
2SAMUEL 19: 1 It was told Joab, "Behold, the king weeps and mourns for Absalom."

David continues his lamentation for his son, and the people are greatly discouraged, 2Sam 19:1-4. Joab reproves and threatens him with the general defection of the people, 2Sam 19:5-7. David lays aside his mourning, and shows himself to the people, who are thereby encouraged, 2Sam 19:8. The tribes take counsel to bring the king back to Jerusalem, 2Sam 19:9-12. He makes Amasa captain of the host in place of Joab, 2Sam 19:13. The king, returning, is met by Judah at Gilgal, 2Sam 19:14, 2Sam 19:15. Shimei comes to meet David, and entreats for his life, which David grants, 2Sam 19:16-23. Mephibosheth also meets him, and shows how he had been slandered by Ziba, 2Sam 19:24-30. David is met by Barzillai, and between them there is an affecting interview, 2Sam 19:31-40. Contention between the men of Judah and the men of Israel, about bringing back the king, 2Sam 19:41-43.

2SAMUEL 19: 2 The victory that day was turned into mourning to all the people; for the people heard it said that day, "The king grieves for his son."

Verse 2

The victory - was turned into mourning - Instead of rejoicing that a most unnatural and ruinous rebellion had been quashed, the people mourned over their own success, because they saw their king so immoderately afflicted for the loss of his worthless son.

2SAMUEL 19: 3 The people sneaked into the city that day, as people who are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.

2SAMUEL 19: 4 The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "My son Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son!"

Verse 4

The king covered his face - This was the custom of mourners.

O my son Absalom - Calmet has properly remarked that the frequent repetition of the name of the defunct, is common in the language of lamentation. Thus Virgil, act. v., ver. 51: - - Daphnin que team tollemus ad astra;

Daphnin ad astra feremus: amavit nos quoque Daphnis. "With yours, my song I cheerfully shall join,

To raise your Daphnis to the powers Divine.

Daphnis I'll raise unto the powers above,

For dear to me was Daphnis' well tried love."

See the notes on the preceding chapter, 2 Samuel 18 (note).

2SAMUEL 19: 5 Joab came into the house to the king, and said, "You have shamed this day the faces of all your servants, who this day have saved your life, and the lives of your sons and of your daughters, and the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines;

Verse 5

Thou hast shamed this day - Joab's speech to David on his immoderate grief for the death of his rebellious son is not only remarkable for the insolence of office, but also for good sense and firmness. Every man who candidly considers the state of the case, must allow that David acted imprudently at least; and that Joab's firm reproof was necessary to arouse him to a sense of his duty to his people. But still, in his manner, Joab had far exceeded the bonds of that reverence which a servant owes to his master, or a subject to his prince. Joab was a good soldier, but in every respect a bad man, and a dangerous subject.

2SAMUEL 19: 6 in that you love those who hate you, and hate those who love you. For you have declared this day, that princes and servants are nothing to you. For today I perceive that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it would have pleased you well.

2SAMUEL 19: 7 Now therefore arise, go out, and speak to comfort your servants; for I swear by the LORD, if you don't go out, not a man will stay with you this night. That would be worse to you than all the evil that has happened to you from your youth until now."

2SAMUEL 19: 8 Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. They told to all the people, saying, "Behold, the king is sitting in the gate." All the people came before the king. Now Israel had fled every man to his tent.

Verse 8

The king - sat in the gate - The place where justice was administered to the people.

2SAMUEL 19: 9 All the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us out of the hand of our enemies, and he saved us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he has fled out of the land from Absalom.

2SAMUEL 19: 10 Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why don't you speak a word of bringing the king back?"

2SAMUEL 19: 11 King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, 'Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house? Since the speech of all Israel has come to the king, to return him to his house.

Verse 11

Speak unto the elders of Judah - David was afraid to fall out with this tribe: they were in possession of Jerusalem, and this was a city of great importance to him. They had joined Absalom in his rebellion; and doubtless were now ashamed of their conduct. David appears to take no notice of their infidelity, but rather to place confidence in them, that their confidence in him might be naturally excited: and, to oblige them yet farther, purposes to make Amasa captain of the host in the place of Joab.

2SAMUEL 19: 12 You are my brothers, you are my bone and my flesh. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?’

2SAMUEL 19: 13 Say to Amasa, ‘Aren’t you my bone and my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if you aren’t captain of the army before me continually in the room of Joab.’”

2SAMUEL 19: 14 He bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as one man; so that they sent to the king, saying, “Return, you and all your servants.”

Verse 14

And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah - The measures that he pursued were the best calculated that could be to accomplish this salutary end. Appear to distrust those whom you have some reason to suspect, and you increase their caution and distrust. Put as much confidence in them as you safely can, and this will not fail to excite their confidence towards you.

2SAMUEL 19: 15 So the king returned, and came to the Jordan. Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to bring the king over the Jordan.

2SAMUEL 19: 16 Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, who was of Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.

Verse 16

Shimei the son of Gera - It appears that Shimei was a powerful chieftain in the land; for he had here, in his retinue, no less than a thousand men.

2SAMUEL 19: 17 There were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went through the Jordan in the presence of the king.

2SAMUEL 19: 18 A ferry boat went to bring over the king’s household, and to do what he thought good. Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, when he had come over the Jordan.

Verse 18

There went over a ferry-boat - This is the first mention of any thing of the kind. Some think a bridge or raft is what is here intended.

2SAMUEL 19: 19 He said to the king, "Don't let my lord impute iniquity to me, nor remember that which your servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.

2SAMUEL 19: 20 For your servant knows that I have sinned. Therefore behold, I have come this day the first of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king."

Verse 20

For thy servant doth know that I have sinned - This was all he could do; his subsequent conduct alone could prove his sincerity. On such an avowal as this David could not but grant him his life.

2SAMUEL 19: 21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered, "Shall Shimei not be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?"

2SAMUEL 19: 22 David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be adversaries to me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? For don't I know that I am this day king over Israel?"

2SAMUEL 19: 23 The king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." The king swore to him.

2SAMUEL 19: 24 Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and he had neither groomed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came home in peace.

Verse 24

Neither dressed his feet - He had given the fullest proof of his sincere attachment to David and his cause; and by what he had done, amply refuted the calumnies of his servant Ziba.

2SAMUEL 19: 25 When he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth?"

2SAMUEL 19: 26 He answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, I will saddle me a donkey, that I may ride on it, and go with the king; because your servant is lame.

2SAMUEL 19: 27 He has slandered your servant to my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God. Do therefore what is good in your eyes.

Verse 27

The king is as an angel of God - As if he had said, I state my case plainly and without guile; thou art too wise not to penetrate the motives from which both myself and servant have acted. I shall make no appeal; with whatsoever thou determinest I shall rest contented.

2SAMUEL 19: 28 For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king; yet you set your servant among those who ate at your own table. What right therefore have I yet that I should cry any more to the king?"

2SAMUEL 19: 29 The king said to him, "Why do you speak any more of your matters? I say, you and Ziba divide the land."

Verse 29

I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land - At first, David gave the land of Saul to Mephibosheth; and Ziba, his sons, and his servants, were to work that land; and to Mephibosheth, as the lord, he was to give the half of the produce. Ziba met David in his distress with provisions, and calumniated Mephibosheth: David, too slightly trusting to his misrepresentation, and supposing that Mephibosheth was actually such a traitor as Ziba represented him, made him on the spot a grant of his master's land. Now he finds that he has acted too rashly, and therefore confirms the former grant; i.e. that Ziba should cultivate the ground, and still continue to give to Mephibosheth, as the lord, the half of the produce. This was merely placing things in statu quo, and utterly annulling the gift that he had made to Ziba. But why did he leave this treacherous man any thing? Answer,

1. He was one of the domestics of Saul, and David wished to show kindness to that house.
2. He had supplied him with the necessaries of life when he was in the greatest distress; and he thinks proper to continue him in his old office, by way of remuneration.

But it was certainly too great a compensation for his services, however then important, when all the circumstances are considered.

2SAMUEL 19: 30 Mephibosheth said to the king, "Yes, let him take all, because my lord the king has come in peace to his own house."

2SAMUEL 19: 31 Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim; and he went over the Jordan with the king, to conduct him over the Jordan.

2SAMUEL 19: 32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even eighty years old: and he had provided the king with sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man.

Verse 32

Barzillai was a very aged man - This venerable person had given full proof of his attachment to David by the supplies he had given him when he lay at Mahanaim, where his case was all but desperate; the sincerity of his congratulations now none can suspect. David's offer to him was at once noble and liberal: he wished to compensate such a man, and he wished to have at hand such a friend.

2SAMUEL 19: 33 The king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will sustain you with me in Jerusalem."
