

2nd Samuel Ch 19

The bible says, “*A foolish son is a grief to his father, And bitterness to her who bore him.*” Prov 17:25 And again, “*He who begets a scoffer does so to his sorrow, And the father of a fool has no joy.*” Prov 17:21 and Ch 18 left off with David weeping excessively, and crying out desperately over the loss of his son Absalom. Absalom had foolishly incited a rebellion against his father, and that rebellion was a lot like a fireworks display, shot off, looked good for a little while, seemed exciting to him and those who supported him, and then just like that it was over. Absalom got hung up by his head in a tree in the midst of this battle between he and his men vs the supporters of David due to his mule taking him under some low tree branches, and the mule just kept going even though he was caught and so he was left hanging there suspended in this tree.

And when Joab caught wind that he was hung up in the forest he immediately set out after him and when he found him you recall he thrust 3 spears into his midsection and his 10 armor bearers beat the remaining life right out of him. And they took him down, threw him in a pit and heaped stones over his body.

And so Joab blew the trumpet and the war ceased, and when the runners went to David to tell him the news of victory, all David was concerned about was Absalom, how’s Absalom? And when he found out that his son was dead, he blew a gasket, he started weeping and wailing, and grieving and crying out, “If only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!”

And this is where Ch 19 picks up, in the midst of this excessive mourning of David’s, and I say excessive because there is such a thing as “excessive” grieving as believers. And we’ll develop that a little more as we go along, but even in our grieving the bible is clear to you and to me that we’re not to sorrow as others who have no hope. And people watch our lives, and see how we handle desperate circumstances, and is the God of all comfort a reality to you, or something that sounds good when everything’s going well but when push comes to shove His comfort and peace that passes all understanding isn’t a reality in your life. And so the way we present ourselves before others in times of trial and hardship, is a real testimony one way or another regarding our relationship with the Lord, and we need to be aware of that and sensitive to that. David had lost sight of how his reaction to troubled times would impact the lives of people around him, and so he just out there with out regard to the people around him, just wallowing in his grief.

Vs1-4

You know when you read this you just want to kind of shrink down in your seat for these men who fought for David. Here they went out for him, were willing to sacrifice themselves, and lay their own lives down for him, they won the battle to the glory of God and for the good of Israel. And though they should be rejoicing and celebrating in their victory, they're all just sort of on eggshells and slumped over as they make their way into the city as though they need to be ashamed of what's happened because David is just out of control wailing all out loud for everyone to hear because their enemy is dead.

Vs5-7

Whoa, that's pretty hardcore Joab! "Hey David, snap out of it! Don't you see what you're doing here and the type of damage it's wreaking, you need to get a grip!" I mean this is some sharp truth here, and its delivered with precision. It's that whole, "Who's side are you on anyway," kind of thing. And it's not that God is against grieving over the loss of loved ones, or that feelings are somehow a bad thing, we were created with feelings, and there's a lot of believers out there who really lack any type of emotion, or don't really experience *any* feelings in their walk God.

But we're talking here about a balance just like with anything else, David has allowed the pendulum of his emotions swing way off to the left, and our emotions are like the other things in this life, we were never meant to be brought under the bondage of them, or under their control so that we have *no* control. David is just wailing and weeping and grieving, and he's out of control, but what does the bible say the fruit of the Spirit is? Gal 5, "*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.*" Gal 5:22-23 and Joab is all, "David, you're out of control man, but you need to get your eyes off yourself here and consider how your attitude is impacting everyone else. Because I'm going to tell you straight up that if you keep this up, by nightfall all these people are going to walk out on you. Because the way they see it you'd have rather seen your enemy alive and your supporters dead, than to win this war and regain the throne, and so you better get out there and act like a king who appreciates his soldiers and the sacrifices they're willing to make for their king."

Now again you hate to place your stamp of approval on a guy like Joab because of the self serving agenda that he always seemed prone to follow, but there were times when he stepped up to the plate and hit a grand slam, and this is one of them. And people in leadership need these kinda guys around them, guys that are willing to stand up and say, "Hey, if you don't start looking at the big picture here, you're going to do all kinds of damage, because it's not all about you, and how you feel about it, there's a big picture here and you need to be looking at it." This is a faithful wound that Joab is inflicting here.

And there are a couple of lessons in this little passage here, and we've touched on them already but #1 My attitude, and my outlook impacts, and affects other people. And as a servant of Jesus Christ you need to realize that the pampered privilege of being bummed really doesn't belong to you, why?

Because it brings everyone else around you down as well, how many times have you gone home in a bad mood only to realize that in about 30 seconds of your hitting the door everyone else is in bad mood to? Things may've been going well before you got there, but now that your sorry attitude, or my sour outlook has entered the equation, the whole demeanor of the place changes. Why? Because my uptightness, and your bad attitude permeates and infiltrates and spoils the whole thing, like leaven, it's sin and it just takes a little leaven to leaven the whole loaf. Just a little leaven in a lump of dough and before long the whole thing is impacted, and affected, the whole dynamic of the dough changes because of just a little leaven. And that's the way our attitude permeates and infiltrates the people around us. That's why the bible says, "*A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.*" Prov 29:11 We come in ranting and raving, blowing our top, and letting off steam.. it's foolish, all it does is drag everyone else into the flesh right along with us, and my how misery loves company. But if you're in the ministry, let me just say it, you're not allowed the privilege of venting on everyone else, or for that matter even acting all depressed and disgruntled and disheartened around everyone else. Why? Because that sends a message that you've been dealt a bum wrap, and God hasn't been fair to you. When the fact is that God loves you more than you could ever fathom, and the circumstances that surround our lives are fashioned in such a way as to insure us the best eternal experience possible.

Do you recall what happened there in Lev Ch 10 when Nadab and Abihu (Aaron's sons) were serving the Lord, and we read where they offered profane fire *before* the Lord and so fire was sent out *from* the Lord and consumed them on the spot? And God told Aaron through his brother Moses not to tear his clothes or uncover his head before the people, which was to say don't go out there and mourn before the people, get bummed and depressed before all the people as if to say God has not been just in the situation.

Why? Because discouragement spreads like wildfire, depression is contagious, and defeatist mentality will bring down everyone around you. So if the anointing is on your life, you don't have the right, I don't have the right to bring down everyone else with my personal problems, we're to cast our cares upon the Lord, not project our problems upon everyone else. Some people seem to be like a black hole of emotional need, and they just drain everyone around them, and depress anyone with in their sphere of influence with their problems but they themselves refuse to be comforted or consoled. Did David have the right to grieve? Sure, his son had died, who wouldn't be crushed? But his grieving was to be done personally and privately, not publicly before the people, his attitude was bringing down the whole congregation. Now if you're not in the ministry, or you don't care if the Lord uses your life, I suppose you have the right to be bummed and let whoever you want to know about it. But if you want God to be glorified in your life, then be sensitive to what's going on in your life and how it's going to impact others, there are appropriate environments for mourning or for seeking guidance, or whatever you may need. But if you truly believe that God is in control and that He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love, then that needs to be the signal that you're sending out to those around you by the way that you conduct yourself in public, that's not hypocrisy, it's crucifying the flesh.

The 2nd thing we need to see here (and then we're moving on) is the fact that happiness is a choice that I choose to make, not something that my situation has control over, look at vs 8.

Vs 8

In other words David sucked it up, received the wisdom in what Joab had to say regarding getting his eyes off himself and considering the way that his attitude was affecting everyone else and chose to show the people that he was happy about the way they had fought for him. To show the people genuine appreciation over the victory they had wrought that day rather than allowing his emotions to bring him down into the pit of despair past the point of no return. Happiness shouldn't be something that we allow in and out of our lives depending on whether or not things are going my way, because the love of Jesus Christ is constant regardless of our circumstances. That's why Paul the apostle said, "*I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.*" Phil 4:11 Whether I'm abased or abounding doesn't matter, I've decided to be content, because God is control, David chose to focus on his bummers, his son, and what had happened to him, but Joab said, you need to be focusing on your blessings. The kingdom was spared, a rebellion was snuffed out, God preserved your throne and has blessed you with victory, and yet you're weeping and wailing and bringing everyone down, cut it out and get out there and show those people your love and appreciation for them. And as soon as David decided to show his contentedness, and his thankfulness, his appreciation for the people and what God had done for them, they all began to rally around him again. The choice is yours, the choice is mine, we can impact people positively, or negatively, we can be all bummed, or we can demonstrate how blessed we are, how confident in the love of God we are, how assured of the fact that God is in control we are and that He is just and faithful and rich in mercy. I'm sure that David didn't *feel* like doing this, but we never hear him singing his sad song of loss again regarding Absalom, there comes a time when we've grieved enough, rejoice that God is in control, don't mourn as those who have no hope, rest assured that God *loves* you, and is watching out *over* you, and truly he is good *to* you.

Vs9-10

You see there's unrest and confusion in Israel now, they've debunked their king and it's brought on confusion, and now that the one that they sought out to rule over them is dead, they're thinking of bringing him back.

And this is just so often exactly like we are, Jesus Christ is ruling and reigning in our hearts and in our lives, and suddenly we find ourselves taken with another, something else that we think we'd rather have in that position, and so we oust the Lord. And He doesn't fight for the throne, or resist our rebellion, He just steps down and gives that place to that other person or other thing that you'd rather be there. And the sad part is that we'll ride our pursuit of that other king until he's dead, or just out of the picture, and eliminated as an option altogether before we debate bringing Jesus back to that place of prominence and rightful rulership. These guys didn't reconsider David until Absalom was no longer a choice, and so we begin to see God's wisdom allowing Absalom to be struck down.

Because David was the true king that God had anointed to be on the throne of Israel, and that's why God allows your Absalom, and my Absalom, that person, or occupation, or hobby, that we were taken with to be struck down and eliminated as an option for *our* lives, that *our* hearts might be turned back to the true king, the Son of David, Jesus Christ and His rightful reign in our lives.

Vs11-13

What's happening here? Just like the Lord, David is taking the initiative to instigate reconciliation to the people, and he's even offering general amnesty, or an official pardon to the entire army of rebellion by offering Amasa to replace Joab in his army. Now who was Amasa? He was David's nephew, and the man whom Absalom had chosen to be *his* general, and perhaps David found out that Joab killed Absalom, we don't really know, but for whatever reason David offers to replace Joab with Amasa.

Vs14

I love this, because David could've come riding in with his royal entourage, forcing his position in Israel as the conquering king, but he didn't do that, he wasn't going to assume that position until he was invited to do so. Now Absalom's rebellion centered in Judah, and I imagine the elders of Judah were a bit worried now about how David would handle the situation. And so David stays outside the nation and seeks to reason with the people until they feel swayed in their hearts to welcome him back. How often we worry about how the Lord will treat us, or what type of punishment awaits us once we've rebelled against the Lord, and our efforts have turned to futility and we want to reconsider Jesus but we're worried about what He'll do. And Jesus sends Word to us via His Holy Spirit and just says, "What are you doing? You're apart of Me, I'm apart of you, why would you not bring back the King, I'm waiting here ready to forgive you." And our hearts are swayed to bring Jesus Christ back into our lives, Jesus won't force His reign, but He will seek to persuade you via His Word and the work of His Holy Spirit in your heart and life. David could've forced his reign on the people, but what kinda relationship would that have been? Jesus doesn't want to force you to love Him and to serve Him, He wants your heart to be fully swayed, He wants you to desire to have Him rule over you, that you choose to love and to serve Him. And once you open your heart and your life to Him, once you bow your heart to Him, He'll readily make His way back to that place of rightful reign in your heart and in your life.

Vs15-18

Now I trust that as these guys names are read here that you recall some of these events that took place as David was being ousted from his throne, and now these guys resurface because they represent some loose ends that need to be tied up. You recall that Shimei was that sort self-proclaimed prophet who basically kicked David while he was down. He was of the tribe of Benjamin (Saul's tribe) and when David was being rejected as king, he went along the way kicking up dust, throwing rocks and making a big mess of the whole thing, calling David names and saying he got what he had coming because of what had happened with Saul and all.

And of course Ziba is Mephibosheth's servant, the one who met David along the way with supplies saying that Mephibosheth was looking to capitalize on David's desperate situation and so David just gave Ziba all the land that he had originally restored to Mephibosheth as Jonathon's son. And so now that David is coming back the 1st one on the scene is Shimei. Only this time it's not to throw rocks *at* David, but rather he falls on his face *before* David.

Vs 19-20

"Hey, about all that, 'man of blood' stuff, that whole 'you got what you deserve' bit, I was just kidding, no hard feelings?" And though a big part of me wants to see in this a man who is simply desperately trying to save his own neck, we do see here some real elements of true repentance, at least in this. I mean he was humble, (he fell down before him) he didn't seek to hide his guilt, he knew that David had a right to impute iniquity to him, but asked for mercy, he didn't try to minimize his actions, he said, "I know I've sinned" and so he came down to show the fruits of his repentance. He didn't just say the right things, his life demonstrated repentance by his actions, he confessed his sin and subjected himself to the mercies of his king.

Now David has the right to enforce judgment, he's the king, and this guy came against him. And again David has those men around him who would be all the more willing to be those instruments, but the heart of the Lord is to forgive, and David knew that 1st hand. He'd blown life, and the Lord had forgiven *him*. In Ps 32 he wrote, "*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.*" Ps 32:1-2. And when you've received compassion, you're more prone to extend compassion, and that's what David's going to do here, notice.

Vs21-23

David says, "I don't have an insecurity complex and I don't have anything to prove, what's going to be accomplished in this man's death?" David knows who he is and understands that this man's being eliminated won't make or break that in anyway. And so often it can be our own insecurities that make us want to lash out at other people and put the sword to them so to speak, but David knew the work of God in his life, and wasn't threatened in anyway by this man.

And again I think in many ways we're the Shimei in the scenario, and we go out against the Lord, kick up dust, and call Him names, we get all upset and blame everything on Him. And then we're afraid to come to the Lord because He just might take the sword to us. Charles Spurgeon said this, "Perhaps you have been like Shimei, who cursed king David, and you are afraid that Jesus will never forgive you. But David forgave Shimei, and Jesus is ready to forgive you. He delighteth in mercy." If you're willing to show the fruits of repentance, he's willing to forgive you. Now how about us? Are we so willing to forgive others who've perhaps criticized us, or put us down behind our backs or whatever? Col 3:13, "*If anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*"

Vs24-28

Mephibosheth says, “Hey, why would I want to overthrow your reign, I was as good as dead and you gave me life, you’ve already treated me above and beyond anything that I could ever have hoped for so whatever you want to do with me I won’t argue with it. You just need to know that I was slandered, I had no desire to take your place, but there was nothing I could do to let you know that.” You recall that Ziba, Mephibosheth’s servant met David on his way out of Jerusalem with some supplies. And David said, “Where’s Mephibosheth?” and Ziba said, “Well, he’s looking to take advantage of this situation, he figures that when you and Absalom do each other in, the dynasty will return to the house of Saul, and he’ll be the next king, he’s stabbing you in the back.” And here Mephibosheth is simply saying, “Hey, I’m lame, and there’s no way that I could tell you what was happening, and whatever you decide I won’t argue with, but you need to know, that wasn’t true, you’ve been better than life itself to me.”

Vs29-30

2 Things, either David was saying, “Look, I don’t have time to deal with this or look into the facts, you guys just split the land.” (Which I doubt) The other thing is that it’s possible he was testing these men’s hearts here much like his son Solomon would do in years to come. Remember when the woman came to Solomon and had a baby, and another woman was claiming it was her baby? And Solomon said, “Look, just cut the baby in two, and let each woman have ½.” And the real mom stepped up and said, “No, just give the child to her” and Solomon said, that’s the real mom.

And here David is possibly seeking to see which of these men’s hearts is truly just for him as their king vs who’s in it for what they can get out of the deal. And Mephibosheth stands up . And says, “Hey, just give it all to him, I’m just glad that you’re on the throne again.” And he’s in essence giving up his life, that he might have life, letting go of the cares of this world that he just might be close to his king. Here comes the transfer into our lives, are you like Ziba who was willing to cause his king more pain and heartbreak if he could only have more stuff? Or are you like Mephibosheth who was willing to abandon it all if it meant the king reign in glory in his life? God help us not to get so caught up with the stuff, but to be caught up with our King Jesus Christ and seeing Him rule and reign in our lives at any expense, it’s not about what we want it’s about seeing Him in His rightful position. What an example we see in Mephibosheth.

Vs31-39

Here’s a man who represents the man or the woman whom God has blessed immensely materially speaking, but who’s not absorbed in it. He’s not about storing up treasures for himself but he’s rich towards God, and he invests in the kingdom with out expecting anything in return; he’s just about propelling the agenda of the kingdom. He just says, “David, I know my place, and palace delicacies and festivals don’t do anything for me. I don’t know if it’s beef jerky or well-done K.C. strip, take my son with you, he’ll enjoy it.” And so David says, “Hey, it’s the least I can do.”

Vs40-43

Now what do make of this? Last week they're all fighting against David, and here they are all fighting over David! And this is the fickleness of humanity, one day they're saying, "Hosanna blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." And the next day they're saying, "We will not have this Man to rule over us, Crucify Him, Crucify Him!" And can I just close by saying this is why we do what we do because the love of Christ constrains us. If you enter the ministry because of your love for man, it'll be short lived, because man will turn on you at times. One day you're the hero, the next day you're the villain, one day you solve a problem, the next day you are the problem. If you're in the ministry to see people saved, what happens when no one responds to your invitation week after month after year? Make sure your motivation is nothing short of the love of Christ and His call on your life, anything less won't go the distance.