

2 Samuel 19:9-43 **David's encounters on his return trip toward Jerusalem**

Israel considered bringing back the king

9 Now all the people were in a dispute throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king saved us from the hand of our enemies, he delivered us from the hand of the Philistines, and now he has fled from the land because of Absalom. 10 But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now therefore, why do you say nothing about bringing back the king?"

David sent for Judah to bring him back across the Jordan River

11 So 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 words of all Israel have come to the king, to his very house?' 12 You are my brethren, you are my bone and my flesh. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?' 13 And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if you are not commander of the army before me continually in place of Joab.'" 14 So he swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah, just as the heart of one man, so that they sent this word to the king: "Return, you and all your servants!"

Shimei joined the men of Judah with a thousand men of Benjamin – Ziba and his household crossed the Jordan ahead of the king – A ferryboat carried over the king's household

15 Then the king returned and came to the Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to escort the king across the Jordan.

16 And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, who was from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David. 17 There were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over the Jordan before the king. 18 Then a ferryboat went across to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good.

David's Mercy to Shimei

Now Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king when he had crossed the Jordan. 19 Then he said to the king, "Do not let my lord impute iniquity to me, or remember what wrong your servant did on the day that my lord the king left Jerusalem, that the king should take it to heart. 20 For I, your servant, know that I have sinned. Therefore here I am, the first to come today of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king."

21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed?"

22 And David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should be adversaries to me today? Shall any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?" 23 Therefore the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king swore to him.

David and Mephibosheth Meet

24 Now Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he returned in peace. 25 So it was, when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"

26 And he answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go to the king,' because your servant is lame. 27 And 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 eyes. 28 For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king. Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your own table. Therefore what right have I still to cry out anymore to the king?"

29 So the king said to him, "Why do you speak anymore of your matters? I have said, 'You and Ziba divide the land.'"

30 Then Mephibosheth said to the king, "Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house."

David's Kindness to Barzillai

31 And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim and went across the Jordan with the king, to escort him across the Jordan. 32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. And he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very rich man. 33 And the king said to Barzillai, "Come across with me, and I will provide for you while you are with me in Jerusalem."

34 But Barzillai said to the king, "How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? 35 I am today eighty years old. Can I discern between the good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any longer the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a further burden to my lord the king? 36 Your servant will go a little way across the Jordan with the king. And why should the king repay me with such a reward? 37 Please let your servant turn back again, that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and mother. But here is your servant Chimham; let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what seems good to you."

38 And the king answered, "Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what seems good to you. Now whatever you request of me, I will do for you." 39 Then all the people went over the Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own place.

The Quarrel About the King

40 Now the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him. And all the people of Judah escorted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

41 Just then all the men of Israel came to the king, and said to the king, "Why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the king, his household, and all David's men with him across the Jordan?"

42 So all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is a close relative of ours. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we ever eaten at the king's expense? Or has he given us any gift?"

43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, "We have ten shares in the king; therefore we also have more right to David than you. Why then do you despise us — were we not the first to advise bringing back our king?"

Yet the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.
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Facts Revealed:

Israel considered bringing back the king [2 Samuel 19:9-10]

- ✧ The Israelites who had defected to Absalom realize that they can easily be considered as traitors after Absalom was killed in battle, so they are the first to speak of bringing back the king.

David sent for Judah to bring him back across the Jordan River [2 Samuel 19:11-14]

- ✧ David heard that the people of Israel who had defected to Absalom were talking about bringing back the king, so he sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests to call his own tribe of Judah to lead the way in his return, promising to make Amasa his nephew, son of his sister Abigail, the commander of his army, in the place of Joab his nephew, son of his sister Zeruiah. [2 Samuel 19:11-13, 2 Chronicles 2:13-17]
- ✧ Amasa swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah, just as the heart of one man, so that they sent this word to the king: "Return, you and all your servants!" [2 Samuel 19:14]

Shimei joined the men of Judah with a thousand men of Benjamin – Ziba and his household crossed the Jordan ahead of the king – A ferryboat carried over the king's household [2 Samuel 19:15-18]

- ✧ David and those with him traveled from Mahanaim in the land of Gilead to the Jordan River on his way to return to Jerusalem as king.
- ✧ An escort party from the tribe of Judah came to Gilgal, the first place of encampment of Israel when they first entered the Promised Land, to escort the king across the Jordan River. [Joshua 4:19, 2 Samuel 19:15]
- ✧ Shimei, who cursed David as he fled from Absalom, hurried to bring a thousand men from Benjamin, including Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth and his 15 sons and his 20 servants, to join the men of Judah to meet the king at the Jordan River.
- ✧ A ferry boat was used to carry King David's household across the Jordan River.

David's Mercy to Shimei [2 Samuel 19:18-23]

- ✧ Shimei fell down before the king and pleaded for mercy for his behavior in cursing David.
- ✧ Abishai the son of Zeruiah, David's sister, suggested Shimei be put to death for having cursed the Lord's anointed.
- ✧ David refused to allow Shimei to be put to death, because he felt confirmed as King of Israel.

David and Mephibosheth Meet [2 Samuel 19:24-30]

- ✧ Mephibosheth came from Jerusalem to meet David at the Jordan River, David asked, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"
- ✧ Mephibosheth answered that since he was lame and David had shown so much kindness to him, he felt he had no right to ask for anymore.
- ✧ David said that Mephibosheth and Ziba should divide the land of Saul between them.
- ✧ Mephibosheth said to the king, "Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house."

David's Kindness to Barzillai [2 Samuel 19:31-39]

- ✧ Barzillai from Rogelim in the land of Gilead had provided the king with supplies while he was at Mahanaim, for he was a very rich man, 80 years old.

- ✧ David offered to return the favor by inviting Barzillai to come with him to Jerusalem where David would provide for him.
- ✧ Barzillai chose to go a little way across the Jordan with the king and then to return to his home in Gilead to die there, rather than to be a burden to the king, however he asked to let his son Chimham cross over and go to Jerusalem with the king.
- ✧ David accepted the request and Chimham was granted a property near Bethlehem. [[New Unger's Bible Dictionary](#)]
- ✧ Then all the people went over the Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own place. [[2 Samuel 19:39](#)]

The Quarrel About the King [[2 Samuel 19:40-43](#)]

- ✧ After crossing the Jordan River, he and all his escort went on to Gilgal.
 - ✧ The men of Israel complained that the men of Judah had stolen the king away and brought him and his household across the Jordan River.
 - ✧ The men of Judah claimed closer family ties to David.
 - ✧ The men of Israel claimed ten shares to one in rights to the king and that they were the first to mention bringing back the king.
 - ✧ Yet the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.
 - ✧ It is interesting to see the change of heart when the war is ended, and those who had defected to Absalom claimed a higher right to David than his own tribe.
 - ✧ Guilt and fear played a major part in looking at the present reality and motivating action.