Sunday, November 8, 2026

JOURNEY THORUGH THE BIBLE (58)
United Kingdom (12)
David – Returning to Jerusalem
2 Samuel 19-22

Tonight we continue our journey through the Bible. We are continuing to examine the United Kingdom (Period 9 of 17) with David as king over all of Israel. Our last 2 lessons have dealt with David's sins with Bathsheba and its consequences. In our last lesson there was family trouble as Amnon violates his half-sister, Tamar and then totally rejects here. Because of this, and David's inaction, Absalom her brother kills him 2 years later. Then in time he stages a rebellion against David which is unsuccessful. We concluded that lesson with the death of Absalom. Joab, defying David's orders, kills him. When it is reported to David, he mourns. And that is where we resume our study in 2 Samuel 19.

In this text, we are approaching a time later in David's reign as king. Some of what we address still deals with the consequences of his sins. But he has certainly learned from his errors. We find in our text a series of events as Israel struggles and heals from the rebellion of Absalom.

I. The Text

a. 19:1-8 – after David hears of the death of Absalom he mourns greatly. So much that his people who had be victorious are downcast and ashamed. As David continues to mourn, Joab comes to him and rebukes him for failing to acknowledge his loyal followers. He warns David that his conduct will turn the people against him if he does not behave like a victorious king. His rebuke included saying, "your behavior is such that if your entire army had died and Absalom was spared you would prefer that." David wisely listens and goes and sits at the gate. It is reported to the people and they all come before the king.

b. 19:9-23 - The Israelites who had sided with Absalom work to bring back David as king (seeking reconciliation). David speaks to the Zadok and Abiathar, priests, to ask Judah, his own tribe, why they have not worked to return David to his home and city. Vs. 13 – He also makes Amasa (who had sided with Absalom) commander of his army in place of Joab (who had killed Absalom). Judah then with one heart brings David back. As he is returning, Shimei, the one who had cursed David as he was fleeing from Absalom comes to David with 1000 men of Benjamin and Ziba (the one entrusted by David to care for the household of Mephibosheth, and who had come to David and told him that Mephibosheth was rejoicing and hoping to assume the throne for Saul) and they seek reconciliation. Shimei confessed his sins before David. Abishai wants to put Shimei to death but David says no and spares him, BUT he does not forget. We will see this later.

c. 19:24 – David then meets Mephibosheth who bows before him. Since David's departure he had not taken care of himself demonstrating he was likely mourning for David. When he meets David, he asks why he had not left with him. Mephibosheth tells David that he was deceived by Ziba who left him there. He puts himself at the mercy of the king. David listens to him and restores HALF of his possessions to him, with the other half going to Ziba (Recall that when Ziba came to David and told him about Mephibosheth that David gave all the land to Ziba. Now he restores half of it. Why? He does NOT know who to believe.). But Mephibosheth tells him to let Ziba have it all because the king had returned in peace. (Note: To ME this implies that Mephibosheth was the loyal one).

d. 19:31-39 Next David meets Barzillai of Gilead as he is about to cross the Jordan. He is a very loyal friend of David, who was 80 years old and very wealthy. He had helped to provide for David while he was gone. David invites him to come be with him in Jerusalem but he declines because of his age. He just wants to return home where he will be buried with his family. However, he does provide his servant, Chimham to go with David. David accepts.

e. 19:40-43 records Israel and Judah fighting over David as their king.

f. 20 – records another rebellion by Sheba another Benjamite. He seeks to turn Israel (except Judah) against David again. David orders Amasa to assemble his army within 3 days. But Amasa delays (reason not given) and David tells another servant, Abishai, that because they had not moved swiftly, more damage would be done by Sheba than was done by Absalom. (NOTE: Recall the advice that Absalom rejected by Ahithophel to go immediately after David – 2 Sam. 17:1-4 and listened to Hushai who convinced him to delay until he could amass the whole army – 17:5-14, who was planted there by David). So Joab gathers mighty men to pursue Sheba. But he meets up with Amasa. Pretending to hug him, Joab stabs him (note that he is Joab's replacement as commander). They continue to pursue Sheba, but his men are halted when they see Amasa dying in the road. So he is pushed aside to die and they continue to pursue Sheba. They catch up with Sheba at a town called Abel of Beth Maachah and siege the city. But a wise woman declares that they were innocent. Joab asks for Sheba and he will leave. The men of the city behead him and toss it out of a tower. Then Joab and his men return home. 20:23 records that Joab is (again) over the army of Israel. ***We will get back to this in a later lesson.***

g. 21 – after this there was famine in the land for 3 years. David inquires of the LORD. He is told that it is because Saul had killed the Gibeonites. David asks the Gibeonites what they wanted. They wanted 7 descendants of Saul to be hanged. It was granted to them, but David spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan because of the vow he had made. The 7 sons were hanged and the mother of 2 of those hanged mourned for them. When David heard of it, he took the bones of Saul, Jonathan and the 7 men hanged and gave them a proper burial in the tomb of Kish, Saul's father. Then the land was healed.

h. 21:15-22 – Describes further battles that David and his army have with the Philistines. Israel is victorious several times and several of the giant relatives of Goliath are slain by them.

i. 22 records a psalm of David. It is also Psalm 18 though there are variations in the wording of the two. In this psalm David praises the LORD as his deliverer and rock. NOTE: This psalm is not necessarily in chronological order, but could be associated with reflections at the end of his life. Chapter 23 records, "the last words of David" (23:1). This is then followed by other events later in David's life.

   i. 22:2-4 – describing God with many terms – strength, his trust, a shield, the horn of his salvation, his stronghold and refuge. His Savior from violence. Vs. 4, *I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies*.
   ii. 22:5-7 – facing death and Sheol (the grave) surrounded him, he called upon the LORD who heard him.
   iii. 22:8-16 describe the Lord in His power acting against His enemies.
   iv. 22:17-22 – But the LORD delivered David because of his righteousness. Note vs. 21 mentions the "cleanness of my hands". David was not innocent, but he WAS forgiven. Vs. 22, *For I have kept the ways of the LORD, And have not wickedly departed from my God*.
   v. 22:23-25 – David had been faithful to Him and His word.
   vi. 22:26-28 he continues to describe God as merciful to the merciful, blameless to the blameless, pure to the pure, and shrewd to the devious. He saves the humble and brings down the haughty.
   vii. 22:29-31 – God was his lamp in the darkness, giving him great strength. Vs. 31, *As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him*.
   viii. 22:32-43 – using military language, God helped David to defeat his enemies.
   ix. 22:44- 46 – He had even delivered him from the strivings of his own people – acknowledging how he ruled of the nation.
   x. 22:47-49 - "*The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let God be exalted, The Rock of my salvation!"* More gratitude being delivered from his enemies.
   xi. 22:50-51 - *Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name. "He is the tower of salvation to His king, And shows mercy to His anointed, To David and his*

descendants forevermore." NOTE: This verse is quoted in Romans 15:9 where Paul is declaring salvation is available to all. Also Vs. 51 is messianic.

II. Lessons to consider

a. Grief has its place and is absolutely needed. But it is something we must overcome so that we can move on. For many, grief becomes a weight that consumes. David finally moved on and made his way back to Jerusalem.

b. Be grateful when someone helps you, EVEN IF the outcome is not what you intended, even negative. The death of Absalom was tragic and worthy of mourning, but he WAS the enemy and a threat to David and Israel. We need to hear the truth, even when it hurts.

c. Wise leaders surround themselves with wise men who tell them what they NEED to hear, not just what they want to hear. Joab as he advised David after Absalom's defeat was right in this. Proverbs 20:5-6, *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, But a man of understanding will draw it out. Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, But who can find a faithful man?* Proverbs 27:6, *Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful*. THINK of Nathan and David in this!
David in Psalm 141:5, *Let the righteous strike me; It shall be a kindness. And let him rebuke me; It shall be as excellent oil; Let my head not refuse it. For still my prayer is against the deeds of the wicked*. BTW, this ought to apply to ALL of us!

d. If you have wronged someone, what are you willing to do to make it right? Shimei desires to make things right (or so it seems).

e. The value of loyalty – this is demonstrated throughout this text. David had enemies, but he also had loyal friends and advisors. We all need those who are loyal to us. Proverbs 18:24, *A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother*. While other translations interpret the first phrase differently, they all agree on the second part! We need loyal friends. Proverbs 17:17, *A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.*

f. We see again in David mercy and forgiveness (against Shimei, Barzillai and even Ziba). Though there is some caution as he moves forward. Again, leave it in God's hands – Romans 12:17-21.

g. Sometimes we may not find the true answer with a dispute (Ziba or Mephibosheth?). All we can do is use our best. If there is a solution of compromise, take it.

h. When there is a problem, we need to take action as soon as possible. David knew Sheba needed to be dealt with ASAP. Delay often leads to more trouble.

i. A reminder to keep our vows – the problem with the Gibeonites goes back to Joshua 9 where a treaty was made with the Gibeonites. Somehow (not recorded) Saul had sought to destroy them. But God remembered the covenant. We must keep our vows even when they hurt – Psalm 15:4, Ecclesiastes 5:1-7.

j. Do we seek God for answers to our problems. David knew something was wrong with 3 years of famine. He turned to the right source.

k. Repentance is not always easy – to make the nation right required a hard action. Sometimes our true repentance requires unpleasant actions. The goal is purification and saving souls. 2 Corinthians 7:10-11

l. Psalm 22 is filled with lessons about God, our faithfulness and need to trust Him.

And thus, we continue our study through the life of David. We are coming to the conclusion of his life (1 or 2 more lessons). In David we see a man of faith who was not perfect, but he WAS loyal to God and served Him with humility and a pure heart. A part of that involves making right that which is wrong. That is what we see in this lesson. What about you? Do you trust God always? Think about it!