

# The Christian Arsenal

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## 2 SAMUEL 19:8-20:26

If you remember from last week, the armies of David and Absalom came against each other. And we saw last week that Joab, David's commander-in-chief killed Absalom even though David had commanded that his son be dealt with gently.

We're told that when Absalom's people heard that Joab had blown his trumpet signaling the triumph of David's people over Absalom's people, that Absalom's people fled.

So, here is David...still in Gilead where he had been forced to flee by Absalom's rebellion. And as we look at this passage before us today, we're going to see how David came back to Jerusalem and how he dealt with some of the people once he got there.

Remember how David had mourned the loss of Absalom and Joab had come and rebuked him and had told him if he didn't get out there with his people he wouldn't have any people to rule over?

Well, this is the setting for...

### 2 Samuel 19:8...

"The king is sitting in the gate..."

Remember this isn't the gate of Jerusalem. This is the gate of Mahanaim in Gilead...and the people of Israel who fled, each to his tent, refers to the folks who stayed with Absalom. And look at what they said...

### Verses 9-10...

I believe this proves to us that folks have always been fickle. I mean, it doesn't take much now and it never has taken much to sway public opinion.

These folks had allowed Absalom to steal their hearts and had supported him when he ran their king off and now they're saying, *"Why don't we bring back King David? I mean, we might as well...Absalom is dead."*

And we'll see before we finish today these same people will turn against David again!

All this had come upon David because of his sin. God was disciplining David.

God had told David the sword would never depart from his house. And God was also saying,

"David, let me remind you that you're not king because of your **personality** or your **popularity** with the people.

You're not king because of your **power** or your **greatness**. You're king because I **chose** you to be king. It's because of **My** greatness, not **yours**. And it's also because of **My grace**!

### Verses 11-15...

To help us understand...when this passage refers to Israel, it is referring to Absalom's people and when it refers to Judah, it is referring to David's people.

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These verses tell us that David sent a rebuke to Zadok and Abiathar. Remember that Zadok was the priest and Abiathar was his son. And David is saying that *Israel* wanted him back and why hadn't *Judah* requested the same thing.

So the people of Judah got busy and sent word to David to come back.

Well, when he got that message, he sent word to the priests to say to Amasa that he would replace Joab as his commander in chief. Then, David returned and came as far as the Jordan River and the men of Judah came to bring him across the river.

Now, let me ask you...why did David replace Joab? Joab had served David for a long time as the commander of his army. Joab and his brother, Abishai, were David's nephews, as was Amasa, by the way. Joab and Abishai were the sons of David's sister, Zeruiah and Amasa was the son of David's sister, Abigail. So, all these men were cousins, weren't they?

But the question was...why did David replace Joab? I believe he did it because Joab had disobeyed his command to deal gently with Absalom. Joab was really out of control. Matthew Henry called him "intolerably haughty" and I believe that's a very good old English term for him.

This is a very interesting appointment. See, Amasa had sided with Absalom against David. Amasa had been the commander of **Absalom's** army, and here David is commissioning as the commander of **his** army!

The **19<sup>th</sup>** and **20<sup>th</sup>** chapters of **2 Samuel** are full of interesting characters. And I just want to touch on some of these men and how they relate to David's coming back to the throne...and how they're a picture of folks today...and then, end with some contrasts between David's second coming to Jerusalem and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Verses 16-23...**

Do you remember Shimei?

Back in **chapter 16**, when David had fled the city of Jerusalem, Shimei cursed David and threw stones at David and yelled insults at David.

Abishai had wanted to kill Shimei right then and there, but David had told him, "No, Abishai, let him alone..."

Well, when Shimei heard David was coming back, he got scared. So, he rushed to David to make amends. I suppose Shimei believed that surely David would retaliate against him in some way...imprison him, or even kill him for what he had done and said.

Again, Abishai wanted to kill Shimei, and again David protected Shimei's life.

Bloodshed and violence and murder were always the answer to Abishai and Joab. But David knew this must be a day of forgiveness and a day of peace. David knew he was on shaky ground. Israel had chosen Absalom over him and he didn't even seem to have the full support of Judah.

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Not only do we see Shimei, who never dreamed David would really come back, but we also see another man we've seen before...a man named Ziba. (**verse 17**).

Who was Ziba? Well, Ziba had come to David and told him a long story about how Mephibosheth had elected to stay in Jerusalem when David fled, hoping the kingdom would be restored to the house of Saul. Remember Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan.

But, we'll see in just a moment that this story was a lie...a lie told by Ziba for his own advantage.

Oh, but here he comes with Shimei to David to show David how very loyal he was to David!

**I believe Shimei and Ziba are a picture of unbelievers today who care nothing at all for Jesus. In fact, they are against Jesus actively. Sort of like Madelyn Murray O'Hair and that character that filed the petition with the federal court in California to take "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance and others we could think of who actively come against the Lord.**

**These folks lie about God's servants and they actively put down the things of God.**

**There are "passive" unbelievers and there are "active" unbelievers. The active unbelievers are not any more lost than the passive unbelievers, but they do more damage, they influence more people...many times they even influence the courts of our land...**

**EXAMPLE:** Bill Moyers and his round table discussion on the **Book of Genesis** on PBS several years ago. Each person told how this book was not to be taken literally...

This is just **one** "round table" discussion that PBS chose to air. But, how many others go on in our universities and even our liberal seminaries?

**And one day, Jesus will come back and I believe these kinds of folks will remember the things they did against Christ and His kingdom, but it will be too late. Jesus won't give them another chance.**

**Their knees will bow and their tongues will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father, but it will be too late to save their soul from hell.**

Let's look at Mephibosheth...

**Verses 24-25...**

Mephibosheth was the next one to come to David. And Mephibosheth had neither washed himself nor groomed himself nor washed his clothes from the day David had left Jerusalem.

David was skeptical and he asked Mephibosheth why he had not gone with him and Mephibosheth said that Ziba had betrayed him.

**Verses 26-30...**

David had already given Mephibosheth this land. Yet, because he believed the lies of Ziba, he gave it to Ziba...and now, it's as though David is confused and hesitant to truly believe wholeheartedly the story Mephibosheth is telling, so he said, "You and Ziba divide the land."

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I believe David was tired of being manipulated and patronized. David was fed up with the folks who always had their hand out when times were good and turned on him with times were bad.

He cut Mephibosheth off kind of short, didn't he? David was a pretty good judge of character, but he could not look into a man's heart and know if his heart was really sincere, could he?

It seems from **verse 30**, however, that Mephibosheth was sincere...that his story was true and that although he couldn't do anything to help David in his conflict with Absalom, and even though he could not actively bring the king back, he rejoiced that the king came back.

**He didn't care what the king did for him...he simply cared about the king!**

**And I believe Mephibosheth is a picture of folks who love the Lord Jesus and would follow Him anywhere...but they're disabled and they're dependant upon others to help them move around. They'd be active for Jesus if they could, but they can't.**

**However, this doesn't diminish their devotion and love and loyalty and commitment to Him.**

**Verse 31-35...**

The next person we need to look at is an old man named Barzillai. This man was from Gilead and he came down to escort David across the Jordan River.

We saw Barzillai in **chapter 17**, and the Bible tells us in chapter that when David fled to Gilead, that Barzillai brought David **beds** and **basins** and **pottery** and **wheat** and **barley** and **flour** and **parched grain** and beans and **lentils** and **parched seeds** and **honey** and **curds** and **sheep** and **cheese**.

This tells us this old man loved David and wanted to supply his needs. Barzillai knew David had fled in haste and had no furniture and no food. David and his men had brought their wives and their children with them and he gave David what he could to make their lives easier!

Barzillai was an old man...he couldn't distinguish good or bad. He couldn't taste what he ate or drank.

He could no longer hear. And he knew he would be a burden to David.

But, Barzillai had a son and he had raised his son to go with David and he did.

**Verses 36-39...**

And I believe Barzillai pictures believers today who have lived their lives for the Lord Jesus Christ. We all know believers like that! Don't you love to meet up with an old man or woman who has lived all their lives for Christ?

**They've served Christ faithfully. They've given of their tithes and offerings faithfully. They've not withheld anything from Him...but there comes the time when they're old and the only thing they can offer the Lord is the fruit of their witness.**

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Oh, I know the desire of all our hearts is that when we get too old to serve God anymore, that we will have children to give Him...either our **own** children of our own flesh, whom we have led to Christ or **spiritual** children God has allowed us to "birth" into the kingdom!

Let me ask you...what's more important? For our children and grandchildren to be successful as the world views success? Or for our children and grandchildren to know Jesus and to walk with Him and to serve Him and to witness for Him...**What's more important to you?**

**So, Barzillai gave David the most precious thing he could give. He gave him his son. and it's very interesting that over in *Jeremiah 41*, we see a lodging place in Bethlehem...a place where folks who were traveling stayed...and this lodging place was known as "the lodging place of Chimham".**

An inn in Bethlehem. Doesn't it make you wonder if this is the inn which had a manger outside where the Lord Jesus was born?

Well, we see in **verses 40-43**, a division between the people of Judah and the people of Israel. They all wanted David back, but they disagreed on how they should get him back and who had done the most for him. Doesn't this remind you of churches or denominations or even individual believers today who look on each other with contempt because of jealousy?

God's people need to be reminded that disputes and quarrels which lead to evil divisions are regarded by God to be very serious...

In fact, Paul tells us in ***Galatians 5*** that they are very serious in God's eyes...***Galatians 5:19-21...***

"Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are:  
immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, (so far, so good...we don't do any of these things, do we?)  
enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envyings (uh-oh)...  
drunk-eness, carousings and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Well, let's continue looking at some more folks in ***chapter 20...***

***Verses 1-2...***

Here we see yet another rebellion against God's anointed...this one led by a man named **Sheba**, and **verse 2** tells us all the men of Israel withdrew from following David and followed Sheba.

WHY? Because they were jealous of the people of Judah because David was from the tribe of Judah. Israel insisted that her ten tribes had a much larger share in the national scene than Judah. So theirs was the right to have a place of priority in the royal palace.

Also, Saul had been a Benjamite. And there was rivalry and jealousy between the Benjamites and the men of Judah, because Saul had been replaced by David from Judah. And Sheba was working this jealousy and rivalry to his advantage...

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Judah on the other side insisted that since David was from the tribe of Judah, then he was one of **her** native sons, bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, one on whom she had first claim.

**How petty! How silly! How childish! Yet, what fertile ground for yet another man to come along and mount a rebellion against the king!**

***The bottom line was jealousy...and it's amazing what folks will do when jealousy takes over, isn't it? We see it every day in Washington, don't we?***

And I believe Sheba is a picture of another "active" unbeliever. He is jealous of God...and the things of God...as well as the people who would follow after God. And he is determined to do everything in his power to bring division and discouragement among those who follow after the Lord.

So, David tells his new commander-in-chief, Amasa to muster the men of Judah again for war against Sheba and his followers.

## **Verse 5...**

Amasa delayed...Amasa hesitated...

Probably because he was new to the job...more than likely the men of Judah still considered him a traitor who had followed after Absalom. **And perhaps he didn't really want the job!**

At any rate, David sensed the urgency of the matter and he hastily summoned Abishai to come to his aid... He ordered Abishai to take his veteran soldiers and pursue Sheba.

And guess who joined Abishai? Well, his brother, Joab, of course! I mean, if there was any killing to be done, these two guys are there!

## **Verses 6-10...**

Remember now, Joab has been demoted and Amasa has been put in his place.

So, on the way to kill Sheba...Joab conveniently came upon Amasa...greeted him with a kiss and a "Is it well with you, my brother?" and then he ran a sword right through him!

Now, folks, this was Joab's third deliberate murder... In cold blood Joab had killed **Abner** back in **chapter 3**. Then, in cold blood Joab killed **Absalom**. Now, we see Joab in cold blood killing **Amasa**.

If Amasa had gone when the king told him to go...if Amasa had totally obeyed the king, he might have been way down the road in his search for Sheba and not been around where Joab could kill him.

I believe Amasa is a picture of a man who has been called into the kingdom by the Lord Jesus Christ. But, instead of embracing Jesus and coming into His kingdom and serving Him with all his heart...he hesitates...he delays...and loses his life before he gets another chance. "He who hesitates really is lost!"

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Joab looked like a a servant of David...and he looked like an all out loyal servant of David. But, Joab was not an **obedient** servant of David.

Joab reminds me of folks today who **look** like believers and are zealous in their service, but they serve God their way. They are not obedient followers of Christ.

They are like some of the TV evangelists we see who say the right things, but they don't really know Jesus. They use their "service" to the Lord to their own advantage...to advance their own position and power and popularity.

After Joab killed Amasa, he hunted Sheba down and made sure he was killed. See, he did what the king wanted...but he did **more** than the king wanted...and he did all that he did **his own way**...not the king's way!

He always had his own agenda to advance...  
He killed Abner because Abner had killed his brother.  
He killed Absalom because Absalom was a threat to his position.  
He killed Amasa because Amasa had been put in his position.

Joab's defense would be, "But, I did all this for **you**, David."

**And I wonder when Jesus comes back if He will say to folks like Joab,  
"Depart from me, I never knew you."**

Jesus told His disciples, **"Many will say to Me on that day,  
'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and  
in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name per-  
form many miracles?'**  
**"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart  
from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"**

In many ways, David's return to his throne can be likened to the return of the Lord Jesus to set up His throne!

But, in **many more** ways it is different!

David was just a man. David was not a perfect man. David made many errors in judgment. For instance, His forgiveness of Shimei in **chapter 19** was not a **permanent** pardon. Later on, on David's deathbed, he will give Solomon strict instructions not to let Shimei go unpunished. He gave Solomon the same instructions concerning Joab.

But, I want to tell you...when our Lord Jesus comes back...He won't **un**forgive someone He's already forgiven. And it will be too late to seek His forgiveness if you've rejected it before He comes back.

**And we know Jesus never did sin and never will...before or after His Second Coming...but before we get out of 2 Samuel, we'll see David sin again...so severely that God had to again deal with him severely.**

And He won't have to wonder if Mephibosheth was sincere! He will know! He will give just the right reward to Mephibosheth and just the right punishment to Ziba!

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And He will know if Joab's loyalty was based upon real belief or misplaced ambition.

The Lord Jesus Christ knows each of us better than we know ourselves. One day, the King will come and there'll be no jealousy or hostility or animosity or "one upmanship".

***One day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.***

One day, every person will stand before Him...to receive punishment or rewards for the deeds done in the flesh.

Do you know beyond any doubt where you will stand before Him?

**The Great White Throne Judgment will be for folks who rejected Him in this life and punishment will be given for the deeds done in the flesh.**

**The Judgment Seat of Christ will be for folks who accepted Him in this life and rewards will be given for deeds done in the flesh. And if our deeds were done as Joab's were...for the wrong motives, these deeds will be burned up. We'll be saved but not our rewards.**

My prayer is that there was a time in your life when you accepted what Jesus did on the cross for you. And my prayer is that we will all stand before Him...spotless...every sin having been washed in His precious blood!

My prayer is that our deeds will stand the test of fire...

My prayer is that as we stand there before Him, we will have someone with us whom we've brought to Jesus! Do you have any spiritual children..folks you've led to Jesus?