

THE RETURN OF THE KING

Introduction:

1. Absalom plotted and planned for years to take the throne of Israel for himself.
2. He convinced many in Israel to go along with him, and many more joined in his rebellion out of ignorance.
3. For a time, he succeeded in exiling King David from Jerusalem.
4. But, in the end, his coup failed, his army was defeated, and Absalom was killed.
5. Though David mourned for the death of his son, the time had come for the rightful King of Israel to return to the throne in Jerusalem.

- I. David's Mourning (2 Samuel 19:1-4)
 - A. David wept bitterly because his son had died in rebellion to God.
 - B. Though this was certainly justified, David was neglecting his role as King.
 - C. His sorrow over Absalom was causing him to overlook those who had remained loyal to him and who had served him faithfully.

- II. Joab's Advice (2 Samuel 19:5-8)
 - A. Though his words were cruel, Joab had just cause to rebuke David.
 - B. He accused David of shaming all those who had fought for him in battle.
 - C. He claimed that David loved his enemies more than his friends.
 - D. He advised David to go to the gate of the city and speak to the hearts of his servants.
 - E. He warned that if David did not do something to encourage his followers, they would all abandon him.
 - F. Though Joab exaggerated the situation, David understood what he was saying.
 - G. David went to the city gate and spoke to all those who came out to see him.

- III. David's Restoration (2 Samuel 19:6-39)
 - A. There are several important factors to be kept in mind as one studies this passage of Scripture.
 1. The nation of Israel had become divided and needed unification.
 - a. Would this be accomplished by bloodshed – killing David's enemies?
 - b. Would this be accomplished by peaceful means – trusting in Jehovah?
 2. Those who had supported Absalom were traitors to the nation and rebels to God.
 - a. Upon the death of their leader, they had fled back to their homes in fear.
 - b. The elders of the tribes had joined with Absalom.
 - c. Thus, David did not know who would be loyal to him.
 - d. Clearly, the spiritual desire of the nation had waned.
 3. There was no precedent for David to follow in regard to this situation.
 - B. There was much confusion and strife throughout the land.
 1. Some wondered why the elders of Israel were not planning the return of the king.
 2. The elders, concerned for themselves, were afraid of what would happen if David returned to the throne.
 3. David waited patiently.

2 Samuel 19

- a. He did not force himself upon the nation.
- b. He waited for them to see their need of him (and to obey God) and to invite him back to Jerusalem.
- C. David sent word to the elders of Judah, his kinsmen, asking why they did not seek his return.
- D. To ease their minds, David declared that Amasa would be made captain of his host in the place of Joab.
 - 1. Amasa was a cousin of Joab who had led Absalom's army in battle.
 - 2. David was signaling that he would not punish those who had fought against him.
 - 3. This also implies that David had demoted Joab, probably after learning of his role in the death of Absalom.
- E. After hearing this, the people of Judah asked David and his servants to return.
 - 1. There was no apology or remorse.
 - 2. There was no pledge of loyalty.
- F. "So, the king returned" and the men of Judah met him at the Jordan River to bring him back to the throne in Jerusalem.
- G. However, when they arrived, they found 1,000 men from the tribe of Benjamin already there and helping the king's servants across the river.
- H. Shimei was quick to find David and to ask for pardon and mercy (cf. 16:5-13).
 - 1. Like before, Abishai wanted to execute Shimei for his sin (cf. 16:9).
 - 2. But David showed mercy and sought unity in Israel.
- I. Later, Mephibosheth came out to meet David, clearly distressed over the king's exile.
 - 1. David learned that Ziba had slandered Mephibosheth, claiming that he was not loyal to the king.
 - 2. His words to David prove the faithfulness of Mephibosheth.
- J. Finally, David met with Barzillai, a true friend who had supported him throughout his exile.