



“A Pinata With No Candy”

2 Samuel 18-19

3/16/25

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19:49

All right. Well, total transparency, we've got two chapters that we're covering this week and we have got a lot to cover. So grab your Bibles.

20:00

We're gonna be talking at like... you ever heard speed up the the little audio thing up to like 1.2 or 1.5 speed? We're gonna go at 1.5 speed today. So, grab your Bibles, make your way to Second Samuel chapter 18.

20:13

And if you weren't with us last week, just to kind of catch you up on what's going on in our story. So we've been working our way through the story of first and Second Samuel.

20:18

We've been uh looking at the life of King David and so last week we saw King David was on the run. King David's son Absalom had kind of overthrown David's leadership and

there was this conflict, there was this disagreement in Absalom's cabinet where there were two advisors, Ahithophel on one side and Hushai on the other side with conflicting opinions about how they should proceed.

20:39

Absalom excuse me, Absalom asked Ahithophel first, what do you think we should do? And so Ahithophel wanted to take a small task force and go try to kill David quickly. Meanwhile, Hushai who had been placed there by David to kind of try to thwart some of the plans that Absalom was going to put together.

20:39

He offers a bad plan that Absalom ends up choosing to follow but he says let's gather the whole army together and so they're going to march the whole army of Israel out hunting for David out in the wilderness.

21:22

So as we begin chapter 18, it seems clear to me that all of the resources, all of the advantage that the odds are in Absalom's favor. He's marching out into the wilderness with all of the army from Israel at his disposal. He's got this giant force marching out with this overwhelming numbers advantage.

21:55

And by the way, David is on the run. David's out running for his life minimally resourced and really doesn't have a whole lot going for him. But if we were to think just that way, we're forgetting one very important thing. That is that God was on David's side.

22:21

And we're going to see this week God deliver David from this threat of Absalom. God allowed Absalom to play a role for a season in this story. But Absalom's time is coming to an end. So we're gonna look at chapter 18 & 19 this week as we see Absalom's demise. So I want to invite you to pray with me as we get started and then we'll dive into the text. Let's pray.

22:30

God we thank you for your Word and we thank you for the privilege we have of coming to your Word this morning. God we pray that you would give us ears to hear what you have to say and God help me to communicate clearly what you have for us in chapter 18 and 19.

22:31

We give this time to you and we love you. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. All right, well as we dive in the first 18 verses in chapter 18, what we're going to see is Absalom's demise. So the first thing that we look at in verses 1 through 8, we're going to see that Absalom as he has gathered his entire army there is pursuing David into the wilderness.

22:51

David does have a few things that are kind of skewed to his advantage. The first thing is that he was able to choose where the battle was going to be fought. If Absalom is chasing him and David is going to set up shop somewhere, he gets the privilege of choosing where that battle is going to be fought.

23:07

So David decides rather than going out and fighting in the open where Absalom's numbers would be an advantage, this battle is going to be fought in the woods. And so David and his men divide up into three groups. And they determined that this battle is going to be won where strategy may play a little more significant role than just out in the open where one big force of men runs into another big force of men.

23:29

So we see the men prepare and then we're going to see them engage in the first eight verses here. Let's read, we'll start in chapter 18 verse 1. It says, Then David mustered the men who were with him and set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.

23:41

And David sent out the army, one third under the command of Joab, and one third under the command of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the command of Ittai the Gittite.

23:51

And the king said to the men, I myself will also go out with you. But the men said, you shall not go out. For if we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will not care about us.

24:17

But you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore it's better that you send help from the city. The king said to them, whatever seems best to you I will do. So the king stood at the side of the gate while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands.

24:35

And the king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave orders to the commanders about Absalom. So the army went out into the field against Israel and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim.

24:50

And the men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David and the loss there was great on that day, 20,000 men. The battle spread out over the face of all the country and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword.

25:00

You know, we see glimpses of David's masterful military experience at work here, don't we? We see David's strategic mind coming into play as David begins to divide his forces into smaller groups, more agile units that were able to be maneuvered more easily.

25:10

But it seems that David turned the fact that Absalom was in pursuit to his advantage because he was able to choose the battleground. So he he sets up this battle where they're going to come into the woods where he's going to not only be able to hide more effectively and attack when he chose it would be best or when the commanders chose it would be best.

25:27

But he was also going to be able to create fear and confusion in Absalom's inexperienced army. See, David had a well-trained, well-prepared fighting men that were on his side, but Absalom had just gathered together any fighting age male in Israel and sent them into the battle.

25:59

They were poorly prepared as they were being sent in. So David's skill and the skill of his men was going to play an advantage for them as they fought in the forests. David's desire was to go and to be on the front lines with his men.

26:15

I love this about David. David is the kind of leader that I want to be. David in this moment, he he shows us that he's the kind of guy that wants to be out there getting his hands dirty on the front lines.

26:30

He doesn't want to just sit back and and patiently wait for other people to take care of things. He was a a "follow me" kind of a leader. And so David was a man of action and he wasn't above getting his hands dirty.

26:57

So David wants to go, but the men said, no, no, no, no, no. You're more valuable to us being back there in the safety. Your mind is more valuable, your leadership is more valuable than just another troop on the front lines.

27:19

So in spite of David's desire to go and to be with the men, the men stopped him and encouraged him, no, no, you need to stay in the safety of the fortress. You're worth more than 10,000 of us. We need you.

27:30

So we see this description now of the battle. It's fairly uneventful description, isn't it? Simply, steps in, in just a verse or two, it says David's men defeated all the men of Israel that day. There were about 20,000 men that were lost. Seems like a big deal.

27:31

Seems like 20,000 men dying would be worth more than about, what, 20 words or so? That are snuck there in the middle of our passage. There's a simple statement. David's men won.

27:34

20,000 men died that day, but the the most significant death that happened that day is described more fully in verses 9 through 18. We see Absalom, David's son falls. Let's continue reading in verse 9. It says, and Absalom happened to meet the servants of David.

27:51

And Absalom was riding on his mule and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak, and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on.

28:04

And a certain man saw it and told Joab, behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree. And Joab said to the men who told him, what? You saw him? Why did you not strike him there to the ground?

28:17

I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt. But the man said to Joab, even if I had felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not reach out my hand against the king's son, for in our hearing the king command you and Abishai and Ittai, for my sake protect the young man Absalom.

28:35

On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life and and there's nothing hidden from the king, then you yourself would have stood aloof.

28:43

You would have hung me out to dry. Joab said, I will not waste time like this with you. And he took three javelins in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive hanging in the oak tree.

28:52

And ten young men, Joab's armor bearers surrounded Absalom and struck him and killed him. And then Joab blew the trumpet, the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained them. And they took Absalom and threw him into a great pit in the forest and raised over him a very great heap of stones.

29:05

And all Israel fled, everyone to his own home. Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself the pillar that is in the king's valley, for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.

29:16

And he called this pillar after his own name and it is called Absalom's monument to this day. You know, there's only a couple of passages in the Bible that make me feel vindicated in my baldness and this is one of them, right?

29:24

Absalom died because he had long hair. If he would have cut his hair, we wouldn't have had this problem. Long hair kills people. You guys caught that, right?

29:34

And this is a strange way for the story to come to an end with Absalom, David's son, isn't it? Seems likely to me that Absalom is on the run. He sees 20,000 of his men are killed that day and as David's forces are pursuing Absalom's forces, He's described as uh running away from David's men and it says that his mule that he goes under this oak tree, this big thick oak tree with his big thick luscious hair. Remember he had told us just a couple of chapters ago that he cut his hair once a year and he weighed it. It was so significant. This was a man with some great hair.

30:26

But he goes under this tree and the mule takes off under the tree and his head gets caught in the tree, but instead of the mule stopping and sitting there and helping him figure out getting untangled, the mule keeps going and he's just left hanging there like a weird piñata.

30:45

A soldier sees him there hanging suspended in the tree, hanging between heaven and earth and he runs back to commander Joab and he says I found Absalom, he's just hanging there in the tree, but the soldier didn't kill Absalom. He remembered what David had said as the troops were going out, he says deal graciously with my son.

31:04

But Joab had different plans. Joab hears the news that Absalom is there hanging in the tree and Joab takes off and immediately rushes in with a group of men to finish the job. It tells us that Joab stabs Absalom in the heart and then his ten armor bearers, his men proceed to strike the Absalom piñata until the candy falls out. They're just they're beating him and beat him to death. They're hanging in the tree.

31:29

Joab then buries Absalom in disgrace as they throw him in a hole and throw rocks over top of him. That's the end of this man's story. No family to carry his lineage forward, no no no grand ending for this man that had such high hopes, had such grand plans that he was going to take over that he was the next king of Israel and now he meets his rather uneventful end.

31:57

But now David needs to hear the news. David had sent the men out. David had stayed back at the fortress and now someone needs to take the message back to David about his son's death. Let's continue reading chapter 19 verse eight. We're gonna see David's response to this news. First David hears the news. So at the troops request, David had stayed back, but now after Absalom's death, the time comes for Joab and for the the men to go and inform David of what had happened.

32:29

Let's continue reading now in verse 19. It says then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, let me run and carry news to the king that the Lord has delivered him from the hand of his enemies. And Joab said to him, you are not to carry news today. You may carry news another day, but today you shall carry no news because the king's son is dead.

32:48

Then Joab the commander said to the Cushite, go, tell the king what you have seen. The Cushite bowed before Joab and ran. Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, come what may, let me also run after the Cushite. And Joab said, why will you run, my son, seeing that you will have no reward for the news?

33:10

Come what may, he said, I will run. So he said to him, run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain and outran the Cushite. Now David was sitting between the two gates and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall and when he lifted up his eyes and looked, he saw a man running alone.

33:28

The watchman called out and told the king and the king said, if he's alone, that means there's news in his mouth. And he drew nearer and nearer. The watchman saw another man running. And the watchman called to the gate and said, see, another man running alone. The king said, he also brings news.

33:50

The watchman said, I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, he is a good man and comes with good news. Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, all is well. And he bowed before the king with his face to the earth and said, blessed be the Lord your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king. Your enemies have been defeated he says.

34:03

And the king said, is it well with the young man Absalom? Ahimaaz answered, when Joab sent the king's servant, your servant, I saw a great commotion, but I do not know what it was. And the king said, turn aside and stand here. So he turned aside and stood still.

34:21

And behold, the Cushite came and the Cushite said, good news for my lord the king, for the Lord has delivered you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you. The king said to the Cushite, is it well with the young man Absalom? And the Cushite answered, may the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man.

34:41

Two messengers are sent to deliver news to David. The first one, Ahimaaz is one of the priest's sons. You remember he had done this already. He was one of the messengers that David had left in Jerusalem to come and to run and deliver news out to him in the wilderness as David had set up this little spy network a few chapters earlier. So Ahimaaz volunteers for the job initially and Joab tells him, no, no, no, you're not gonna go.

35:02

He doesn't want to send this young man in to be the bearer of bad news in this moment. Maybe Joab assumed that David was gonna receive the news poorly and something was gonna go wrong, don't shoot the messenger kind of thing and so he didn't want Ahimaaz to be caught in the crossfire, but Joab instead sends this random Cushite to deliver the news, but Ahimaaz would not be deterred.

35:30

He insists that he wants to go as well. I want to go and deliver the news and so both men take off running. The Cushite gets a head start. Ahimaaz stays there and continues to argue with Joab until Joab lets him go as well. But both men take off running and Ahimaaz, cardio king, actually gets there first, right? Outruns the Cushite and arrives first to deliver the news.

35:58

But as he's there delivering the news to David, what happens? Did you catch it? Ahimaaz chickens out. Ahimaaz is there and he tells him uh David, your enemies are dead. David says, well, but what happened to my son? He goes, uh, I don't know. I saw some commotion but I don't know.

36:20

He knew. It's a lie, but he choked up and he just kind of swallowed his tongue and he stood there and went [shrug]. Meanwhile, now the the Cushite, the slow one, shows up and arrives to share the news that Ahimaaz was too nervous to share. David says, what happened to my son?

36:50

He says, may all of your enemies be like what happened to your son. And David puts two and two together and says, no, no, no, no, no. No, what has happened? You would imagine that there would be some sort of a sigh of relief from David as he hears that his enemies are dead, that those who were seeking his life are gone.

36:50

The war is over. This is good news, but instead David is quickly overcome by grief as he hears this news. Verse 33. It tells us that the king was deeply moved. He went up to the chamber over the gate and he wept.

37:15

And as he went, he said, oh my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom. Oh, would I have died instead of you, oh Absalom, my son, my son. David in kind of a strange response, he doesn't actually show any immediate concern for his men or the victory that was won. He simply focuses on his grief that he's overwhelmed by this fact that that his son has died.

37:44

David was more focused on the death of his son than he was over the the victory over this enemy, his son who had made himself an enemy, who was seeking David's life. David wasn't concerned about that at that moment. He was concerned that he'd lost his son. And maybe David in all of this is feeling some sort of personal responsibility in all of this.

38:06

And we know that it was David's sin that had caused God to declare judgment years earlier on David and on David's household that the sword was never going to depart from David's house. God made it very clear that all of this was David's fault.

38:06

Certainly running through the back of David's mind that in some sense this may have been his doing that his son had died. David was probably wondering, was there something I could have done when Absalom was younger? You know, what about those moments, that the family dinners that I missed or the the moments, that I didn't just roll around and play in the floor with my son, the the things that I should have taught him when he was younger.

38:50

If we had a better relationship, maybe we wouldn't have gotten here. Maybe he's carrying regrets about, you know, maybe I should have handled the situation with Amnon and Tamar, you remember that? David's other son and daughter that that Absalom had gotten so upset that Amnon had raped his sister.

39:06

Maybe David should have addressed that more clearly, more directly. He should have dealt with Absalom then so that he wouldn't have become so furious and so angry and wanted to make himself an enemy of David's in the midst of all of this.

39:06

So whatever it is that's running through David's mind, we don't have that clearly written out for us, but I believe as I look at this, it seems to me that David was a broken man.

39:31

David was what was heartbroken and full of regrets as he weeps openly for the loss of his son. And as I read this, I can't help but hear application in this for us. Because I think

that such an urgent warning that David gives to those who have similarly failed. I think David might want to share some of this with us today because there's many in this room, there's many of us who are failing in the same ways that we saw David fail, but the good news is that we still have an opportunity to change.

40:05

We still have opportunity to make adjustments in our life because maybe there's sin habits that are in our lives. David had his sin grow up, grow up, grow up and ultimately God declared judgment on that. God told David, no, no, no, this is not acceptable.

40:23

And even though David repented, even though David acknowledged his sinfulness and made some adjustments in his life, it was too late. The the price already needed to be paid. But are there sin habits in your life that there's still time to change?

40:37

Are there things that you see in your life that maybe your children are starting to pick up on, maybe you're starting to see it in the people around you that anybody ever had that moment that you have an attitude, it doesn't seem like that big of a deal when you do it.

40:51

But then you hear your child do it and you go, oh, no. I say that word, I know where they learned that. I respond like that to situations sometimes. Uh-oh. It's time for me to make some changes in life, isn't it?

41:17

If we have situations like this that that there are sinful habits in our lives, we have an opportunity still to change before it's too late. Because see here for David it was too late. His son was gone.

41:23

But for us there's still time. Are there sin habits in your life that need to change? Are there vital duties? Are there responsibilities that you have in your life that that maybe you're breezing past, that maybe you're just brushing off.

41:46

Things that are associated with with parenting, with with how you should work, with how you should love those around you with with different things that God has clearly instructed you to do that that you've said, no, no, I'll do it tomorrow.

41:50

Tomorrow may not come. Tomorrow wasn't going to come for Absalom. Yesterday was the time for David to act and so for you sitting here today, today is the time for you to make that change.

42:03

Today is the time for you to act either in turning from your sin or stepping up in some godly duty before the fruit of your growing sin has reached maturity. We should learn from David's grief and make the appropriate changes before it's too late.

42:22

David is a heartbroken man. He hears that his son is gone and and he has no more opportunity to fix it. He says, oh, if I could have died instead of you, Absalom, I wish I could take your place, but it's too late.

42:38

No concern for the lives of his men, no concern for the victory that was won. This should have been a good day for the rest of David's supporters, but David is heartbroken. So we see as we continue reading that Joab, commander, rebukes David for his response.

42:59

David's apparent lack of concern for his men quickly becomes an issue. As Joab hears about David's response and he quickly goes to rebuke David. Let's continue reading now, chapter 19. We'll start in verse one.

43:15

It says it was told to Joab, behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom. And so the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people, for the people heard that day, the king is grieving for his son.

43:36

And the people stole into the city that day as people steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle. The king covered his face and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

43:46

Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, "You have today covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who have this day saved your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your wives and your concubines, because you love those who hate you and hate those who love you.

44:04

For you have made it clear today that commanders and servants are nothing to you, for today I know that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased.

44:14

Now therefore arise, go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by the Lord, if you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night, and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now."

44:29

Then the king arose and took his seat in the gate. And the people were all told, "Behold, the king is sitting in the gate." And all the people came before the king. Now Israel had fled every man to his own home.

44:51

Joab, in this moment, seems to believe that the army's big day was ruined by David's moping, by David's mourning. The troops are all coming home to celebrate their victory. They had won, their enemy had been defeated. But David is still sitting there, weeping loudly, mourning for his son.

44:51

Joab goes to David and says, "David you're blowing it. David you need to stop this, stop it now, you're making it clear to all the men who have risked their lives for you, you're telling all of them that if they were dead and your son was alive you would be better off. You need to stop it." Joab tells David "you need to cut it out, you need to go and speak to the men and you need to speak kindly with your men because if you don't they're all going to abandon you. you're gonna lose them if you don't change course."

44:51

So to his credit David allows himself to be shaken awake by this moment. It tells us in verse 8 that the king arose and took his seat by the gate and David resumes his royal duties as he kinda shakes out of this a little bit and he begins to look forward. Looks towards the future. So we see that moving forward continuing in chapter 19. We see this mercy tour in verse 9 thru the rest of the chapter.

44:51

David's victory now has been won and now its time for him to return back to Jerusalem to return to the throne where he belonged. So as David begins to head back towards Jerusalem theres going to be some awkward conversations between here and there.

44:51

I don't know if you have put two and two together yet, but David is coming back into power and the question now becomes how is David going to respond to those who have betrayed him up until this point? Most of Israel, the people that he loved, his trusted advisors, the people that were close to him, people that he had shown mercy to in the past, they all abandoned him.

44:51

They all turned and said no we belong to Absalom now, we're gonna follow King Absalom. So now that Absalom is dead and David is back in charge, Israel is nervous. They all ran home with their tails tucked between their legs, scared because they didn't know what David was going to do when he comes back into power.

44:51

Was he going to kill all of those that stood against him? Was David going to offer retribution in some way? How is David going to respond to all those who betrayed him and sinned against him during this rebellion? Is he out for revenge or is he going to respond in some other way? Well, lets continue reading.

44:51

I'm going to read the rest of chapter 19. Kind of a big chunk here. We're gonna see how David responds and so we're gonna read the whole big section, this farewell mercy tour as he's making his way back into Jerusalem. And then we'll come back and pick it apart with a few key events and a few key people. Pick up in verse 9 of chapter 19.

44:51

It says, And all the people were arguing throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies and saved us from the hand of the Philistines, and now he has fled out of the land from Absalom.

44:57

But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"

45:15

And King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar the priests: "Say to the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his house, when the word of all Israel has come to the king? You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh.

45:39

Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?' And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me and more also, if you are not commander of my army from now on in place of Joab.'"

46:00

And he swayed the heart of all the men of Judah as one man, so that they sent word to the king, "Return, both you and all your servants." So the king came back to the Jordan, and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king and to bring the king over the Jordan.

46:23

And Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim, hurried to come down with the men of Judah to meet King David. And with him were a thousand men from Benjamin. And Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan before the king, and they crossed the ford to bring over the king's household and to do his pleasure.

46:53

And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was about to cross the Jordan, and said to the king, "Let not my lord hold me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. Do not let the king take it to heart.

47:10

For your servant knows that I have sinned. Therefore, behold, I have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king." Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed?"

47:31

Remember that was the same guy that tried to kill Shimei the last time he was running around throwing rocks.

47:31

But David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be as an adversary to me? Shall anyone be put to death in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" And the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die."

47:57

And the king gave him his oath. And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. He had neither taken care of his feet nor trimmed his beard nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came back. And he fell on his face and did obeisance to the king. And the king said to him, "Why have you not gone with me, Mephibosheth?"

48:17

And he said, "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 with the king,' because your servant is lame. But he has slandered your servant to my lord the king.

48:31

But my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what seems good to you." For all my father's house were but men doomed to death before my lord the king, but you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right have I, then, to cry to the king?" And the king said to him, "Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided, 'You and Ziba shall divide the land.'"

48:45

And Mephibosheth said to the king, "Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home." Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim, and he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan. Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. He had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man.

49:00

And the king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you with me in Jerusalem." But Barzillai said to the king, "How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am this day eighty years old.

49:00

Can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? Your servant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king.

49:00

Why should the king repay me with such a reward? Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham. Let him go over with my lord the king, and do for him whatever seems good to you."

49:45

And the king answered, "Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you, and all that you desire of me I will do for you." Then all the people went over the Jordan, and the king went over. And the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own home.

49:45

The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him. All the people of Judah, and also half the people of Israel, brought the king on his way. Then all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, "Why have our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David's men with him?"

49:45

All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is our close relative. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's expense? Or has he given us any gift?" And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?" But the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

53:40

Let's pick it apart a little bit. So Absalom's forces, the supporters, the troops had all run home after they saw Absalom killed. All of the people that were on Absalom's team, they take off. They run home with their tails tucked between their legs knowing the rebellion is over and David's gonna be reinstalled as king soon enough. We're gonna be in trouble for having aligned ourselves with the rebels.

54:05

They run home scared, but how does David respond? What does David do? Well, the first thing that we see him do is David begins by reaching out to the elders of Judah. These were his people. These were his tribe, his brothers and sisters. These were

people that even though they had worked with Absalom, David reaches out to them first to offer peace.

54:27

As David reaches out to them, David initiates this reconciliation. Judah is restored and realigns themselves with King David. They're gonna march David into Jerusalem across the Jordan River and back into town. Next we see the man Shimei. You guys remember that name? Shimei was one of King Saul's family members who had followed David through town back in chapter 16.

54:43

You remember you remember him. He was the one that was yelling and cursing at David, throwing rocks and throwing dust at him as David was walking out of town in disgrace, David is grieving and mourning at what's going on and Shimei is just chasing him through town, yelling at him and letting him have it.

55:11

If anyone deserves justice and revenge as as David has gone through all of this, it seems to me that Shimei should be near the top of that list, right? People had wanted to just let me go over and knock his head off when he was doing it the first time.

55:29

So now that that David's back in control, he says, well certainly let me do it now. David says, no, no, no, no, no. We're gonna offer forgiveness. David shows mercy to this man as he comes and humbles himself before David. David offers forgiveness.

55:48

Next, that we see Ziba and Mephibosheth show up. Those names sound familiar as well, don't they? The last we heard of Mephibosheth, you remember this was Jonathan's son, David's best friend.

56:00

Jonathan's son and King Saul's grandson that David had showed such favor to and placing him at his own table and bringing him in. David had provided so generously for Mephibosheth in the past.

56:11

But then a few chapters ago, Ziba shows up, the household manager for Mephibosheth and he says, no, he's not out here. He stayed in Jerusalem because he's aligning himself with Absalom and with the rebellion.

56:31

David's heart surely broke as he heard that Mephibosheth had betrayed him and had aligned with Absalom. But now here in this chapter, Mephibosheth shows up, unshaved and unkempt. It says that he didn't wash his feet the entire time that David was gone.

56:42

We got some problems here, right? Mephibosheth had been in mourning at what was happening to King David and so Mephibosheth was lame. He wasn't able to get up and to walk and to go after David on his own.

57:08

So Mephibosheth tells David, no, I tried to follow my servant and I told him I was going to go saddle a donkey and follow you. He said, I got this and then he takes off running with the donkeys and the supplies and everything and he just left me there.

57:25

There's this disagreement now between what Ziba had shown up and told David and what Mephibosheth is there telling David and who was right and who was wrong. What we see from David is David essentially says, I don't care.

57:47

I'm gonna offer mercy to both of you. I'm gonna extend forgiveness to both of you, whoever it is. He tells them, divide the land that I've given to you and go in peace. Be blessed. It's okay. Finally, we see this described as an old man, Barzillai comes down from Rogelim.

58:14

This wealthy old man had provided support for David while David was on the run that he had come and given supplies and and resourced David as David was fleeing from Absalom. But Barzillai shows up and he's not looking for favors.

58:30

He's not looking for somebody to give him something in this. He simply wants to show support for David as David is being restored to the position that that he believed David should have been in. David wants to honor Barzillai for all of his help.

58:58

He wants to take him to Jerusalem. He says, no, you're gonna come live with me. You're gonna eat the best food. You're gonna hear the best musicians. You're gonna have it all.

59:42

And Barzillai says, I'm old. I can't taste it anyways. The food doesn't taste good. I can't hear the musicians. He didn't have any hearing aids in. He he's like, why are you gonna take me to the castle and and do all this for me when I just want to stay home and die in peace.

01:00:46

Barzillai refuses, but he sends Chimham instead. Most people believe that was likely Barzillai's son in his place and Chimham goes and and goes along with David and and receives all of this blessing, all of this favor that David wanted to show to Barzillai for the kindness that he had shown to him.

01:01:07

Instead, David now pours all of that out on this undeserving man, Chimham. So we reach the end of this massive chunk of text in chapters 18 and 19 as David's return to Jerusalem offers us this beautiful model of Jesus' attitude that he instructed the disciples to have in the Lord's Prayer in Luke chapter 11.

01:01:30

Because as David is returning to Jerusalem, what we see from him is the same attitude. Jesus had told the disciples, he says, pray that God would forgive us our debts as we forgive those who have sinned against us. Well that's what David is doing here.

01:01:51

David is given opportunity as he marched out of town and he goes all the way out and as he marches out of town, there's all these people that that seem to be against him at every turn. He's got a few supporters, but mostly people throwing rocks and dirt and cursing at him in the midst of this retreat.

01:01:51

And now that the battle has been won and it's time for David to come back to Jerusalem. He follows that same route and he has some of these awkward conversations with these same people.

01:01:51

The people that were yelling at him on the way out of town are now forced to tuck their tails and and say, David, we were wrong. David, I don't know why I did what I did. Shouldn't have done what I did. They come and they lay themselves at the mercy of the king who could have easily said, no, you were against me before, you're done and had these people killed.

01:01:51

But instead of that, David reflects this Lord's Prayer attitude, forgive us as we forgive those who are indebted to us. David knew that if he could be forgiven by God for the all of the terrible sins that he had committed with Bathsheba and Uriah and everything as he had stepped out of bounds, men like Ziba and Shimei, they they deserved grace as well.

01:01:51

You know that there've been so many parallels for us between David in this story and the son of David, Jesus who we saw prophesied back in chapter seven. Even the forgiveness and the mercy that we see modeled here from David, it feels like it points us to Jesus, doesn't it? As we see David offering mercy and forgiveness to people that that really didn't deserve it.

01:01:51

David had every right to have these people killed or or certainly thrown into prison or something terrible done to these men and women who had stood against him. But as David showed mercy to all of them, that's great news for us today because it reminds me, it reminds us that we have a savior who has offered mercy even more generously than David does in this story.

01:01:51

Because David in this story in this section of scripture, David is paying the price for his own sin. But Jesus never sinned. Jesus wasn't paying the price for his sin. Jesus was paying the price for yours and for mine. David was forgiving others because God had so generously forgiven him.

01:02:10

If God can forgive me, I certainly need to forgive Shimei and Ziba and these others. David was forgiving because he had been shown mercy, but Jesus had no need for mercy to be shown to him. So Jesus's mercy is freely given to those that he would show mercy to. And I want you to hear me when I say, mercy is available to you today.

01:03:01

I don't know how you stepped out of bounds. I know this story. And so if we look at the principles, we see people who stepped out of bounds who sinned against David over and over and over again. There's this parade of people that were throwing rocks and and curses and insults at David as he was retreating from town.

01:03:13

But David comes back and David shows mercy even though he didn't have to, he extends kindness to these people. Just like David took the initiative in restoring his enemies, Jesus has taken the initiative and restoring you and restoring us.

01:03:22

We don't come to God because there's something good in us. We don't come to God and say, God, you need to forgive me because I deserve it. We come to God and we, just like Shimei did, we lay ourselves at the feet of the one who has every right to punish us for what we've done. But instead of receiving punishment, instead of receiving justice, we receive grace.

01:03:54

Instead of getting what we deserve, Jesus so generously gives us what we would never deserve. Let me read for you Colossians chapter two, some of my favorite verses. Colossians 2:13-14 tells us that that you who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all of our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

01:04:18

Yeah, those those verses Paul's obviously talking about Jesus, but it kind of sounds a little bit like David, doesn't it? The mercy that's being shown to his enemies.

01:04:29

So the question today is, are you in need of mercy? Are you in need of the mercy of Jesus today? Have you stepped out of bounds and and disregarded God's commands? Because Romans chapter five tells us that God shows his love for us in this that while we were sinners, Christ died for us.

01:04:52

The Bible says, you know, maybe, just maybe, speculative here, maybe someone would die for a friend. Right? Maybe there's some of you in this room that that you can think of someone that you say, you know, I love my spouse so much that I'd be willing to die for them.

01:05:07

I love this person so much that I'd be willing to give it all up to to serve someone else. Maybe someone would die for a friend. The Bible tells us Jesus died for you while you weren't a friend. Jesus died for you while you were an enemy. You had postured yourself as a standoffish rebel from God.

01:05:31

That God said, no no, live this way. And we go, no, I don't feel like it. I don't want to. I'm gonna do what I want. I know better than you, God. And we we shake our fists at God and we say, God, I'm gonna do what I want.

01:05:41

Every single time we disobey him, we're essentially rebelling against him and saying, I'm gonna go do what I want. And even in that moment, even as we are wagging our fist at God and saying, I don't need you.

01:05:51

Jesus steps in. The Bible tells us that while you were actively opposed to God, while you were an enemy of God, God said, no no no, I still love you. I still want to forgive you. I'm still going to show grace and mercy even though you don't deserve it.

01:06:13

David has poured out mercy really just abundantly generously in this story. And I want you to hear me. Jesus has done the same for you if you would receive it. Jesus has done the same for you. That same grace is available to you. So if you don't know that grace this morning, if you don't have a relationship with Jesus, if you haven't received that this morning, I want you to know that that offer is there.

01:06:43

That that grace is available to you and that God has said, I don't care that you have been my enemy up to this point. I want to forgive you. I want to show mercy. I want to show you favor even though you don't deserve it. Here.

01:06:58

Would you take it? That's the offer of the gospel. That's the Christian message of salvation. That's why we're all here. So if that's not you today, but you want that, you're in good company because that's why the rest of us are here.

01:07:16

Because we're all openly acknowledging by being here today, the reason why you attend a Christian church is because you're not good enough to please God on your own. I'm not good enough to please God on my own. All of us being here is an open admission of us saying, we're not enough.

01:07:32

But Jesus was. So I'm gonna hitch my cart to his course. He's gonna be the one. And for those of you that are in the room, I think probably the majority of you, let me speak to you for a minute. For those of you who do know Christ this morning,

01:07:51

David was aware that his deliverance and his restoration had been an act of unmerited favor that he had received from God. David knew that all of this, all of the the problems that he was facing, all of the judgment that he was under, it was a result of his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah.

01:08:01

God had told him, this is your doing. But God's mercy had allowed David to escape. David beautifully models for us the principle that Paul commanded in Colossians chapter three. Colossians 3:13 says, if one of us has a complaint against another, forgive each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

01:08:35

So if you know the Lord this morning, if you've been forgiven generously, I don't know. Maybe you could sit here and tally up all the things that you've done wrong against God, all of the ways that you've stepped out of bounds over the course of your life. Thousands, hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of times that we've sinned against God that God has said, no no no, my grace is sufficient. You're forgiven. You're forgiven again and again. again and again and again and again.

01:09:06

However many times that is that you've been forgiven, that's how many times that person that sinned against you deserves to be forgiven. Jesus told the disciples, should we forgive somebody seven times, right?

01:09:20

We've all heard the statement, fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me, right? You're not gonna get me twice. Jesus says, no, no, no.

01:09:29

The disciples are like, do we have to forgive them seven times? Jesus goes, no, no, no, no. But seventy times seven. And he's saying an extravagant number.

01:09:41

And no, I'm not saying you need to forgive them 490 and then 491, you get to be done. But Colossians chapter three is saying as as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. So however many times God has forgiven you, that feels like a good measure for us to start with.

01:09:58

I dare say we're probably not gonna run out of tally marks. If you've been forgiven generously, forgive others with that same generosity today. And if you've received mercy and favor from God, show that same kindness to others today.

01:10:14

So I think for for many of you, my question would be as we've seen David so beautifully model forgiveness today. My question for you is, who do you need to forgive? Who are you holding on to? You said, no, you know, that 12th time's a charm, I'm done with them.

01:10:33

I'm really thankful God didn't do that with you. Or with me. Who do you need to extend forgiveness to today? Our prayer team is gonna be down here after the service. They would love to pray with you about whatever it is that's going on in your life. And we have our prayer wall that's out the back doors into the right.

01:10:55

So you can go write your prayer requests down. You can leave them there. We would love to pray for the shy people in the room too. But with all of that said, would you pray with me now?

01:11:03

God, we thank you for your word. We thank you for David. We thank you for what a beautifully familiar example he is to all of us.

01:11:13

God, there's so much of his story that seems so foreign to us with with the power that he possessed with the riches that were available to him with his family dynamics and and God multiple wives and concubines and children from all these different families.

01:11:27

God it seems so foreign in some ways and at the same time, I look at David so regularly and go, oh, that's me. We see your principles at work that you desire mercy instead of sacrifice. That you desire us to to step out and to show kindness to others that have wronged us.

01:11:52

God that you provide for us even when we don't deserve it. David didn't deserve forgiveness and mercy, but you showed it to him anyway. You made mercy and favor available to him.

01:12:05

And you've done the same for us. God, we thank you for the gospel. We thank you for the the good news that sinners can be saved and that people like me can be restored to a right relationship with you.

01:12:22

That if we would humble ourselves and we would lay ourselves down before you like Shimei did with David, that you are the lifter of our heads. You're the one that that picks us up, gives us dignity, offers forgiveness where forgiveness is not deserved.

01:12:45

God, may we be may we be gracious recipients of your mercy this morning. God teach us to to receive your mercy well and to extend it to others in the same measure. God help us to never forget how much we've been for been forgiven and for God like like Colossians 3 says for us to extend forgiveness to others in the same way.

01:13:14

God teach us to live it out, not just to talk about it in a in a study. This isn't just a history lesson, God. This is this is your word to our ears. Help us to be what you call us to be. That's in Jesus name we pray. Amen.