. Joab wanted David not only to see that he was *foolish* in his excessive grief, but he was also *selfish*.

2 Samuel 19:7 **"Now therefore arise, go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by the LORD, if you do not go out, surely not a man will pass the night with you, and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now."**

- speak Ge 34:3 Pr 19:15 Isa 40:1 Ho 2:14 \*marg:
- there: Pr 14:28
- all the evil: Ps 71:4-6,9-11,18-20 129:1,2
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID WARNED OF POLITICAL DISASTER OF HIS UNRESTRAINED GRIEF

**Now therefore** - This is Joab's conclusion based on what he feels the effect of his intense mourning is having on all around him.

**Arise, go out and speak kindly** (speak to the heart of) **to your servants** - General Joab gives 3 commands to the king.

**For I swear by the LORD** - Joab utters an oath because he feels so strongly about what he saying and what may happen if David continues mourning.

**if you do not go out, surely not a man will pass the night with you, and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now** - Joab points out the effect of David's actions and inaction. Joab warns that there will be no servants left if he keeps up his unrestrained grief and the result be be worse than all the trouble he had suffered in his entire life! That is a strong warning for sure!

**2 Samuel 19:8 So the king arose and sat in the gate. When they told all the people, saying, "Behold, the king is sitting in the gate," then all the people came before the king. Now Israel had fled, each to his tent.**

- **sat in the gate:** 2Sa 18:4,24
- **for Israel:** 2Sa 19:3 18:6-8 1Ki 22:36 2Ki 14:12
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **DAVID'S PRUDENT RESPONSE TO REPROOF**

**So** - For this reason. What reason? Joab's firm warning and exhortation! Do you think he felt like going into the public eye? Surely he did not, but there is a time to act on what is true and right and not on how one feels they should act. It is notable that there is never again an "Absalom, my son," uttered by King David! He responded to Joab's wise counsel. This reminds me of Joab's counsel to bring Absalom back from exile and then his counsel (using the acting of a wise woman) to reunite with Absalom after 2 years of not letting him see his face. Unfortunately by then Absalom was bitter and looking for revenge which led to his revolt.

**The king arose and sat in the gate** - David pulled himself together, in effect agreeing with Joab's strong words. The **gate** was a public appearance and was where the king would grant audiences to his subjects. It was a sign that the king had again assumed his God given authority.

**TSK Note** - How prudently and mildly David took the reproof and counsel given him! He shook off his grief, anointed his head, and washed his face, that he might not appear unto men to mourn, and then made his appearance at the gate of the city, which was the public place of resort for the hearing of causes and giving judgment, as well as a place to ratify special bargains. The people flocked to congratulate him on his and their safety, and that all was well. When we are convinced of a fault, we must amend, though we are told of it by our inferiors in a way which is peculiarly painful to our natural feelings. This ancient custom still obtains in the East; for when Dr. Pococke returned from viewing the town of ancient Byblus, he says, "The sheik and the elders were sitting in the gate of the city, after the ancient manner, and I sat awhile with them."

**Believer's Study Bible** - For David to sit in the gate was to demonstrate to the people that the Absalom coup was over, and that he, not Absalom, would hear their cases (cf. 2Sa 15:2)

Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.  
-- Thomas Moore

**Walton on sat in the gate** - king's seat in the gateway. Recent excavations at Tel Dan have revealed what appears to be a stone platform set inside the gate area, which once was canopied and may have held a throne. It could have been used for ceremonial or diplomatic occasions or legal proceedings (see 1 Kings 22:10). The Ugaritic Epic of Aqhat describes King Danil sitting in the gate area judging the cases of widows and orphans. Thus a king enthroned is a king carrying out the duties of the position—an image David now wanted to portray(See page 348 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

**When they told all the people, saying, "Behold, the king is sitting in the gate," then all the people came before the king-** When...then serves in effect as a cause/effect. As the news spread in the city, the people begin to come to him.

**Now Israel had fled, each to his tent** - To whom does **Israel had fled** refer? This has to refer to the Israelites who supported Absalom had fled to their homes.

**Chisholm on fled, each to his tent** - This is tragically ironic, for on an earlier occasion Israel fled to their homes following a defeat by a foreign army, the Philistines (1 Sam. 4:10). But now they do so after an unsuccessful coup against their rightful king. ([Teach the Text - 1-2 Samuel](#))

**2 Samuel 19:9 All the people were quarreling 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, but now he has fled out of the land from Absalom.**

- **people were quarreling** : Ge 3:12,13 Ex 32:24 Jas 3:14-16
- **The king**: 2Sa 8:10 1Sa 17:50 18:5-7,25 19:5
- **he is fled**: 2Sa 15:14
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## NATIONAL STRIFE OVER DAVID'S REIGN

**All the people were quarreling** (arguing) **throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered** (saved) **us from the hand of our enemies and saved** (rescued) **us from the hand of the Philistines, but now he has fled out of the land from Absalom** - Note that **all these people** refer to those who supported Absalom (cf v10). They affirmed how David had rescued them from enemies including Philistines but how he had left the country because of Absalom. Clearly the nation was in a state of discord, division and disorganization over David's vacating his throne, and his kingdom was not yet fully restored!

**Alan Redpath** writes "The folly of their allegiance to Absalom was clear – it had brought only misery and confusion. They were on the wrong side; they had rejected their true king, and therefore the situation was full of unrest."

Clearly, David was no longer universally respected. For the first time since the twelve tribes anointed him as king of all Israel, there was fierce debate about his fitness to rule. Nonetheless, one faction recalled fondly that he had delivered the nation from Philistine bondage ([v. 9](#)). Despite the setback Absalom's uprising had caused to David's reputation, they wanted David back.

What the Bible Teaches - What the Bible teaches – 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel.

**2 Samuel 19:10 "However, Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now then, why are you silent about bringing the king back?"**

- **whom**: 2Sa 15:12,13 Ho 8:4
- **is dead**: 2Sa 18:14
- **why are you silent** Jdg 18:9
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**However, Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now then, why are you silent about bringing the king back?"** - Note whom we anointed, not whom God anointed (like He did David - 1Sa 16:13). Since their chosen (**anointed**) king Absalom was dead why was no one talking about bringing back king David? The implication is that they needed to ask him to come back and be their king.

See [SPECIAL TOPIC: "ANOINTING" IN THE BIBLE](#).

**2 Samuel 19:11 Then King David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, 'Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house, since the word of all Israel has come to the king, even to his house?'**

- **sent**: 2Sa 15:29,35,36 1Ki 2:25,26,35
- **Speak**: 2Co 5:20
- **Why are**: Mt 5:16 2Th 3:9
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Then King David sent Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, to say to the leaders of Judah, "Why are you the last ones to reinstate the king? For I have heard that all Israel is ready, and only you are holding out.** NLT paraphrases it "Why are you the last ones to reinstate the king? For I have heard that all Israel is ready, and only you are holding out." Basically the priests were to ask the elders "Why is it taking so long for you to call David back as king?" The elders of Judah were reticent to invite David to return, perhaps because of the part they had played in Absalom's insurrection (cf. 2Sa 15:10-11).

**Alan Redpath** notes that "David didn't lift a finger to re-establish his authority.... His return to sovereignty was decided by the voluntary submission of his kinsmen and by their loving obedience to his will."



**Walton on process for reinstatement of David.** Because Absalom had been anointed king, and because the tribal elders of both Judah and Israel were divided on whether to take David back as king, certain compromises and assurances had to be made. For instance, Absalom's chief general, Amasa, is now given charge of David's army (although not the elite and mercenary troops, which remained under Joab's command). David also has to cajole his own tribe, reminding them of blood ties and previous oaths of loyalty. David's exile and eventual return to kingship could be compared to the similar experiences of Idrimi, the fifteenth-century B.C. king of Alalakh, who was forced from his throne for seven years before regaining the loyalty of his vassals. (See page 348 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

**2 Samuel 19:12 'You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?'**

- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh** - This is an idiom for blood-relatives (cf. Ge 29:11; Jdg 9:2; 2Sa 5:1).

**Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?'** - David repeats his question to the elders of Judah, his own "flesh and blood," asking why are they reticent to welcome him back as their king.

**2 Samuel 19:13 "Say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? May God do so to me, and more also, if you will not be commander of the army before me continually in place of Joab.'"**

- **Amasa:** 2Sa 17:25 1Ch 2:16,17 12:18
- **God:** Ru 1:17 1Ki 19:2
- **place of Joab:** 2Sa 19:5-7 3:29,30 8:16 18:11
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Resource:

2 Samuel 17:25 Absalom set Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Ithra the Israelite, who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

## DAVID'S GESTURE OF RECONCILIATION

Say to [Amasa](#), 'Are you not my bone and my flesh?' [Amasa](#) was David's nephew. But let us not forget that as good as this sounds, the fact is that Joab was also "my bone and my flesh" for Joab was the son of Zeruiah, David's sister, whereas Amasa was the son of Abigail, the sister of Zeruiah (cf 1Ch 2:16, 17)

**May God do so to me, and more also** - Basically David is swearing an oath that God should strike him dead if he did not appoint his nephew head of his army. (cf Jesus' words Mt 5:34-37 [What does it mean to let your yes be yes and your no be no? | GotQuestions.org](#); [What does the Bible say about keeping your vows / oaths? | GotQuestions.org](#) [What are some Bible verses about vows? | GotQuestions.org](#)).

**if you will not be commander of the army before me continually in place of Joab**- Clearly this would be a move of to win over Absalom's followers for Absalom had appointed Amasa commander of his army. By doing this he hoped to secure the allegiance of the rebel army whom Amasa had led (2Sa 17:25). His removal of Joab likely was a form of discipline for slaying his son against his orders.

[The Pulpit Commentary](#) offers an interesting analysis of David's decision to replace Joab with Amasa - politic it was not. Passing over the fact that Amasa had actually taken the command of the rebel army, he was an ambitious and selfish man, and could lay no claim to that sturdy fidelity which had characterized Joab throughout his long service. For all he had done had been for David's good, and his advice, however roughly given, had averted grave misfortunes. Joab's murder of Absalom was an act of wilful disobedience; but David had used Joab for a far meaner murder, committed, not for reasons of statesmanship; but for purposes of lust. The guilt of slaying Absalom was as nothing compared with that of slaying Uriah, nor was it so base as the assassination of



Abner, which David had tolerated, though made angry by it. The dismissal of Joab could have been effected only by putting him to death, and this certainly he did not deserve at David's hands; and the attempt, unless carried out secretly, would have led to tumult and insurrection. Joab, too, was a far more skilful general than Amasa, who, with larger forces, had just suffered a disastrous defeat; and if Joab was removed secretly, his brother Abishai remained to avenge him. David was, in fact, blinded by love for the son whom for so many years he had treated with coldness. There was a strong reaction now in the father's mind, and under its influence he was prepared to sacrifice the nephew who had been faithful to him and saved him, for the nephew who had joined in Absalom's rebellion. But possibly it had an immediate good effect, as Amasa, assured of forgiveness and promotion, now took David's side.

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**AMASA** - According to 2 Sam 17:25, Amasa is the son of Abigail, the sister of Zeruiah and David, and **Ithra**, an Israelite; but another source, 1 Ch 2:17, calls his father **Jether** the Ishmaelite. Aside from the two different forms of the same name, the probable explanation of this difference is that Jether (or Ithra) was an **Ishmaelite proselyte** to the faith of Israel. He was a nephew of David and a cousin of Absalom, who made him commander of the army of rebellion. When the uprising had been quelled, David, in order to conciliate Amasa, promised him the position held by Joab; the latter had fallen from favor (2 Sam 19:13 ff). When a new revolt broke out under Sheba, the son of Bichri (2 Sam 20), Amasa was entrusted with the task of assembling the men of Judah. But Joab was eager for revenge upon the man who had obtained the office of command that he coveted. When Amasa met Joab at Gibeon, the latter murdered him while pretending to salute (2 Sam 20:8-10; 1 Ki 2:5).

**2 Samuel 19:14 Thus he turned the hearts of all the men of Judah as one man, so that they sent word to the king, saying, "Return, you and all your servants."**

- even: Jdg 20:1 Ps 110:2,3 Ac 4:32
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **MEN OF JUDAH HAVE CHANGE OF HEART**

**Thus he** (Amasa or David) **turned** (bowed, won, touched) **the hearts of all the men of Judah as one man** - David's conciliatory move of making Amasa his general bore immediate fruit as the elders of Judah were swayed and their response was unanimous affirmation of David. It should be noted that the identification of the "he" (in "he turned") unclear. Thus some translations favor David and some Amasa - NCV = "David"; TEV = "David's words"; NRSV, NLT = "Amasa." **The hearts of all the men of Judah as one man** in essence means unanimous.

**So that** (purpose clause - what purpose?) **they sent word to the king, saying, "Return, you and all your servants."** - This was the positive effect of David's replacing Joab with Amasa, but the negative effect would soon be seen when jealous Joab murders Amasa in order to reclaim his position as head of David's army. Given this latter outcome, one might question whether David's decision was the most reasonable and prudent he could have made to secure allegiance of the rebel army. For example, could he have placed Amasa second in command? Even that would have been a sign that David had forgiven Amasa and those who followed in the rebellion against his kingdom.

**Guzik** has a good point - David would not come back until welcomed by the hearts of all, and that could not be forced – their hearts had to be swayed.. There is a sense in which God will not, in the present age, force His reign on us. We must welcome His reign, and He will not force our heart-response. Our hearts must be swayed by the work of the word of God and the Holy Spirit. The point is emphasized – David would not return as king until he was welcomed, until hearts were swayed to receive him.

**Wycliffe Bible Commentary (borrow)** says it this way - The move has been questioned as hardly prudent, for Joab was not the type of man to acquiesce quietly, nor had the loyalty of Amasa been proved. (See also [TPC note above](#))

**The Pulpit Commentary** After the solemn anointing of Absalom, it was necessary for him to wait until some equally public and national act authorized his resumption of the royal power; and delay was dangerous. Every day now spent at Mahanaim might give the opportunity for fresh troubles.

**TSK Note** - The measures that he pursued were the best calculated that could be adopted for accomplishing this salutary end. David appears to take no notice of their infidelity, but rather to place confidence in them, that their confidence in him might be naturally excited; and to oblige them yet farther, purposes to make Amasa general of the army, instead of Joab.

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**2 Samuel 19:15 The king then returned and came as far as the Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal in order to go to meet the**

NLT - So the king started back to Jerusalem. And when he arrived at the Jordan River, the people of Judah came to Gilgal to meet him and escort him across the river.

- **Gilgal:** Jos 5:9 1Sa 11:14,15
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID RETURNS FROM EXILE JUDAH MEETS DAVID AT GILGAL

**The king then returned and came as far as the Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal** (on west bank of Jordan near Jericho) **in order to go to meet the king, to bring the king across the Jordan.** Returning to Jerusalem from exile in Mahanaim (on the eastern side of the Jordan River), David was met on the western side of the river by his supporters, for Gilgal is just west of the Jordan and was a city that played host to a number of key events in the history of Israel (read **GILGAL** below, especially the [excellent summary](#) by gotquestions.org).

**Guzik** - The point is emphasized – David would not return as king until he was welcomed, until hearts were swayed to receive him. **To escort the king:** David left Israel as a desperate fugitive, rejected by the nation and hunted by his son Absalom. He came back escorted by thousands of enthusiastic supporters.

**GILGAL** - The first camp of Israel after crossing the Jordan (Josh 4:19; 5:9,10; 9:6; 10:7; 14:6; 15:7; Dt 11:30). According to Josh 15:7 it lay to the North of the valley of Achor, which formed the border between Judah and Benjamin. Here 12 memorial stones taken from the bed of the river were set up by Joshua, after the miraculous crossing of the Jordan; and here (Josh 5:5 ff) the people were circumcised preparatory to their possession of the land, when it is said in Josh, with a play upon the word, "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." Whereupon the Passover was celebrated (Josh 5:10) and the manna ceased (Josh 5:12). To Gilgal the ark returned every day after having compassed the city of Jericho during its siege (Josh 6:11). Hither the Gibeonites came to make their treaty (Josh 9:3 ff), and again (Josh 10:6) to ask aid against the Amorites. Gilgal was still the headquarters of the Israelites after the battle with the Amorites (Josh 10:15); again after Joshua's extensive victorious campaign in the hill country of Judea extending to Kadesh-barnea and Gaza (Josh 10:15 ff); and still later upon his return from the great battle at the Waters of Merom (Josh 14:6). At the conclusion of the conquest (Josh 18:1), the headquarters were transferred to Shiloh on the summit of the mountain ridge to the West. **Gilgal reappears frequently in subsequent history.** Samuel (1 Sam 7:16) made it one of the three places where he annually held circuit court, the other places being Bethel and Mizpah. The Septuagint text adds that these were holy places. The place continued as one of special resort for sacrifices (1 Sam 10:8; 13:8,9,10; 15:21), while it was here that Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the Lord (1 Sam 15:33), and that Saul was both crowned (1 Sam 11:14,15) and rejected as king. It was at Gilgal, also (2 Sam 19:15), that the people assembled to welcome David as he returned from his exile beyond Jordan during Absalom's rebellion. The early prophets refer to Gilgal as a center of idolatry in their day (Hos 4:15; 9:15; 12:11; Am 4:4; 5:5). Micah (6:5) represents Gilgal as at the other end of the Dead Sea from Shittim.

**Walton on Gilgal.** During much of the early monarchy, Gilgal apparently served as a cultic center. Perhaps because of its previous association with the installation of Saul as king and its proximity to the Jordan River (possibly identified with sites near Khirbet Mefjir, about a mile northeast of Jericho), this was an appropriate place for the tribal elders to welcome David back as king. See comments on 1 Samuel 7:16; 11:14-15. (See page 348 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

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### QUESTION - [What is the importance of Gilgal in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - There are at least two locations named Gilgal in the Bible. There was a Gilgal just west of the Jordan River near Jericho (Joshua 5:9, 13) and one nearer Bethel (2 Kings 2:1–2). Some scholars believe there was a third place named Gilgal near [Mount Gerizim](#) and [Mount Ebal](#) (Deuteronomy 11:29–30). The meaning of the name *Gilgal* is "rolling." Gilgal is not mentioned in the New Testament, but the Old Testament depicts it as follows:

#### ***Gilgal was a place of memorial.***

Gilgal is significant in the Bible as serving as a place of memorial for the Israelites, to remind them of what God had done. After miraculously [crossing the Jordan River](#) into the Promised Land, the Israelites set up twelve stones taken from the river, representing the twelve tribes, to serve as a reminder to the children of Israel (Joshua 4:19–20). The stones at Gilgal would remind the Israelites and their descendants of the power of God and how He had dried up the Jordan River so they could walk through it, just as He had done to the

Red Sea (Joshua 4:21–24). The stones at Gilgal would serve a teaching purpose to the younger generation, so that they too could remember what the Lord had done for them (Joshua 4:21–22).

### ***Gilgal was a place of consecration and change.***

It was at Gilgal that the Israelites were [circumcised](#) and celebrated their first [Passover](#) in the Promised Land (Joshua 5:7–8, 10). The children of those who had wandered in the desert had not yet been circumcised, and it was time for them to take the sign of the covenant and be set apart as God's people. This time of circumcision is what gave Gilgal its name, for the Lord said He had "rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you" (Joshua 5:9). The "reproach" was the Israelites' uncircumcised condition; the "rolling away" of that reproach set them apart, once and for all, from the Egyptian people and way of life. After the Israelites celebrated the Passover and began to eat the produce of their new land, the manna that the Lord had provided the Israelites during their years of wandering stopped. This also happened while they were camped at Gilgal (Joshua 5:11–12).

### ***A place of worship.***

Years later, Gilgal was still a place of worship to offer sacrifices to the Lord, and it was the place where [Saul](#) was publicly crowned the first king of Israel (1 Samuel 10:8; 11:15). Unfortunately, as the Israelites slipped into idolatry, Gilgal became connected with the worship of false gods (Hosea 4:15; Amos 4:4).

### ***A place of judgment.***

It was at Gilgal that [Samuel](#) rebuked Saul and prophesied of his loss of the kingdom (1 Samuel 13:13–14). Saul had been instructed to stay at Gilgal and wait for Samuel before offering sacrifices to the Lord there (1 Samuel 10:8; 13:8). Rather than obey, Saul took the matter in his own hands and sacrificed to the Lord at Gilgal (1 Samuel 13:9–12). When Samuel arrived, he announced judgment on Saul for his disobedience, stating that Saul's kingdom and position would not endure (1 Samuel 13:14).

### ***A place of prophets.***

Gilgal was one of three cities where Samuel regularly held court as the judge of Israel (1 Samuel 7:16). It seems that [Elijah and Elisha](#) spent some time at a place called Gilgal before Elijah's departure to heaven (2 Kings 2:1–2). This is most likely not the same Gilgal as where Joshua had camped; rather, it is a place nearer Bethel in central Canaan. Sometime after Elijah was gone, Elisha returned to Gilgal where many other prophets resided (2 Kings 4:38). There, he found that Gilgal was in the midst of a famine and so made sure the prophets were fed. He also miraculously fed around a hundred other residents (2 Kings 4:38–44).

Gilgal was a significant place in that it reminded the Israelites of their heritage, served as a place of worship, and was visited by kings and prophets. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**2 Samuel 19:16 Then Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite who was from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David.**

- **Shimei:** 2Sa 16:5-13 1Ki 2:8,36-46
- **hurried and came down:** Job 2:4 Pr 6:4,5 Mt 5:25
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **SHIMEI SLITHERS OUT TO MEET DAVID**

**Then Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite who was from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David** - See (2Sa 16:5-13) for Shimei cursing David, but now his cursing had turned to cringing! Shimei came with **the men of Judah** but he himself was from the tribe of Benjamin. Perhaps he is "[hedging his bets](#)" as they say (do things that will prevent great loss or failure if future events do not happen as one plans or hopes.)

**Warren Wiersbe** - Many a rebel will try to "change his tune" when the King comes back! David was trying to gather together the fragments of his kingdom, so he could not afford to alienate any of the tribes, but later on, Solomon gave Shimei what he deserved (1 Kings 2:36-46). (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#))

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[Josephus](#) wrote (Chapter 11.2) - "When the ambassadors came to him, he came to Jerusalem: and the tribe of Judah was the first that came to meet the King at the river Jordan. And **Shimei**, the son of Gera, came with a thousand men; which he brought with him out of the tribe of Benjamin: and Ziba, the freed man of Saul, with his sons, fifteen in number; and with his twenty servants. All these, as well as the tribe of Judah, laid a bridge [of boats] over the river; that the King, and those that were with him, might with ease pass over it. Now as soon as he was come to Jordan, the tribe of Judah saluted him. Shimei also came upon the bridge, and took hold of his feet, and prayed him, "To forgive him what he had offended; and not to be too bitter against him: nor to think fit to make him the first example of severity under his new authority; but to consider that he had repented of his failure of duty: and had taken care to come first of all to him."

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**SHIMEI** - A Benjamite of the house of Saul, who stoned and cursed David when he reached Bahurim in his flight from Jerusalem on the occasion of the rebellion of Absalom (2Sa 16:5-13). After the defeat of Absalom he "came cringing to the king, humbly suing for pardon, bringing with him a thousand of his Benjamite tribesmen, and representing that he was heartily sorry for his crime, and had hurried the first of all the house of Israel to offer homage to the king" (2Sa 19:16-23). David forgave him; but on his death-bed he gave Solomon special instructions regarding Shimei, of whose fidelity he seems to have been in doubt (1 Kings 2:8,9). He was put to death at the command of Solomon, because he had violated his word by leaving Jerusalem and going to Gath to recover two of his servants who had escaped (1Ki 2:36-46).

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Shimei in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - There are a total of 18 men in the Bible with the name Shimei, all Israelites and all found in the Old Testament. Some Shimeis are simply mentioned by name in genealogies, some are called out for their sin of intermarriage with other cultures, and some are mentioned due to their relationship to other famous Bible characters (such as Saul, David, and Esther). You can find a few of them in the following passages: 2 Samuel 21:21; 1 Kings 1:8; 1 Chronicles 3:19; 4:26-27; 5:4; 6:29.....

**The other Shimei who stands out in the Bible is Shimei son of Gera, who was a part of King Saul's clan.** When King David was forced to flee from his son [Absalom](#), who coveted his father's throne, Shimei met the king along the way: "As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul's family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. He pelted David and all the king's officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David's right and left" (2 Samuel 16:5-6). Shimei blamed David for King Saul's death during a battle with the [Philistines](#). Saul had, in fact, fallen on his own sword to escape capture by the enemy (see 1 Chronicles 10:1-4); however, Shimei accused David of murder and announced that this was the reason Absalom was taking over the kingdom.

David's men wanted to kill Shimei then and there, but David, in his despair, believed the Lord had sent Shimei to curse him (2 Samuel 16:11-12), and he refused to allow his men to kill Shimei. David and his party resumed their journey, and Shimei continued to follow, cursing and throwing stones and dirt at them (1Sa 16:13).

Eventually, Absalom's rebellion was put down, Absalom was killed, and King David was restored to his throne. Shimei knew that he was now on shaky ground, so he gathered with him over a thousand Benjamites and went to meet David (2 Samuel 19:16-17). Falling on his face, Shimei apologized for his past behavior and begged the king not to hold it against him (2Sa 19:18-20). Again King David's men asked to kill Shimei, but again David refused and gave Shimei his oath that he would not kill him.

It seems that Shimei was a thoroughly despicable man, however, and that he persisted in his opposition to David. On his deathbed, David charged Solomon with the task of executing Shimei: "Do not consider him innocent. You are a man of wisdom; you will know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood" (1 Kings 2:9). The only reason Shimei was still alive was that David was honoring his oath. Solomon showed Shimei mercy, giving him one final chance: as long as Shimei remained in Jerusalem, he would live (1Ki 2:36-37). Shimei agreed to the pact, but three years later he left the city. When King Solomon found out, he called for Shimei and told him, "You know in your heart all the wrong you did to my father David. Now the Lord will repay you for your wrongdoing" (verse 44). Shimei was then executed (1Ki 2:46). [GotQuestions.org](#) (Bolding added)

**2 Samuel 19:17 There were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, with Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they rushed to the Jordan before the king**

- **Ziba:** 2Sa 19:26,27 9:2,10 16:1-4
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**

2 Samuel 9:1 Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant."....10 "You (ZIBA) and your sons and your servants shall cultivate the land for him, and you shall bring in the produce so that your master's grandson may have food; nevertheless Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall eat at my table regularly." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

## **SHIMEI'S RETINUE & ZIBA RUSH TO MEET DAVID**

**There were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, with Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they rushed to the Jordan before the king**

**ZIBA** - ZIBA - zi'-ba (tsibha', tsibha' (2 Sam 16:4a), meaning unknown; Seiba): A former servant or probably dependent of Saul's house (2Sa 9:1ff), who was brought to David when the king inquired if there was not a member of Saul's family that he could show kindness to (compare David's oath to Jonathan in 1Sa 20:14 ff). **Ziba** tells David of Mephibosheth (Meribbaal), Jonathan's son, who is thereupon taken to the king from Lodebar, East of the Jordan, and given Saul's estate. **Ziba** is also bidden to till the land and bring in its produce, and "it shall be food for thy master's son," according to Massoretic Text in 2Sa 9:10b; but the Septuagint and Lucian have a better reading, "thy master's household." Mephibosheth himself is to eat at David's table. Ziba is to be assisted in this by his sons and servants; he had 15 sons and 20 servants (2Sa 9:10).

When David has to leave Jerusalem at the time of Absalom's revolt, Ziba (2 Sam 16:1-4) takes two asses for members of the king's household to ride on, and 200 loaves and 100 clusters of raisins as provisions for the youths. When asked where Mephibosheth is, he accuses his master of remaining behind purposely in hopes that his father's kingdom would be restored to him. David then confers upon Ziba his master's estate.

After Absalom's death, David sets out to return to Jerusalem from Mahanaim, East of Jordan. **Ziba** with his sons and servants, as we are told in a parenthesis in 2Sa 19:17,18a, by means of a ferry-boat goes backward and forward over Jordan, and thus enables the king's household to cross. But **Ziba has wrongly accused his master of treacherous lukewarmness toward David, for Mephibosheth meets the king on his return journey to Jerusalem (2Sa 19:24-30 with signs of grief**. When he is asked why he had not joined the king at the time of the latter's flight, he answers that **Ziba** deceived him, "for thy servant said to him, Saddle me (so read in 2Sa 19:26 with Septuagint and Syriac for Masoretic Text 'I will have saddled me') the ass." He then accuses Ziba of falsehood, and David divides the estate between the two, although Mephibosheth is quite willing that Ziba should retain the whole of it.

**2 Samuel 19:18 Then they kept crossing the ford to bring over the king's household, and to do what was good in his sight. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king as he was about to cross the Jordan**

- **fell down:** Ps 66:3 81:15 Rev 3:9
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **Related Passage:**

2 Samuel 16:5 When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came. 6 He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left.

## **SHIMEI WHO CURSED NOW CRINGES!**

**Then they kept crossing the ford to bring over the king's household** - How were they crossing? Walking or being ferried across (KJV says "went over a ferry boat")?

**and to do what was good in his sight** - In other words they did whatever the king wanted.

**And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king as he was about to cross the Jordan**- The one who had thrown curses,

now falls cringing. He knew the old adage "to the victor go the spoils" and he realized his head might be one of the "spoils!"

[Guzik](#) gives a great summary of Shimei's genuine repentance - Shimei showed a remarkably humble, contrite confession. He sinned greatly against David, and here he repented greatly before him.

- i. Shimei's repentance was humble (**fell down before the king**). His posture represented his low place before David.
- ii. Shimei's repentance honored David (**Do not let my lord impute iniquity to me**). He knew David had the right to **impute iniquity**, but he pleaded for mercy.
- iii. Shimei's repentance was honest (**I have sinned**). He made no attempt to minimize his actions.
- iv. Shimei's repentance was put into action (**here I am, the first to come today of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king**). Real repentance will show itself not only in words and ideas but also in *action*.

**2 Samuel 19:19 So he said to the king, "Let not my lord consider me guilty, nor remember what your servant did wrong on the day when my lord the king came out from Jerusalem, so that the king would take it to heart.**

- **And said:** Ec 10:4
- **Let not:** 1Sa 22:15 Ps 32:2 Ro 4:6-8 2Co 5:19
- **remember:** Ps 79:8 Isa 43:25 Jer 31:34
- **did perversely:** 2Sa 16:5-9,10-14 Ex 10:16,17 1Sa 26:21 Mt 27:4
- **take it:** 2Sa 13:20,33 1Sa 25:25
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

2 Samuel 16:5-9+ When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came. 6 He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left. 7 Thus Shimei said when he cursed, "Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow! 8 "The LORD has returned upon you all the bloodshed of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. And behold, you are taken in your own evil, for you are a man of bloodshed!" 9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now and cut off his head."

### SHIMEI CONFESSES ASKING FORGIVENESS

**So he said to the king, "Let not my lord consider me guilty nor remember what your servant did wrong on the day when my lord the king came out from Jerusalem, so that the king would take it to heart - NLT = "My lord the king, please forgive me," he pleaded. "Forget the terrible thing I did when you left Jerusalem."**

**THOUGHT** - It strikes me that Shimei gives us all a good pattern to emulate, for we have all often sinned greatly against an even greater King, the Son of David, Christ Jesus (and the Father and the Spirit of course). How we need to continually beg Him to forgive and forget our great sins against Him. Praise God for His infinite mercy and grace in Christ.

**Spurgeon** adds "Perhaps you have been like Shimei, who cursed king David, and you are afraid that Jesus will never forgive you. But David forgave Shimei, and Jesus is ready to forgive you. He delighteth in mercy. I do believe that the harps of heaven never give to Christ such happiness as He has when He forgives the ungodly, and saith, 'Thy sins are forgiven; go in peace.'" HALLELUJAH! AMEN!

**2 Samuel 19:20 "For your servant knows that I have sinned; therefore behold, I have come today, the first of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king."**



- **come:** Ps 78:34-37 Jer 22:23 Ho 5:15
- **Joseph:** 2Sa 19:9 16:5 Ge 48:14,20 1Ki 12:20,25 Ho 4:15-17 5:3
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SHIMEI COMES CLEAN!

**For your servant knows that I have sinned** - Shimei does not "beat around the bush," but takes advantage of the truth in Pr 28:13b+ which says "he who confesses and forsakes them (transgressions) will find compassion."

**Charles Swindoll** - Shimei said the three hardest words in the English language, "**I have sinned.**" They must have rung a bell in David's mind. It hadn't been too many years ago that he had said those same words to Nathan. Forgiveness comes easier when we remember times in our own past when we failed and were forgiven. Before we look at David's response to this, let's look at the other side of the equation and think about times we might have been in Shimei's shoes. He's not just some Old Testament character or caricature; his actions and reactions are real. We now know because we've all had similar experiences, haven't we? We've done or said something that could easily offend another person. We now know what we did was wrong, and we know the other person is hung up on that. So the ball is in our court. It's our serve. It's now our move, and we need to come to terms with it, but that's tough, isn't it? And it's even tougher when we know that we were 100 percent in the wrong. Well, that is where Shimei finds himself in this scene. Let's turn once again to David's side of the matter. After what Shimei had said to him earlier, David could have been indifferent to his confession. He could have just ignored him. Some people would do that . . . just sort of looked past him with a shrug. George Bernard Shaw wrote wise words, "The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that's the essence of inhumanity. . . ." Indifference is certainly not forgiveness. Indifference is RAGE controlled. So Shimei is spread out on the ground before David, saying, "I have sinned." What he's really saying is, "Will you please forgive me?" (from [David A Man of Passion & Destiny](#))

**therefore behold, I have come today, the first of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king** - Why does Shimei says **the first of all the house of Joseph**? The tribe of Benjamin may be considered "first" because of King Saul.

**Utley** explains that "The **"house of Joseph"** is just another way to refer to the northern tribes (cf. Josh. 18:5; Jdg 1:22,23,35; 1Ki 11:28). Usually this phrase refers to the tribe from Joseph – Ephraim and Manasseh, but not here.

**2 Samuel 19:21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah said, "Should not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD'S anointed?"**

- **Should not:** Ex 22:28 1Ki 21:10,11
- **cursed:** 2Sa 16:5,7,13 1Sa 24:6 26:9
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ABISHAI'S UNWILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE

**But Abishai the son of Zeruiah said, "Should not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD'S anointed?"** - In theory Abishai may have been correct. But David is a man after God's own heart, as just as God did not (and does not daily) put us to death for "high treason" against Him, so too David would not receive such harsh, unforgiving words from Abishai. Clearly Abishai and his brother Joab were men with a revengeful spirit (killing Abner and then Absalom and then Amasa!)

**Josephus** wrote (Chapter 11.2) - While he (SHIMEI) was thus entreating the King, and moving him to compassion, Abishai, Joab's brother, said, "And shall not this man die for this, that he hath cursed that King whom God hath appointed to reign over us?" But David turned himself to him, and said, "Will you never leave off, ye sons of Zeruiah? Do not you, I pray, raise new troubles and seditions among us, now the former are over. For I would not have you ignorant, that I this day begin my reign: and therefore swear to remit to all offenders their punishments, and not to animadvert on any one that has sinned. Be thou therefore, said he, O Shimei, of good courage; and do not at all fear being put to death." So he worshipped him, and went on before him.

**2 Samuel 19:22 David then said, "What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be an adversary to me? Should any man be put to death in Israel today? For do I not know that I am king over Israel today?"**



- **What have:** 2Sa 3:39 16:10 1Sa 26:8 Mt 8:29
- **shall any man:** 1Sa 11:13 Isa 16:5 Lu 9:54-56
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID'S MAGNANIMOUS SPIRIT

David then said, "What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah (refers to Joab and Abishai), that you should this day be an adversary ([satan](#); Lxx - epiboulos - plotting against, treacherous) to me? - I like the God's Word paraphrase "Are you sure we're from the same family, sons of Zeruiah? You are my enemies today." Note the Hebrew word for **adversary** is **satan**!

**Should any man be put to death in Israel today? For do I not know that I am king over Israel today-** The NLT paraphrases it "This is not a day for execution but for celebration! I am once again the king of Israel!" David had already granted Amasa his rival general amnesty.

[Guzik](#) points out that "David could readily forgive a man who deserved to die because he was *secure*, knowing that *God* gave him the throne. Insecurity is a great motivator for revenge and holding on to bitterness."

**Walton on pardon granted on special occasions.** The king serves as "head of household" to his nobles and royal court. As such he may operate as a paterfamilias, granting life or sentencing them to death for political crimes or disloyalty (see 1 Kings 2:19-46). Shimei and Mephibosheth have both committed crimes against David that could justify the death penalty. However, David chooses on the day of his accession to pardon them as a sign of his magnanimity and willingness to forgive his political enemies (see Saul's similar statements in 1 Sam 11:12-13). It was typical in Mesopotamia for the king to declare *anduraru*—a release of prisoners and debt slaves—connected to his accession to the throne. Similar release could also extend to those guilty of political crimes as seen in the reform document of the Sumerian king Uruinimgina (twenty-fourth century B.C.), in which even thieves and murderers are freed. In Egypt the coronation of a new pharaoh was often accompanied by proclamations of amnesty. (See page 348 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

**Adversary** ([satan](#)) ([07854](#)) [satan](#) means adversary, opponent, accuser. Most uses refer to Satan the adversary of God and thus related to relate to "the cosmic struggle in the unseen world between God and the opposing forces of darkness." In [1 Chronicles 21:1](#) "Then **Satan** ([satan](#)) stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel."

**Satan - 23v - accuser(1), adversary(8), Satan(18).** Num. 22:22; Num. 22:32; 1 Sam. 29:4; 2 Sam. 19:22; 1 Ki. 5:4; 1 Ki. 11:14; 1 Ki. 11:23; 1 Ki. 11:25; 1 Chr. 21:1; Job 1:6; Job 1:7; Job 1:8; Job 1:9; Job 1:12; Job 2:1; Job 2:2; Job 2:3; Job 2:4; Job 2:6; Job 2:7; Ps. 109:6; Zech. 3:1; Zech. 3:2

**2 Samuel 19:23 The king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." Thus the king swore to him.**

- **You shall not die.** 1Ki 2:8,9,37,46
- **swore:** 1Sa 28:10 30:15 Heb 6:16
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID SWEARS NO DEATH SENTENCE

**The king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." Thus the king swore to him-** In a sense David kept this oath because he himself did not have Shimei killed at that time but there is a bit of an "spiritual asterisk" (or "spiritual disclaimer") on David's words suggesting he may have forgiven him, but he did not forget. And so while David was dying we hear his words to the next king, Solomon...

**"Behold**, there is with you Shimei the son of Gera the Benjamite, of Bahurim; now it was he who cursed me with a violent curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword' 9 "Now therefore, **do not let him go unpunished**, for you are a wise man; and you will know what you ought to do to him, and **you will bring his gray hair down to Sheol with blood.** (NET = "make sure he has a bloody death")" (1Ki 2:8-9+) (God's Word Translation while a paraphrase minces no words - "Put that gray-haired, old man into his grave by slaughtering him.")

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**THOUGHTS ON FORGIVENESS BY CHARLES SWINDOLL** -- although there is an issue with the last words of David quoted above, Dr Swindoll nevertheless offers a helpful practical discussion of how we can forgive those who "curse" us or "cast rocks" at us. The excerpt below is from his book [David A Man of Passion & Destiny \(borrow\)](#). Swindoll writes...

While taking this in-depth journey through the life of David, I don't want to just give you just geography and genealogy. My desire is not to have you walk away with a notebook full of chronological and biographical facts. My hope is to have you see David as a real person and then to see comparisons and opportunities in your own life so that you begin to emulate the qualities that made him a man after God's own heart.

One of those qualities is a forgiving spirit. This attribute also happens to be one of the most difficult to acquire. In fact, instead of fully forgiving someone, most folks opt for one of three different responses.

### THREE DIFFERENT RESPONSES

**(1) Instead of complete forgiveness, we offer conditional forgiveness.** "I will forgive you IF . . ." or, "I will forgive you AS SOON AS . . ."; "If you come back and make things right, I'll forgive you," or, "If you own up to your part of the problem, then I'll forgive you." That's conditional forgiveness. It says, "I'm waiting, waiting like a tiger swishing his tail. You make your move, and I'll determine whether it's time to back away or pounce and bite."

**(2) The second kind of forgiveness that's less than perfect is partial forgiveness.** "I forgive you, but don't expect me to forget." Or, "I forgive you, but just get out of my life." Or, "I'll forgive you until that happens again." There are a lot of people we are willing to forgive . . . just so we don't have to see them again.

**(3) The third response is delayed forgiveness.** "I'll forgive you, but just give me some time. Someday, sometime I'll follow through, I'll forgive you." This is a common reaction of someone who has been deeply hurt . . . and has nursed that hurt over the years. Most of us would rather sit on a judgment seat than a mercy seat. If somebody "did us wrong," we'd rather watch him squirm in misery than smile in relief.

### UNFORGIVING... DRAMATIC, DOWNWARD EFFECT

Yet forgiveness isn't just about the other person; it's also about us. When we are **unforgiving**, it has a dramatic, downward effect on our own life. First of all, there is an offense. And if there isn't forgiveness after the offense, then **resentment** begins to build. And if there isn't forgiveness following that **resentment**, then **hatred** comes to take its place. Sustained hatred leads to **grudge**. And grudge ultimately settles into **revenge**. "I'm just biding my time. And when I have my chance I'll get back."

I openly confess, several years ago I couldn't have written this chapter. I hadn't really come to terms with these things in my own life. Thank God, since He has helped me deal with this, today I can honestly say I do not know of an individual I have not forgiven . . . and I write that with no sense of pride. Who am I to brag, having nursed an unforgiving spirit far too long?

I say it with thankfulness and relief. I say it in humble honesty to encourage you to know that it can happen. Now let me go another step further. While I don't feel resentment toward anyone, I still wrestle with this issue on a regular basis. Every week, it seems, I have to come to terms with not letting some offense linger and lead me back into resentment. I have to deal with it at the offense level or I'm a goner. If I didn't, before realizing it, I'd be all the way to revenge.....

**Swindoll goes on to use the example of Shimei cursing David** (2Sa 16:5) and David's willingness to forgive him (2Sa 19:16-23+). Here are wise words from Swindoll on how we forgive the "Shimei's" in our life!

### HOW TO HANDLE "SHIMEI" IN YOUR LIFE

How could David forgive a "reptile" like this Shimei?

**Well, first of all, he kept his vertical focus clear.** "God, You and I can handle this. You take care of that offense. You're good at offenses." I have discovered great strength in taking any offense immediately to God. I mean, immediately. There is something very stabilizing in getting vertical perspective on a situation before seeking any horizontal counsel.

**Second, David was very much aware of his own failure.** The humbled forgiven make good forgivers. David knew only too well what it meant to be a sinner. He knew what it meant to be forgiven by the Lord. He knew the heartache of having done wrong . . . the

cleansing feeling—the relief, the sense of burden lifted—that follows repentance and forgiveness. Those horrible months when he was humbled before his God seasoned David and made him merciful. Being well aware of his own shortcomings gave him great patience with another's wrongdoing.

The proud have a hard time forgiving. Those who have never recognized their own failures have a tough time tolerating, understanding, and forgiving the failure of others.

If we are to develop a spirit of forgiveness in our own lives, if we are to put forgiveness into action, we need to do several things.

## **SOME SOUND ADVICE TO HELP US FORGIVE**

**First, we must cultivate a thicker layer of skin, a buffer to take those jolts that come our way.** We need to ask for God's help with this. "Lord, help me not to be so sensitive, so thin-skinned. Lord, take away this delicate china-doll mentality of mine and give me depth. Toughen my hide. Calm my responses. Make me patient with those who speak too quickly. Make me like Christ." This will help us keep our sense of balance so that the slightest push does not send us toppling over, and so that we can bounce back from whatever hits us.

**Second, we can try to understand where the offender is coming from.** This takes a lot of grace, but, again, God is good at grace. Try to see beyond the offense and find the little boy inside that man lashing out at you . . . or the little girl inside that woman who is striking back. Try to find out what is behind their offensive words or behavior. You may be surprised how helpful that can be! Who knows? David may have seen a touch of his old immature self in Shimei as those rocks came whizzing by.

Sometimes we make things more complicated than they really are. Maybe the critics have been saving up their own offenses and have chosen this moment to use you as a punching bag. Maybe they are just having a bad day. A guy gets yelled at at work. He goes home and screams at his wife. She then becomes angry with one of the kids. The kid walks out and boots the cat. And the cat prowls all night trying to find some innocent creature to bite! That's the kind of chain reaction that happens when we don't stay calm and deal honestly and act graciously with each other. I'm not saying it is easy or suggesting it comes naturally. But neither is it impossible. Putting ourselves in the other person's shoes often helps us objectify their reaction. Our Savior did that even while hanging on the cross. He looked at His accusers and prayed, "**Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing**" (Lk. 23:34+). In that one statement, we realize how our Lord viewed His enemies.

**Third, we should recall times in our own life when we have needed forgiveness and then apply the same emotion** All of us, at one time or another, have done or said something dumb or extreme or offensive and have needed someone's forgiveness. This happens between friends, in families, at work, at school, and, yes, even at church. We must be candid about this—nobody is above the drag of humanity. When it kicks in, we can be as ugly or vile or ornery as the other guy. I pray for this kind of authenticity all the time. "Keep me authentic, Lord. Take every phony-baloney cell out of my body. Just keep me real."

**Fourth, we need to verbalize our forgiveness.** Say it, don't just think it. Spoken words of forgiveness and graciousness are marvelously therapeutic to the offender, no matter how small or great the offense. Saying our feelings removes all doubt. Stuart Briscoe writes:

Some years ago a fashionably dressed woman came to my study, very distressed. She had made a commitment to the Lord a few days earlier but had asked to see me because something was troubling her. She poured out an unpleasant story concerning an affair she had been having with one of her husband's friends. Then she insisted that her husband should know, and that I should tell him! That was a new experience for me! After some discussion with the woman, I called the husband. When he arrived at my study, I told him what had happened. His response was a remarkable and beautiful thing to behold. Turning to his tearful and fearful wife, he said, "I love you. I forgive you. Let's make a new start." (**Borrow Briscoe's book [What Works When Life Doesn't](#)**)

Many things had to be straightened out and much hurt had to be healed, but his response of forgiveness, made possible by his own understanding of the forgiveness of God, became the basis of a new joy and a new life.

Our typical human response to offense is to try all the wrong things: silence, resentment, grudge, indifference, even plotting a way to maneuver and manipulate to get our offender in a vulnerable spot so we can twist the verbal knife, once we've plunged it in. None of this pleases God . . . nor does it work!

**Cultivating a forgiving spirit is a very real problem that every one of us wrestles with** We need a heart of full forgiveness and grace in our family relationships, in our work and school relationships, certainly in our church relationships. We need to put feet to the hope that is within us.

In his book, [You Can Win With Love \(borrow book\)](#), Dale Galloway tells a story about John D. Rockefeller, the man who built the great Standard Oil empire. Not surprisingly, Rockefeller was a man who demanded high performance from his company executives. Then, one day, one of those executives made a two million dollar mistake. Word of the man's enormous error quickly spread throughout the executive offices, and the other men began to make themselves scarce. Afraid of Rockefeller's reaction, they didn't even want to cross his path. One man didn't have any choice, however, since he had an appointment with the boss. So he straightened his shoulders and tightened his belt and walked into Rockefeller's office. As he approached the oil monarch's desk, Rockefeller looked up from the piece of paper upon which he was writing. "I guess you've heard about the two million dollar mistake our friend made," he said abruptly. "Yes," the executive said, expecting Rockefeller to explode. "Well, I've been sitting here listing all of our friend's good qualities on this sheet of paper, and I've discovered that in the past he has made us many more times the amount he lost for us today by his one mistake. His good points far outweigh this one human error. So I think we ought to forgive him, don't you?"

Whether it's a two million dollar mistake or a one-sentence off-the-cuff comment, we need to respond with Christlike grace and complete forgiveness. **Like David, we need a soft heart and thick skin, we need vertical focus . . . and we need an awareness of our own failures and our own need for forgiveness.** (borrow [David A Man of Passion & Destiny](#) page 252)

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#### Related Resources:

- [List of links related to forgiveness/unforgiveness](#)
- [Multiple illustrations and quotes related to forgiveness/unforgiveness](#)
- [Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Ephesians 4:32](#)
- [Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Colossians 3:13](#)
- [Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Matthew 6:12](#) and [Matthew 6:14-15](#)

**2 Samuel 19:24 Then Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and he had neither cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came home in peace.**

- **Mephibosheth:** 2Sa 9:6 2Sa 16:3
- **his feet:** 2Sa 15:30 Isa 15:2 Jer 41:5 Mt 6:16 Ro 12:15 Heb 13:3
- **trimmed:** Literally, made his beard, which may mean, combing, curling, and perfuming it. But Mr. Morier says that they almost universally dye the beard black, by successive layers of a paste made of henna, and another made of the leaf of the indigo: the first tinging with an orange colour, and the next with a dark bottle green, which becomes jet black when exposed to the air for twenty-four hours.
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **MEPHIBOSHETH'S NEGLECT SIGNIFIES SIGNS OF MOURNING**

**Then Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and he had neither cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came home in peace** - Recall that Mephibosheth's servant Ziba had lied to David about Mephibosheth's intentions "Then the king said, "And where is your master's son?" And Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, '**Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.**'" (2Sa 16:3+). His neglect of personal hygiene hardly manifested a demeanor to take over David's throne!

**Utley** describes his appearance as "unusual signs of mourning. (1) neither cared for his feet – the verb basically means "to do something"; here, it denotes washing. The LXX adds "nor pared his nails." (2) trimmed his mustache – same verb and (3) not washed his clothes. Mephibosheth was disheveled, which showed his grief over David's exile and that he himself did not claim kingship or privilege.

**Walton** on **caring for feet and mustache**. The NIV translation suggests a neglect of personal appearance that frequently accompanied mourning. This would also serve as evidence that Mephibosheth had entertained no thought of promoting himself for the throne, for otherwise he would have taken special care to appear kingly. Alternatively, Ezekiel 24:17 identifies bared feet and covered mustache as signs of mourning. The actions attributed to Mephibosheth allow this possibility, because the text simply says he had not "done" his feet or mustache. (See page 348 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

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[Josephus](#) (Chapter 11.3) on **Mephibosheth** - Mephibosheth also, Saul's grandson, met David, clothed in a sordid garment; and having his hair thick and neglected: for after David was fled away, he was in such grief, that he had not polled his head, nor had he washed his clothes: as dooming himself to undergo such hardships upon occasion of the change of the King's affairs. Now he had been unjustly calumniated (had false and defamatory statements made about himself) to the King by Ziba, his steward. When he had saluted the King, and worshipped him, the King began to ask him, "Why he did not go out of Jerusalem with him, and accompany him during his flight?" He replied, that "This piece of injustice was owing to Ziba: because when he was ordered to get things ready for his going out with him, he took no care of it: but regarded him no more than if he had been a slave. And indeed, had I had my feet sound and strong, I had not deserted thee: for I could then have made use of them in my flight. But this is not all the injury that Ziba has done me, as to my duty to thee, my Lord and Master: but he hath calumniated me besides, and told lies about me of his own invention. But I know thy mind will not admit of such calumnies, but is righteously disposed, and a lover of truth: which it is also the will of God should prevail. For when thou wast in the greatest danger of suffering by my grandfather; and when, on that account, our whole family might justly have been destroyed, thou wast moderate. and merciful; and didst then especially forget all those injuries, when, if thou hadst remembred them, thou hadst the power of punishing us for them. But thou hast judged me to be thy friend; and hast set me every day at thine own table: nor have I wanted any thing which one of thine own kinsmen, of greatest esteem with thee, could have expected." When he had said this, David resolved neither to punish Mephibosheth; nor to condemn Ziba, as having belied his master: but said to him, that as he had [before] granted all his estate to Ziba, because he did not come along with him; so he [now] promised to forgive him; and ordered that the one half of his estate should be restored to him. [\(22\)](#) Whereupon Mephibosheth said, "Nay, let Ziba take all: it suffices me that thou hast recovered thy Kingdom."

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#### **QUESTION - [Who was Mephibosheth?](#)**

**ANSWER** - There are two men by the name of Mephibosheth in the Bible, both in 2 Samuel. The less prominent one was a son of King Saul; he was delivered by David to the Gibeonites to be hanged in retaliation for Saul's earlier slaughter of a band of Gibeonites (2 Samuel 21:1-9).

The other Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, who was the son of King Saul and a special friend of King David. When Mephibosheth was five years old, his father Jonathan was killed in battle. Fearing that the Philistines would seek to take the life of the young boy, a nurse fled with him to Gibeah, the royal residence, but in her haste she dropped him and both of his feet were crippled (2 Samuel 4:4). He was carried to the land of Gilead, where he found refuge in the house of Machir, son of Ammiel, at Lodebar.

Some years later, when King David had conquered all of Israel's enemies, he remembered the family of his friend Jonathan (2 Samuel 9:1), and, wishing to display his loving loyalty to Jonathan by ministering to his family, David found out that Mephibosheth was residing in the house of Machir. So he sent royal messengers there, and brought Mephibosheth and his infant son Micah to Jerusalem, where they resided from that point on (2 Samuel 9).

Later, when David invited the young boy to be part of his court, he entrusted the family property to a steward, Ziba. During Absalom's rebellion, Ziba tried unsuccessfully to turn David against Mephibosheth. Upon the king's return to Jerusalem, Mephibosheth vindicated himself and was allowed to remain in the king's house (2 Samuel 19:24-30). [GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Samuel 19:25 It was when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"**

- **Why:** 2Sa 16:17
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **DAVID QUESTIONS MOTIVES OF MEPHIBOSHETH**

**It was when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"**

**2 Samuel 19:26 So he answered, "O my lord, the king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself that I may ride on it and go with the king,' because your servant is lame.**

- **I will saddle:** 2Sa 16:2,3
- **servant:** 2Sa 4:4
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ZIBA'S DECEPTION OF MEPHIBOSHETH

So he answered, "O my lord, the king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself that I may ride on it and go with the king,' because your servant is lame - Ziba's reason for going in place of lame Mephibosheth sounded plausible enough except that it was a lie. Recall that Ziba lied to obtain Mephibosheth's inheritance, and David fell for it declaring "to Ziba, "**Behold**, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." And Ziba said, "I prostrate myself; let me find favor in your sight, O my lord, the king!" (2Sa 16:3+)

**2 Samuel 19:27 "Moreover, he has slandered your servant to my lord the king; but my lord the king is like the angel of God, therefore do what is good in your sight.**

- **slandered:** 2Sa 16:3 Ex 20:16 Ps 15:3 101:5 Jer 9:4
- **as an angel:** 2Sa 14:17,20 1Sa 29:9
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 14:17; 20 "Then your maidservant said, 'Please let the word of my lord the king be comforting, for as **the angel of God**, so is my lord the king to discern good and evil. And may the LORD your God be with you.'" ....20 in order to change the appearance of things your servant Joab has done this thing. But my lord is wise, like the wisdom of **the angel of God**, to know all that is in the earth."

## MEPHIBOSHETH ADDS ZIBA SLANDERED BUT WILL ACCEPT THE KING'S VERDICT

**Moreover, he has slandered your servant to my lord the king-** That is he lied to David about the the true state of Mephibosheth's heart.

**but my lord the king is like the angel of God, therefore do what is good in your sight-** The angel of God means he considers David like a messenger from God and willingly submits to whatever David thinks is just and right.

**2 Samuel 19:28 "For all my father's household was nothing but dead men before my lord the king; yet you set your servant among those who ate at your own table. What right do I have yet that I should complain anymore to the king?"**

- **was nothing :** Ge 32:10
- **dead men** 1Sa 26:16
- **didst thou:** 2Sa 9:7,8,10,13
- **to cry:** 2Ki 8:3
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MEPHIBOSHETH'S AMAZING HUMILITY TOWARD DAVID

**For all my father's household was nothing but dead men before my lord the king -** He is speaking of Jonathan saying in effect David could have killed his entire family.

**yet you set your servant among those who ate at your own table-** Mephibosheth acknowledges David's manifold blessings and honor to himself.

**What right do I have yet that I should complain anymore to the king-** He refuses to hold any right to complain to David in light



of his abundantly gracious treatment.

**Guzik** - Though Mephibosheth was slandered before David, Mephibosheth didn't defend himself or demand a hearing before David. He knew David had already given him more than he deserved, so if David were to now take it all away he would still be ahead.

**2 Samuel 19:29 So the king said to him, "Why do you still speak of your affairs? I have decided, 'You and Ziba shall divide the land.'"**

- **speak:** Job 19:16,17 Pr 18:13 Ac 18:15
- **You:** De 19:17-19 Ps 82:2 101:5
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### DAVID'S DECISION IS DIVISION OF PROPERTY

**So** - For this reason. Based on Mephibosheth's appearance, explanation and attitude of humility David will now reach a decision.

**the king said to him, "Why do you still speak of your affairs?"**- Essentially David is saying Mephibosheth need say nothing else.

**I have decided, 'You and Ziba shall divide the land** - Frankly, this is surprising and does not necessarily (in my humble opinion) reflect a man acting like he is a man of God's own heart. Ziba had deceived and lied (like Satan - Jn 8:44), and received what was not his, so one must question that instead of dividing the land, Ziba should be punished without any reward. That's how I responded to David's decision, but watch the response of Mephibosheth in the next verse! Woe!

**2 Samuel 19:30 Mephibosheth said to the king, "Let him even take it all, since my lord the king has come safely to his own house."**

- 2Sa 1:26 Ac 20:24 Php 1:20
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Acts 20:24+ "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Philippians 1:20+ according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, **Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.**

### MEPHIBOSHETH'S AMAZING HUMILITY AND FORGIVENESS

**Mephibosheth said to the king, "Let him even take it all, since my lord the king has come safely to his own house-** Mephibosheth had not desired his property back, but his king back! Oh, how we all (for sure I) need to stop, look and listen to this great man Mephibosheth model death to self! We see "others before me" mentality in the apostle Paul in Acts 20:24+ and Philippians 1:20+. So even as Mephibosheth sought for David to be exalted, Paul sought for the Son of David (and His Gospel of grace) to be exalted.

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**G Campbell Morgan** (borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#)) - Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come in peace unto his own house.-2 Sam. 19.30

This was the language of a glad heart. Mephibosheth had known the kindness of God through David in the days when he had been found and brought to the king's house and table. How he had suffered during the sad days of the king's absence from his own city! That suffering had been all the more acute because by treachery he had been prevented from accompanying his benefactor into exile, and had been slandered by Ziba. Now the trouble was over, the rebellion was at an end, the king was brought back to his own house. This was joy enough for the crippled son of Jonathan. In view of this, let his enemy have all the material things. This is a



suggestive story in its revelation of the selflessness of true loyalty. 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. How the incident talks to us! We have been given a place in the House of our King, and at His table, in infinite grace. Is our loyalty to Him as disinterested as that of Mephibosheth for David? Is it more to us that He should have His rightful place, than that we should have even the things which are our rightful possessions because they are the King's gifts to us? **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**

**2 Samuel 19:31 Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim; and he went on to the Jordan with the king to escort him over the Jordan.**

- 1Ki 2:7 Ezr 2:61 Ne 7:63
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 17:27 Now when David had come to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim,

### BARZILLAI ESCORTS DAVID TO THE RIVER

**Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim**- Recall that Mahanaim was in [Gilead](#), Barzillai's home territory and Rogelim was his residence probably located near Mahanaim, David's home base in his exile. It is notable that Barzillai means something like "iron" (strong), "man of iron," and one reference says "iron hearted."

**and he went on to the Jordan with the king to escort him over the Jordan**- Barzillai accompanies David to send him on his way back to the city of David.

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[Josephus](#) (Chapter 11.4) on **Barzillai** - But David desired Barzillai the Gileadite; that great and good man, and one that had made a plentiful provision for him at Mahanaim, and had conducted him as far as Jordan; to accompany him to Jerusalem: for he promised that he would treat him in his old age with all manner of respect; would take care of him, and provide for him. But Barzillai was so desirous to live at home, that he intreated him to excuse him from attendance on him; and said, that "His age was too great to enjoy the pleasures [of a court;] since he was fourscore years old: and was therefore making provision for his death and burial. So he desired him to gratify him in this request, and dismiss him. For that he had no relish of his meat, or his drink, by reason of his age: and that his ears were too much shut up to hear the sound of pipes, or the melody of other musical instruments, such as all those that live with Kings delight in." When he intreated for this so earnestly, the King said, "I dismiss thee; but thou shalt grant me thy son Chimham: and upon him I will bestow all sorts of good things." So Barzillai left his son with him; and worshipped the King, and wished him a prosperous conclusion of all his affairs, according to his own mind; and then returned home: But David came to Gilgal: having about him half the people [of Israel,] and the [whole] tribe of Judah.

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#### Get Even 2 Samuel 19:31-33

There are times when it's entirely appropriate to get even with someone...not, however, with those you think have wronged you, but with those you know who have helped you. David practiced this kind of "getting even" with Barzillai.

When the king fled from his son Absalom, he had been unable to gather the supplies needed to support himself and his followers in the wilderness. Hearing of this, a Gileadite from Rogelim named Barzillai and his friends brought "beds and basins, earthen vessels and wheat, barley and flour, parched grain and beans, lentils and parched seeds, honey and curds, sheep and cheese of the herd, for David and the people who were with him to eat. For they said, 'The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness'" (2 Sam. 17:28-29). When the crisis was over and David was ready to return, his first desire was to "get even" with such kindness. He offered Barzillai the opportunity to feast at the king's table for as long as he was in Jerusalem.

What an impact we Christians would have for good in this world if we tried to get even with those who have been kind to us. Instead of taking for granted the blessings God brings to you through other people, seek a way to return that kindness with kindness. That's the kind of vengeance God approves of.

Have you been blessed today? Then get even. And if you can't get even with the one who blessed you, pass the blessing on to someone else. ([Back to the Bible](#))

Get even with someone today--God's way.

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### QUESTION - [Who was Barzillai in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Barzillai the Gileadite is mentioned ten times in the Old Testament. (Two other men named Barzillai are also mentioned, one in 2 Samuel 21:8 and the other in Ezra 2:61 and Nehemiah 7:63). Barzillai is described as a wealthy man from Rogelim in Gilead who lived during the time of King David (2 Samuel 17:27). He is best known for his loyal service to [David](#) when David was forced to flee Jerusalem during a revolt by his son [Absalom](#).

During David's brief time of exile, Barzillai was one of several key people who provided for the needs of David's household (2 Samuel 17:27-29; 19:32). When the rebellion ended, Barzillai accompanied David and his people to the shore of the Jordan River where they would cross back into Judah on their way to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 19:31). At the time, Barzillai was 80 years old. David offered for Barzillai to return to Jerusalem with him so he could return his kindness and care for his needs.

Barzillai respectfully turned down David's offer, seeking to live out the rest of his days in his own land instead. However, Barzillai asked for his servant Kimham to cross over instead: "But here is your servant Kimham. Let him cross over with my lord the king. Do for him whatever you wish" (2 Samuel 19:37). David granted his request and kissed and blessed Barzillai when they parted. Even in his final moments with David, Barzillai sought the welfare of others, this time offering a better life for his own servant.

Barzillai is mentioned three times in Scripture after his death. In Ezra 2:61 and Nehemiah 7:63 he is noted in a list of Jewish descendants. In both passages, Barzillai is called "the Gileadite" because another man with the same name had married one of Barzillai's daughters. Barzillai's name was clearly of great reputation if his son-in-law wanted to be known by the same name.

The other mention of Barzillai after his death is by King David. When David gives instructions to his son Solomon as he transitions the kingdom to him, David states, "But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai of Gilead and let them be among those who eat at your table. They stood by me when I fled from your brother Absalom" (1 Kings 2:7). Barzillai's kindness was remembered long after his death, being mentioned by the greatest king of Israel.

Despite his strange name, Barzillai was a man with a great reputation for loyalty to God and to his king and kindness to those under his care. Despite being a man of wealth, he used his influence for the benefit of others and lived a simple life. He offers a powerful example of the legacy one person can have through loving God and serving others during difficult times. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Samuel 19:32 Now Barzillai was very old, being eighty years old; and he had sustained the king while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very great man.**

- **eighty years old:** Ge 5:27 9:29 25:7 47:28 50:26 De 34:7 Ps 90:3-10 Pr 16:31
- **provided:** 2Sa 17:27
- **for he was:** 1Sa 25:2 Job 1:3
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 12:20-21 (**ANOTHER RICH MAN**) "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' 21 "So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Mahanaim is in NE corner of the pink-shaded area of Gad  
(click to enlarge)

### **BARZILLAI WAS RICH AND GENEROUS TO DAVID**

**Now Barzillai was very old, being eighty years old** - I like the KJV's "fourscore" as I am on the precipice of that "score!"

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, you may be young or old (but I can assure you that one day you will likely be old like me - I am 77 in 2023). Here is the take home point - **you are never too old to be used of God** God used

Barzillai in a strategic and powerful way to help ensure that the Davidic Covenant would be fulfilled. In theory, it would not have been if David had died and Absalom had survived. But of course history is **HIS**-story and He sovereignly moves the pieces on the divine chess board (orchestrating checkmates like He did with Absalom! Pr 21:1) and yet mysteriously interwoven with God's sovereignty is man's responsibility, in this case a man named **Barzillai** who was very old! So let me repeat that you cannot use old age as an excuse that God either cannot use you or does not desire to use you. He is not looking at your age but your heart, or as you have likely heard, He is looking for "F.A.T." men (and women), figuratively speaking, this acrostic describing old (and young) men and women like Barzillai who are **Faithful, Available and Teachable**. You do your "Barzillai" part for God and the greater Son of David will desire to give you a reward that you won't be too old to receive or enjoy eternally! (2Co 5:10+)

**and he had sustained the king while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very great** (NET - very rich) **man** - Barzillai must have been quite wealthy to supply the king's table, and presumably those that were with him. Barzillai gave in faith (in my opinion) because the truth is that he did not know whether David would live or die at the hand of his rebellious son Absalom. This is giving expecting nothing in return.

**Guzik** - Barzillai was a man of great resources – and he wisely used those resources to support the servant of God and the cause of God. In Luke 12:21, Jesus spoke of the foolish man *who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God*. Barzillai was wise enough to use his resources to lay up treasure in heaven and he *was* rich toward God.

**2 Samuel 19:33 The king said to Barzillai, "You cross over with me and I will sustain you in Jerusalem with me."**

- **Cross over:** 2Sa 9:11 Mt 25:34-40 Lu 22:28-30 2Th 1:7
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **DAVID INVITES BARZILLAI TO JERUSALEM**

**The king said to Barzillai, "You cross over with me and I will sustain you in Jerusalem with me** - David desires to pay back Barzillai's kindness by providing for him in his old age. **NRSV** says "I will provide for you in Jerusalem at my side."

**2 Samuel 19:34 But Barzillai said to the king, "How long have I yet to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?"**

- **How long have I yet to live:** Heb. How many days are the years of my life, Ge 47:9 Job 14:14 Ps 39:5,6 1Co 7:29 Jas 4:14

**But Barzillai said to the king, "How long have I yet to live** - Basically Barzillai is saying he does not have much longer to live. I like the literal Hebrew which says "How many days are the years of my life?" He sees his life first as one day at a time and then in years.

**THOUGHT**- Barzillai's words remind me of the great prayer in Ps 90:12+ where Moses prays "So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom." A good prayer for all of us to pray!

**That I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?**- Jerusalem was not his home and as enticing as a regal lifestyle might seem, for an older man it was not so exciting. Undoubtedly he had family in the area of Mahanaim so he chose to remain.

**THOUGHT** - One is reminded of another man who made an even more dramatic, life changing choice, the writer of Hebrews recording that "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin," (Heb 11:24-25+) Would you (I) have made the choice to finish your life with a flair in the king's court? We are going to the King's Court and in fact will even reign with the King! (Rev 5:10+)

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**Some other "HOW LONG" Statements in the Bible...**

- How long will you live? 2Sa 19:34
- How long will you falter between two opinions? 1Ki 18:21
- How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Ex 10:3

- How long will you reject God? Nu 14:11
- How long will you not believe? Nu 14:11
- How long will you sleep? Pr 6:9
- How long will you refuse to humble yourself? Ex 10:3

**There are actually 61 uses of "how long" in 54 verses - here they are for some interesting reading** - Exod. 10:3; Exod. 10:7; Exod. 16:28; Num. 14:11; Num. 14:27; Num. 24:22; Jos. 18:3; 1 Sam. 1:14; 1 Sam. 16:1; 2 Sam. 2:26; 2 Sam. 19:34; 1 Ki. 18:21; Neh. 2:6; Job 8:2; Job 18:2; Job 19:2; Ps. 4:2; Ps. 6:3; Ps. 13:1; Ps. 13:2; Ps. 35:17; Ps. 62:3; Ps. 74:9; Ps. 74:10; Ps. 79:5; Ps. 80:4; Ps. 82:2; Ps. 89:46; Ps. 90:13; Ps. 94:3; Prov. 1:22; Prov. 6:9; Isa. 6:11; Jer. 4:14; Jer. 4:21; Jer. 12:4; Jer. 13:27; Jer. 23:26; Jer. 31:22; Jer. 47:5; Jer. 47:6; Dan. 8:13; Dan. 12:6; Hos. 8:5; Hab. 1:2; Hab. 2:6; Zech. 1:12; Zech. 2:2; Matt. 17:17; Mk. 9:19; Mk. 9:21; Lk. 9:41; Jn. 10:24; Rev. 6:10

**2 Samuel 19:35 "I am now eighty years old. Can I distinguish between good and bad? Or can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Or can I hear anymore the voice of singing men and women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king?"**

- **Can I distinguish:** Job 6:30 12:11 Heb 5:14 1Pe 2:3
- **taste:** Ec 12:1-5
- **I hear:** Ezra 2:65 Ne 7:67 Ex 2:8 12:4
- **burden:** 2Sa 13:25 15:33
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **BARZILLAI SAYS TOO OLD TO ENJOY COURT PLEASURES**

**I am now eighty years old** - His age is repeated for emphasis. He is at the end of his race. The following questions by Barzillai mirror Eccl. 12:1-7, which describes old age as a decrement in desires of the pleasures of life.

**Can I distinguish between good and bad?** - How can I tell what is pleasant and what is not? How can I enjoy life at the royal court?

**Or can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink?** Fine wine and choicest foods are no longer as tasty as when he was younger.

**Or can I hear anymore the voice of singing men and women?** On top of it all he can't hear well so the court music would be wasted on him. One is surprised he does not mention his site (I had cataracts removed at age 77).

**Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king?** He does not want to be a burden to King David. He is thinking of David before he thinks of himself.

**2 Samuel 19:36 "Your servant would merely cross over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king compensate me with this reward?"**

- **the king:** Lu 6:38
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **TO CROSS OVER THE JORDAN WITH DAVID IS REWARD ENOUGH**

**Your servant would merely cross over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king compensate me with this reward?** - This is an amazing declaration of selflessness, loyalty and humility for he is saying in essence that just to cross over the Jordan with David would be all the recompense he desired. He had given aide to David out of a right heart, not out of desire for greedy gain.

**2 Samuel 19:37 "Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother."**

**However, here is your servant Chimham, let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what is good in your sight."**

- **I may die:** Ge 48:21 Jos 23:14 Lu 2:29,30 2Ti 4:6 2Pe 1:14
- **the grave:** Ge 47:30 49:29-31 50:13 1Ki 13:22
- **Chimham:** 2Sa 19:40 1Ki 2:7 Jer 41:17
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Kings 2:7 (**DAVID'S DYING WISHES**) "But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table; for they assisted me when I fled from Absalom your brother.

### **BARZILLAI'S DESIRE IS TO DIE AT HOME**

**Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother.** Barzillai asked to stay in his own town until he died.

**However, here is your servant Chimham, let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what is good in your sight** Chimham was apparently Barzillai's son (cf. 1Ki 2:7).

**TSK Note** - The whole of this little episode is extremely interesting, and contains an affecting description of the infirmities of old age. The venerable and kind Barzillai was fourscore years old; his ear was become dull of hearing, and his relish for even royal dainties was gone: the evil days had arrived in which he was constrained to say, "I have no pleasure in them." (Ec 12:1.) As he was too old either to enjoy the pleasures of a court, or to be of any further service to the king, he finishes his affecting address to the aged monarch with the request, that he would suffer him to enjoy what old men naturally desire, to "die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and mother;" at the same time commending his son Chimham to his kind offices.

**2 Samuel 19:38** The king answered, "Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what is good in your sight; and whatever you require of me, I will do for you."

- 2Sa 19:38
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **DAVID ACCEDES TO BARZILLAI'S REQUEST**

**The king answered, "Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what is good in your sight; and whatever you require of me, I will do for you** - David willing to role out the "red carpet" for Barzillai's son Chimham. In other words David would do for Chimham whatever he would have done for Barzillai.

**2 Samuel 19:39** All the people crossed over the Jordan and the king crossed too. The king then kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his place.

- **kissed Barzillai:** Ge 31:55 45:15 Ru 1:14 1Ki 19:20 Ac 20:37 1Th 5:26
- **blessed:** 2Sa 6:18,20 13:25 Ge 14:19 28:3 47:7,10 Lu 2:34
- **returned:** Ge 31:55 Nu 24:25 1Sa 24:22
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **DAVID KISSES AND BLESSES BARZILLAI**

**All the people crossed over the Jordan and the king crossed too-** The old man Barzillai also crossed over in what was essentially a symbolic crossing, indicating David's return to his kingdom.

**The king then kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his place** The kiss was the token of friendship and farewell; the blessing was a prayer to God for his prosperity

**2 Samuel 19:40 Now the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him; and all the people of Judah and also half the people of Israel accompanied the king.**

- **all the people:** 2Sa 19:11-15 Ge 49:10 Mt 21:9
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID'S MILITARY ESCORT TO GILGAL

**Now the king went on to Gilgal** (see [note](#)), **and Chimham went on with him; and all the people of Judah and also half the people of Israel accompanied the king** - NLT says "All the army of Judah and half the army of Israel escorted him across the river."

**Utley** - Crossing over Jordan with David and going to the sacred site Gilgal (2Sa 19:15) was a kind of re-coronation and affirmation of David's kingship (cf. 2Sa 19:36-39,40).

**2 Samuel 19:41 And behold, all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, "Why had our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away, and brought the king and his household and all David's men with him over the Jordan?"**

- **Why have:** Jdg 8:1 12:1 Joh 7:5,6
- **stolen:** 2Sa 19:3 Ge 31:26,27
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH AND ISRAEL AT ODDS

To be at odds with someone else means they are disagreeing or arguing with one another. It describes a state of disagreement. Don't be confused here by use of the name **Israel** ("men of Israel") which describes the 10 northern tribes (see "**we have 10 parts**" in 2Sa 19:43), not the entire nation. Later (circa 931 BC) when there is a complete division of the nation, the northern 10 tribes are usually referred to as "Israel" (aka the "Northern Kingdom of Israel") and the two southern tribes as "Judah," (which is actually composed of Judah and Benjamin).

**And behold, all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, "Why had our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away, and brought the king and his household and all David's men with him over the Jordan** - What is this complaint about? The men of Israel complain that the men of Judah were allowed most of the honor to bring David back across the Jordan. But this was really only a ceremonial return and so their argument seems petty. The northern tribes protested that Judah had not waited for them before bringing David across the Jordan, as if to imply that they were hesitant to receive David.

**Guzik** feels that "This argument was ultimately about who was more loyal to King David, and who had the greater right to honor him." This argument was ultimately about who was more loyal to King David, and who had the greater right to honor him.

**Ryrie** - The northern tribes protested that Judah had not waited for them before bringing David W across the Jordan, as if to imply that they were hesitant to receive David.

**Utley** - This clearly shows the continuing jealousy and rivalry between the tribes of Israel, particularly Judah vs. the northern ten tribes (v. 43). Because of 2Sa 19:9-10 and 2Sa 19:40 (i.e., "half the people of Israel"), it seems not everyone was supportive of David's return.

**Walton** on **basis of intertribal argument.** The presence of favoritism and discrimination is bound to end up being reflected in policies and privileges. At the heart of this dispute is whether the monarchy is built around the person and family of David (a position the elders of Judah take, referring to their kin ties) or whether the kingship is an institution deserving loyalty no matter who reigns (Israel's position). This argument foreshadows Sheba's revolt and the eventual secession of the northern tribes under Jeroboam's leadership. The dispute also is reminiscent of the arguments between tribes so common in the Judges period. Both examples

indicate that the idea of centralized government under a monarchy has not yet taken firm root among the Israelites. It is easy to think of Israel as having a natural unity reflected in the united monarchy, while the divided monarchy is considered an aberration. In fact, however, until the postexilic period it was tribal loyalties more than unified national loyalties that tended to govern political decisions. (See page 349 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

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**Josephus** (Chapter 11.5) - Now the principal men of the country came to Gilgal to him, with a great multitude; and complained of the tribe of Judah; that they had come to him in a private manner: whereas they ought all conjointly, and with one and the same intention, to have given him the meeting. But the rulers of the tribe of Judah desired them not to be displeased, if they had been prevented by them: for, said they, "We are David's kinsmen: and on that account we the rather took care of him, and loved him, and so came first to him. Yet had they not, by their early coming, received any gifts from him; which might give them who came last any uneasiness." When the rulers of the tribe of Judah had said this, the rulers of the other tribes were not quiet; but said farther, "O brethren, we cannot but wonder at you, when you call the King your kinsman alone: whereas he that hath received from God the power over all of us in common, ought to be esteemed a kinsman to us all. For which reason the whole people have eleven<sup>23</sup> parts in him, and you but one part. (23) We are also elder than you; wherefore you have not done justly in coming to the King in this private and concealed manner."

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**2 Samuel 19:42** Then all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is a close relative to us. Why then are you angry about this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's expense, or has anything been taken for us?"

- **Because:** 2Sa 19:12 5:1 1Ch 2:3-17
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JUDAH RESPONDS TO MEN OF ISRAEL'S COMPLAINT

**Then all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is a close relative to us-** Men of Judah explain that David is their relative as being from the tribe of Judah.

**Why then are you angry about this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's expense, or has anything been taken for us?-** The men of Judah defended their actions by saying they did this for David at no cost to David.

**Walton on eating the king's provisions.** Those who eat from the king's table or storehouse are his dependents and must therefore demonstrate their loyalty based on this payment (evidenced in the listing of provisions provided to nobles and members of the bureaucracy in Mari and Babylonian administrative texts). This is the basis of Mephibosheth's crime, since he is one who had accepted David's provisioning (2 Sam 9:6-7). The leaders of Judah disclaim any such ties, insisting that their welcome of David is based on his ability to rule, not bribes or favors granted to them. (See page 349 [IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

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**F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - 2 Samuel 19:42** The King is near of kin to us.

There are two derivations for the word king: one from the word can— the king is the man that can do things; the other from the word kin— the king is closely related to us, of our kith and kin. In either case, there is a beautiful meaning, as touching our Lord and Savior. He is King, because He has overcome our enemies, and can overcome. He is King, because He has taken on Himself our flesh and blood, and has forever made us one with Himself. The King is our kinsman. Our kinsman is King.

It is very comforting to know how really our Lord has identified Himself with us. The Gospels are full of the wonderful story. His kinship was manifested, in—

**His Prayers.**— He bade us speak to God as our Father; in that marvellous possessive pronoun, not only linking us all to one another, but including Himself in our petitions, save when we ask for forgiveness.

**His Infirmities.**— "We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." His hunger and thirst; His weariness and exhaustion; His suffering unto death all accentuate the closeness of the tie between us.

**His Temptations.**— "In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The avenues through which the tempter could approach Him were those by which He assails us also. No temptation took Him, but such as is common to man. So to every, lonely soldier of His He draws near, saying, "Be of good cheer; I have passed through it all. I am your brother in the fight; I feel for you with a quick sympathy; the glories of my throne do not alter my true-hearted love."



**2 Samuel 19:43 But the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, "We have ten parts in the king, therefore we also have more claim on David than you. Why then did you treat us with contempt? Was it not our advice first to bring back our king?" Yet the words of the men of Judah were harsher than the words of the men of Israel.**

BGT 2 Samuel 19:44 κατεκράθη ἡ Ἰσραὴλ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ εἶπεν ὁ καθένας μοι ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ πρωτοκοχία γὰρ καὶ γὰρ ἡ Δαυὶδ ἐμπίσθη καὶ ναττοβρισε με καὶ οὐκ ἔλογισθη ἡ γὰρ μου πρὸς μοὶ τὸ πιστῶσαι τὴν βασιλείαν καὶ σκληρὴν ἦν ἡ γὰρ τῶν Ἰουδαίων πρὸς τὴν Ἰσραὴλ

LXE 2 Samuel 19:43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we are older than you, we have also an interest in David above you: and why have ye thus insulted us, and why was not our advice taken before that of Judah, to bring back our king? And the speech of the men of Judah was sharper than the speech of the men of Israel.

KJV 2 Samuel 19:43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye: why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

NET 2 Samuel 19:43 The men of Israel replied to the men of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king, and we have a greater claim on David than you do! Why do you want to curse us? Weren't we the first to suggest bringing back our king?" But the comments of the men of Judah were more severe than those of the men of Israel.

CSB 2 Samuel 19:43 The men of Israel answered the men of Judah: "We have 10 shares in the king, so we have a greater claim to David than you. Why then do you despise us? Weren't we the first to speak of restoring our king?" But the words of the men of Judah were harsher than those of the men of Israel.

ESV 2 Samuel 19:43 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.

NIV 2 Samuel 19:43 Then the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king; and besides, we have a greater claim on David than you have. So why do you treat us with contempt? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?" But the men of Judah responded even more harshly than the men of Israel.

NLT 2 Samuel 19:43 "But there are ten tribes in Israel," the others replied. "So we have ten times as much right to the king as you do. What right do you have to treat us with such contempt? Weren't we the first to speak of bringing him back to be our king again?" The argument continued back and forth, and the men of Judah spoke even more harshly than the men of Israel.

NRS 2 Samuel 19:43 But the people of Israel answered the people 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 people of Judah were fiercer than the words of the people of Israel.

NJB 2 Samuel 19:44 The men of Israel replied to the men of Judah, 'We have ten shares in the king and, what is more, we are your elder brothers, so why have you slighted us? Were we not the first to suggest bringing back our king?' The men of Judah's words were even more intemperate than those of the men of Israel.

NAB 2 Samuel 19:44 The Israelites answered the Judahites: "We have ten shares in the king. Also, we are the first-born rather than you. Why do you slight us? Were we not first to speak of restoring the king?" Then the Judahites in turn spoke even more fiercely than the Israelites.

YLT 2 Samuel 19:43 And the men of Israel answer the men of Judah, and say, 'Ten parts we have in the king, and also in David more than you; and wherefore have ye lightly esteemed us, that our word hath not been first to bring back our king?' And the word of the men of Judah is sharper than the word of the men of Israel.

GWN 2 Samuel 19:43 The people of Israel answered the people of Judah, "We have ten times your interest in the king and a greater claim on David than you have. Why, then, do you despise us? Weren't we the first to

suggest bringing back our king?" But the people of Judah spoke even more harshly than the people of Israel.

BBE 2 Samuel 19:43 And in answer to the men of Judah, the men of Israel said, We have ten parts in the king, and we are the first in order of birth: why did you make nothing of us? and were we not the first to make suggestions for getting the king back? And the words of the men of Judah were more violent than the words of the men of Israel.

- **We have:** 2Sa 20:1,6 1Ki 12:16
- **ten parts:** 2Sa 5:1 Pr 13:10
- **our advice:** 2Sa 19:9,14 Ga 5:20,26 Php 2:3
- **the words:** Jdg 8:1 9:23 12:1-6 Pr 15:1 17:14 18:19 Ro 12:21 Ga 5:15,20 Jas 1:20 3:2-10,14-16 4:1-5
- [2 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ISRAEL DECLARES THEY HAVE BIGGER CLAIM ON DAVID**

[See note above](#) on use of the name "Israel" in this context.

**But the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, "We have ten parts in the king, therefore we also have more claim on David than you - NLT = "But there are ten tribes in Israel," the others replied. "So we have ten times as much right to the king as you do." The men of Israel are saying that since they have 10 tribes they had more claim or right on David. Keep in mind for the most part these are the very men who joined Absalom's rebellion.**

**Third Millennium** - Judah and Israel were at odds with one another. There is a mention of "ten shares" (2 Sam 19:43). The point is that the northern tribes, later to become the Northern Kingdom of Israel, were ten in number, while the southern tribes were only two, Judah and Simeon. It is ironic that within the space of a few short verses the northerners went from claiming ten shares in David to disavowing any (2 Sam 20:1).

**Utley** - The men of Israel claimed their right as descendants of Israel/Jacob. The LXX adds "we are the first-born rather than you" (cf. 1Ch 5:2). Some of the men of Judah had apparently supported Absalom, like most of the other tribes.

**Why then did you treat us with contempt ([qala](#))? Was it not our advice first to bring back our king?"**The men of Israel take this as an insult and evidence that they were being treated with contempt. They claim they were the first to speak of bringing David back to his throne.

**Yet the words of the men of Judah were harsher than the words of the men of Israel. NIV = "But the men of Judah responded even more harshly than the men of Israel." This depicts a volleying back and forth of harsh words reflecting their stubborn resistance to one another. Unfortunately word battles can lead to literal battles! And in this case the factious words between Israel and Judah gave rise to Sheba's rebellion. This harsh response and intertribal rivalry indicated there was national "trouble brewing" for two reasons (1) the north-south hostility would in the short term fuel Sheba's revolt (2Sa 20:1-26) and (2) in the long term would contribute to the division of the united kingdom into 10 tribes north and 2 south.**

**Warren Wiersbe** gives a good summation of this sad scene - A crisis will bring out the best in some people and the worst in others. The representatives of the tribes were gathered at Gilgal to escort their king back to Jerusalem, and instead of rejoicing at the victory God had given His people, the tribes were fighting among themselves. The "men of Israel" were the ten northern tribes, and they were angry at the southern tribe of Judah, which had also absorbed the tribe of Simeon. Israel was angry because Judah had not waited for them to arrive on the scene to help take David home. Judah had "kidnapped" the king and had ignored and insulted the other ten tribes. Judah replied that David was from their tribe, so they had the greater responsibility to care for him. Israel argued that they had ten shares in David but Judah had only two, as though the king were some kind of security on the stock market. Apparently nobody urged the tribes to call on Jehovah for His help and to remember that Gilgal was the place where Israel had made a new beginning in Joshua's day (Josh. 3-5). **The conflict between Judah and Israel had deep roots, just like the political conflicts that divide many nations today. When King Saul assembled his first army, it was divided between Israel and Judah (1Sa 11:8), and this division continued throughout his reign (1Sa 15:4; 17:52; 18:16).** After the death of Saul, the ten tribes of Israel followed Saul's son Ish-Bosheth, while Judah followed David (2Sa 2:10-11). Judah, of course, was obeying the will of God, for the Lord had named David as the nation's next king. This tribal rivalry existed even in David's day. "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation," said Jesus, "and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand" (Mt. 12:25kjv). When **Rehoboam** became king after the death of Solomon his father, the rift widened and the kingdom divided into Judah (south) and Israel (north). ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#))

**TSK** - Whatever value or respect the men of Israel at this time professed for their king, they would not have quarrelled so fiercely

about their own credit and interest in recalling him, if they had been truly sorry for their former rebellion.

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**Contempt** (despise) [07043](#) [galal](#) means first of all to be slight, to be trivial, to be trifling, to be swift. There are a number of nuances of this verb but most reflect somehow upon the main idea of slightness or lightness and thus the first use of galal in Ge 8:8, 11 refer to the flood waters being **abated** (receding, becoming "slight" if you will). In Ge 8:21 in the third use of galal God promises to "never again **curse** the ground on account of man." Over 1/2 of the uses of galal are rendered as some variation of to curse. One of the more famous uses is in Ge 12:3 where Jehovah promises "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who **curses (qalal)** you I will curse (**arar** - 0779)." Sarah "**despised** (considered slight so to speak)" Hagar when the latter became pregnant with Abram's child Ishmael (Ge 16:4, 5). Moses would receive help judging the people so it would "be **easier** for" him (Ex 18:22).