

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 19

David indulging to too much grief for the death of his son, is rebuked by Joab, and threatened with a revolt of the people from him, if he did not change his conduct, which he accordingly did, (~~1089~~2 Samuel 19:1-8); upon which the men of Israel were the first that moved for the bringing him back to Jerusalem, and the men of Judah were solicited to join with them in it, which was effected, (~~1090~~2 Samuel 19:9-15); and at Jordan, Shimei, that had cursed him, met him, and asked his pardon, and was forgiven, (~~1091~~2 Samuel 19:16-23); and when come to Jerusalem, Mephibosheth excused so well his not going out with him, that he had half his land restored to him, which had been given to his servant, (~~1092~~2 Samuel 19:24-30); and Barzillai, who had very liberally supplied the king, was allowed to return to his own city, and Chimham his son was taken to court, (~~1093~~2 Samuel 19:31-40); and a contention arose between the men of Israel and of Judah about the restoration of the king, which issued in an insurrection, as the next chapter shows, (~~1094~~2 Samuel 19:41-43).

Ver. 1. *And it was told Joab*, etc.] When returned to Mahanaim, or on his way to it; perhaps by the messengers he sent; and this report he had before he saw the king:

behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom; for the death of him, instead of rejoicing at the victory obtained, and the deliverance from his enemies.

Ver. 2. *And the victory that day was [turned] into mourning unto all the people*, etc.] They also mourned too, instead of expressing joy upon the occasion:

for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son; this report was spread among them, which damped their joy, and hindered them from giving any tokens of it, as were usual at such times.

Ver. 3. *And the people got them by stealth that day into the city*, etc.] Did not march into it in companies, in a public and triumphant manner, as

conquerors used to do; but entered in a private manner, one by one, or a very few together, not caring to be seen or known, at least by the king, as fearing they had incurred his displeasure: but

as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle; as if they had been conquered, and not conquerors; nay, had acted a cowardly part, and ran away; and so cared not to be seen, lest they should be reproached, or suffer for their cowardice.

Ver. 4. *But the king covered his face*, etc.] And would not see his generals, and thank them for their services: but wrapped himself in his mantle, after the manner of mourners:

and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son! and this was some time, perhaps some days after he had received the news of his death, since Joab and the army were returned from the battle; had it been a sudden start of passion, upon first hearing thee news, and had continued a few hours, it would have been more excusable; but to continue some days, as it is very probable it did, was very unbecoming.

Ver. 5. *And Joab came into the house to the king*, etc.] For by this time he was removed from the chamber over the gate to his own dwelling house or palace, where he continued the same doleful ditty as at first:

and said, thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants; they cannot lift up their heads, and look any in the face, nor one another; but behave as if they had committed some very great fault, in fighting with the rebels, and beating them:

which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons, and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; which in all probability would have been taken away if the victory had been on the side of Absalom.

Ver. 6. *In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends*, etc.] Which though not strictly true, there was some appearance of it, which is here greatly exaggerated; in that he expressed so much grief and sorrow for Absalom his enemy, who had rebelled against him, and showed so little regard to his friends, that had exposed their lives for him:

for thou hast declared this day: by his conduct and behaviour, mourning for his rebellious son, and taking no notice of his faithful servants:

that thou regardest neither princes nor servants; neither the officers of the army, the generals and captains, nor the common soldiers: since neither the one were admitted into his presence privately, nor had the other public thanks as they entered the city, as might have been expected: or “that thou hast no princes and servants”¹³²⁷; none that are accounted of as such; they are nothing with thee, in no esteem at all, as if thou hadst none:

for this day I perceive that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well; this was carrying the matter too far; for though it would have been agreeable to David if Absalom had lived, and not been slain, yet not that his army should perish, or his people be destroyed; it would have pleased him well if both had lived.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore arise, go forth*, etc.] Arise from his couch, he was watering with his tears, and go forth from his house, where he had shut himself up retired from all company, to the gate of the city, where the people passed and repassed, and there was a concourse of them: this he said not by way of command, but by way of advice; though all along he seems to take too much upon him, and to speak unbecoming a subject, and not with that decency as was necessary in, speaking to a king; but it may be observed, that a general of an army had great power over princes in those times; and presumed very much on their interest in the army, which led them sometimes not to behave with that decorum as became them:

and speak comfortably unto thy servants; commend them for their courage and faithfulness, thank them for their services, and reward them suitably; at least give them assurance of it:

for I swear by the Lord; by the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; this he said to arouse him, and make him bestir himself, and think what was proper for him to do:

if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night; signifying that he would use his interest in the army to go off with it, and set up another king; and did not doubt of success, as well knowing what temper and humour the people were in through the king’s conduct:

and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now; for when he was persecuted by Saul he had a number of

friends that adhered close to him; and when Ishbosheth was set up against him by Abner as king of Israel, the tribe of Judah cleaved to him, anointed him their king, and abode by him; wherefore, should he now be abandoned by his army, his case would be worse than ever it had been.

Ver. 8. *Than the king arose, and sat in the gate*, etc.] Of the city, a public place, where the inhabitants met on divers accounts at times, and where there were always people passing and repassing:

and they told unto all the people; or it was reported to the soldiers particularly:

saying, behold the king doth sit in the gate; has laid aside his mourning, appears in public, and receives his friends, and attends to business:

and all the people came before the king; to congratulate him on the victory obtained, to receive his thanks and his favours:

for Israel had fled every man to his tent: or to his city, as the Targum; that is, those that followed Absalom; which is observed not on account of what goes before, but of what follows after; (see ^{<10817>}2 Samuel 18:17).

Ver. 9. *And all the people were at strife through all the tribes of Israel*, etc.] Excepting the tribe of Judah; they blamed and reprov'd one another for taking part with Absalom in the rebellion, and especially for their coldness and backwardness in bringing back David to Jerusalem:

saying, the king saved us out of the hand of our enemies; exposed his life to danger, fought our battles for us, and gained us victory over our enemies, and saved us from them, especially those next mentioned:

and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; in the times of Saul, and since; which were benefits which ought to have endeared him to them, and were aggravations of the crime of those who had been concerned in the late rebellion; and were such as ought not to be buried in oblivion, and were proper arguments to engage them to return to their allegiance to him, and abide by it:

and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom; being obliged to quit Jerusalem, and the land of Judea on this side Jordan, and to pass that river; not from a spirit of cowardice, but from tenderness to his son, he did not choose to fight against; and from a concern for his metropolis Jerusalem, lest that should be hurt, as well as for the safety of his person.

Ver. 10. *And Absalom, whom we anointed over us,* etc.] To be king; which either was really done by Absalom's party, or in effect by proclaiming and appointing him king:

is dead in battle; which shows the thing was not of God, and by which means they were released from their oath of allegiance to him:

now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back? nobody speaks of it, gives the least hint of it, or shows any concern about it; but the greatest coldness and indifference, as if it was a matter of no importance.

Ver. 11. *And King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests,* etc.] Who were at Jerusalem, and in his interest; perhaps by Ahimaaz and Jonathan their sons:

saying, speak unto the elders of Judah; particularly those that were at Jerusalem, with whom they had an interest:

saying, why are ye the last to bring back the king to his house? to his palace at Jerusalem, since David was of their tribe, and was first anointed their king: what might make them the more backward to it was their being so deep in the rebellion, which was formed and cherished among them, and brought to the height it was, through their connivance and encouragement, both at Hebron and Jerusalem; and therefore they might fear the resentment of David, and that he would not be easily reconciled unto them:

seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, [even] to his house: or he has received invitations from all the tribes of Israel to return to his house or palace at Jerusalem; and so this was a part of the message of David to the priests, to be told to the elders as an aggravation of their backwardness, and as an argument to excite them to their duty; though some think these are the words of the historian, to be inserted in a parenthesis, as in our version.

Ver. 12. *Ye [are] my brethren, ye [are] my bones and my flesh,* etc.] Being of the same tribe, and therefore he should deal gently with them, as if they were parts of his body; and not be severe upon them, for the hand they had in the conspiracy, as they might fear:

and wherefore then are ye the last to bring the king back? since they were so nearly related to him, and he so ready to forgive them.

Ver. 13. *And say ye to Amasa,* etc.] Who was the general of Absalom's army, and who might fear he should never be pardoned, whoever was, and looked upon his case as desperate; who had led on the army with Absalom against the king's threes, and fought them:

[art] thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? nearly related to him, being his sister's son:

God do so to me, and more also: than he had done to Absalom; or he imprecates the greatest evil upon himself that could be thought of or named:

if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab; signifying that he would not only pardon the treason he had been guilty of, but raise him to the highest post in the army; and to assure him of it, of which he might be doubtful, considering what he had done to merit his displeasure, he makes this oath or imprecation. Joab had got his ill will by many instances, as by the murder of Abner, and now by slaying Absalom against his orders; and by his rude and insolent behaviour to him when lamenting the death of his son; he wanted to be rid of him, and now, having an opportunity of putting a valiant man into his place, and thereby attaching him to his interest, he was determined to make use of it.

Ver. 14. *And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as [the heart of] one man,* etc.] This the Jewish commentators generally understand of Amasa that he used his interest with the men of Judah, and so wrought upon them, that they agreed as one man to send for the king, and bring him back; but it seems best to understand it of David, who by these gentle methods, kind messages, and affectionate speeches, powerfully inclined and engaged the hearts of the people towards him; so that they were unanimously and affectionately agreed to restore him: in this way David chose to return; he could have come without their leave, or any invitation from them, as he was their lawful king, and a victorious one, the rebellion being crushed; and had it in his power to chastise those concerned in it, and use them with severity; but he chose rather to gain the hearts of his people, and to come in a way peaceable to them, and honourable to himself:

so that they sent [this word] unto the king, return thou and all thy servants; perhaps by the same messengers that David sent; or it may be, rather for honour's sake they deputed some of their principal men to wait

on David, and invite him to return to them with all his retinue and army, promising allegiance and fidelity to him.

Ver. 15. *So the king returned, and came to Jordan*, etc.] From Mahanaim thither, which according to Bunting^{f328} was twenty eight miles:

and Judah came to Gilgal; that is, the elders, or principal men of the tribe of Judah, came thither; which place, according to the same writer^{f329}, was twelve miles from Jerusalem, and four from Jordan; and was the first place the Israelites came to when they passed that river in Joshua's time; but it seems to be rather more; (see Gill on "~~CH02~~Joshua 2:1") and (see Gill on "~~CH04~~Joshua 4:19");

to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan; but then they must proceed further on, for Gilgal seems to be live or six miles on this side Jordan.

Ver. 16. *And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which [was] of Bahurim*, etc.] Of whom (see ~~CH05~~2 Samuel 16:5);

hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David: he took the first opportunity to meet the king, and ask his pardon for his ill treatment of him when he fled from Jerusalem; for, hearing: that Absalom was slain, and the victory was on the side of David, who was returning in triumph, he thought it advisable as soon as possible to make his submission, and entreat forgiveness, lest he should fall a just sacrifice to his vengeance; and a better opportunity he could not well have than to go along with the men of Judah, who met the king first of all.

Ver. 17. *And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him*, etc.] Of which tribe he was, and these were either a band of soldiers, of which he was the chiliarch; or tenants of his, which showed him to be a great man; or his neighbours, and persons of some figure, whom he prevailed upon to come as intercessors for him:

and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul; who had imposed upon David, and got his master's inheritance from him, knowing that David would be undeceived by Mephibosheth his master, when he came to Jerusalem; and therefore that he might be more tenderly dealt with, and come off the better, he was thus forward to meet the king, and pay his respects to him:

and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him: which made a considerable appearance; (see ^{<1090>}2 Samuel 9:10);

and they went over Jordan before the king: to meet him on the other side, both Shimei and his a thousand men, and Ziba with his sons and servants.

Ver. 18. *And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household,* etc.] His wives and children, who could not so well ford the river on foot: some will have this to be a bridge of boats, a pontoon; and Abarbinel thinks it might be a company of men, who carried the women and children on their shoulders, one after another:

and to do what he thought good; to carry over whatever else the king pleased, besides his family:

and Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; or just as he was about to come over, when he came to Jordan to take the boat in order to come over; for he went over Jordan to meet him, and therefore would take the first opportunity of coming into his presence, and fall down before him, and make his submission to him.

Ver. 19. *And said unto the king, let not my lord the king impute iniquity unto me,* etc.] That is, deal with him according to the desert of it, punish him for it, but forgive it: for non-imputation of sin is in effect the pardon of it:

neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day my lord the king went out of Jerusalem: he desires that he would not only forgive, but forget it; he owns it was a perverse action, and aggravated by being done at the time when the king was in great trouble and distress:

that the king should take it to his heart; and determine to avenge himself on him for it.

Ver. 20. *For thy servant doth know that I have sinned,* etc.] He was sensible of it, and sorry for it, and publicly acknowledged it before all the men he brought with him, and before all the servants of David; and as a token of the sincerity of his repentance, and as an earnest of his future fidelity, he made this early submission:

therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph, to go down to meet my lord the king; but why does he make mention of the house of Joseph, when he was of the tribe of Benjamin? Kimchi says that

Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, were called the house of Joseph; and it may be observed that it is sometimes used for all Israel, as in (~~881~~ Psalm 80:1); and he was the first of them that came, inasmuch as he came along with the men of Judah, who came first of all to fetch the king back; or Joseph may stand for the tribes of Israel, as distinct from Judah, and he was the first of them; some of the Jewish writers think he makes mention of the name of Joseph, because as the brethren of Joseph used him ill, and he returned good to them; so though he had used David ill, he hoped he would do as Joseph did, return good for evil; and others represent him as suggesting hereby to David, that all Israel had used him ill, and he worse than them all; and now he was come first, and they were all waiting what he would do to him, that if he received him kindly, all would come and make their peace with him.

Ver. 21. *But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said,* etc.] The same person that would have taken off the head of Shimei at the time he cursed David, if he would have given him leave, (~~1062~~ 2 Samuel 16:9);

shall not Shimei be put to death for this? this humiliation and acknowledgment he has made, shall he be forgiven on that account? shall so small a matter as this atone for so great a crime he has been guilty of, as that he shall not die?

because or “though” ^{f330}

he cursed the Lord's anointed; is asking pardon sufficient to expiate so foul an offence, for which according to the law he ought to die? or for this action which he has done, as the Arabic version, in cursing the Lord's anointed.

Ver. 22. *And David said, what have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?* etc.] (See Gill on “~~1060~~ 2 Samuel 16:10”);

that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? or a Satan unto me, as the word is, by advising him to do what would be prejudicial to his interest; (see ~~4162~~ Matthew 16:22,23); as to use severity at such a time as this would have been; for had he immediately ordered Shimei to be put to death, though he deserved it, who was the first man that came to ask pardon, the Israelites in general, or all however concerned in the rebellion, would have concluded they must share the same fate, and so would not have submitted, but have raised a new rebellion against him; and some think Joab and Abishai had this in view, that they might keep their posts in the army:

shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? there shall not: the glory of this day shall not be sullied by the death of any; nor the joy of it be turned into sorrow in any family in Israel, as would, if any was put to death for what had passed during the rebellion:

for do not I know that I [am] this day king over Israel? and can and will do as I please; as he had been driven from his throne and palace, and was now invited back again, and upon his return, it was as if he was made king anew, and afresh inaugurated into his office; and therefore no blood should be split on that day on which he was restored to his kingdom.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the king said unto Shimei, thou shalt not die*, etc.] This day by my hands, or order, or by the sword, (^{<1008>}1 Kings 2:8);

and the king sware unto him; that he should not die for that offence, or for that only; but if he committed a new one, this oath was no longer binding on him, and not at all upon his heir and successor.

Ver. 24. *And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king*, etc.] Not down to Jordan, but Jerusalem; when the king was come thither, he came from his own dwelling to the king's palace; he is called the son of Saul, though he was his grandson, and grandsons are sometimes called sons; though in the Septuagint it is, the son's son of Saul; and the Syriac and Arabic versions are, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul:

and had neither dressed his feet; had not cut his nails, as the Septuagint adds, his toenails; or rather had not washed his feet, as the Targum paraphrases it; which was frequently done in those countries, partly for refreshment, and partly to remove the filth of them contracted by walking barefooted, or only with sandals; as also because of the ill smell of them, which was offensive:

nor trimmed his beard; or shaved his upper lip, and took no care that the hair of his chin should be in any order; otherwise that was never shaved, to do it would be contrary to the law in (^{<1027>}Leviticus 19:27);

nor washed his clothes; his linen clothes, his shirts, or any other that used to be washed; or "whitened" them, as the Targum, he had not sent them, his woollen clothes, to the fuller, to get out the spots, and whiten them. All these were tokens of mourning, and showed him to be a sincere mourner for the king's departure, and the trouble he was in, since it was so long continued:

from the day the king departed, until the day he came [again] in peace; which must be a considerable time, and therefore he must be in a most sordid and rueful condition.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king,* etc.] Perhaps from the place where his estate was; or, as the Arabic version, when he came from Jerusalem, from whence he went a little way to meet the king, as he was coming thither; for it was said he abode at Jerusalem, (^{<3068>}2 Samuel 16:3);

that the king said unto him, wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? when he departed from Jerusalem, being obliged to flee from thence because of Absalom; it is very probable David would never have asked him this question, knowing his lameness, had it not been for the suggestion of Ziba his servant, that he stayed at Jerusalem, hoping that the kingdom of his father would be restored to him, (^{<3068>}2 Samuel 16:3).

Ver. 26. *And he answered, my lord, O king, my servant deceived me,* etc.] His servant Ziba, who, instead of saddling an ass for him by his order, went off with that and another himself, (^{<3068>}2 Samuel 16:1); for thy servant

said, I will saddle me an ass; he not only determined this in his own mind, but gave orders to his servant to saddle one for him:

that I may ride thereon, and go to the king, because thy servant [is] lame; and could not walk afoot, being lame of both his feet, (^{<3068>}2 Samuel 4:4 9:3,13).

Ver. 27. *And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king,* etc.] By suggesting that he stayed at Jerusalem with a view to the kingdom, hoping that the quarrel between David and Absalom would issue in the restoration of it to his father's family; which was a mere calumny, he having had no such thought, nor was there any foundation for it:

but my lord the king [is] an angel of God; for understanding and wisdom, to discern the falsehood of such suggestions:

do therefore [what is] good in thine eyes; condemn him or acquit him; reject him or receive him into favour; he entirely submitted himself to him, to do with him as seemed good in his sight.

Ver. 28. *For all [of] my, father's house were but dead men before my lord the king,* etc.] Or "men of death"^{f331}; worthy of death, not on account of

Saul's persecution, for which his family did not deserve to suffer; rather for the attempt of Ishbosheth to get the kingdom from him, which might be deemed treason, and so the family was tainted for it; though the sense may be only this, that their lives lay at his mercy, and that if he had dealt with rigour and severity towards them, as was usual for princes to do towards the family of their predecessors, who had any claim to the kingdom, put them to death, this would have been their case:

yet didst thou set thy servant among them that eat at thine own table; which was showing him great kindness, and doing him great honour:

what right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king? to ask any favour of him, or make any complaint to him.

Ver. 29. *And the king said unto him, why speakest thou any more of thy matters?* etc.] Of his father's family, and the injuries done by them to David, and of the benefits and favours which he had received from David, or of his temporal affairs, of his estate, which David had given away to Ziba:

I have said, thou and Ziba divide the land; revoking his last grant to Ziba, which gave him all that belonged to Mephibosheth, (^{<1060>}2 Samuel 16:4); he established his first decree, that Ziba should have half the profit of the land for tilling it, and the other half be given to Mephibosheth; he did not choose to punish Ziba for slandering his master, being inclined to clemency and mercy, and determined to show no severity at that time; and might be in some fear of Ziba, being a considerable man, lest he should raise a new insurrection, if he bore hard upon him; besides, he might have a large share in his affection, having made a present to him in the time of his distress, and was one of the first that came to meet him upon his return, (^{<1097>}2 Samuel 19:17 16:1,2).

Ver. 30. *And Mephibosheth said unto the king, yea, let him take all,* etc.] The whole estate, as David had given it to him; he was content that that last grant should stand:

forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house; his palace in Jerusalem; which was a strong expression of affection for him, and loyalty to him.

(Solomn used a similar test to determine which woman's baby was alive. (^{<1036>}1 Kings 3:16-28). He purposed the baby be cut in two to reveal who

the real mother was. Likewise, David suggests the property should be divided between Ziba and Miphibosheth to determine the true loyalty of the later. (~~10629~~2 Samuel 19:29,30) Editor.)

Ver. 31. *And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim,* etc.] The place of his habitation, to Jordan, (see ~~10722~~2 Samuel 17:27);

and went over Jordan with the king to conduct him over Jordan; to accompany him over the river, and then take his leave of him.

Ver. 32. *Now Barzillai was a very aged man, [even] fourscore years old,* etc.] Which was ten years beyond the common term of man's life, and reckoned a very great age in David's time, and has been ever since, and still is, (see ~~19000~~Psalm 90:10);

and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim: had supported him and his family, furnished him with provisions, and all the necessaries of life, during his stay there:

for he [was] a very great man; in wealth and riches, and was a very liberal man, and a man of great wisdom and good sense; and very probably was a man of great grace, which taught him his duty to his prince, and influenced him to show mercy to him in distress.

Ver. 33. *And the king said to Barzillai, come thou over with me,* etc.] Over Jordan; Barzillai came with an intent to accompany the king over Jordan; but the king meant not only to go over Jordan, but when over to go further with him, even to Jerusalem:

and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem; meaning, that he should dwell with him in his palace, and eat at his table, in return for feeding him at Mahanaim.

Ver. 34. *And Barzillai said unto the king,* etc.] In answer to the grateful proposal he made:

how long have I to live; that could not be said with exactness by any; but it might be probably conjectured from the age he was of, and the infirmities that attended him, that he could not live long; it was but a short time he had to be in the world:

that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? take so long a journey as that, seeing he might die before he got thither; and if he did not, since it

could not be thought he should live long, he could not think of it, or judge it advisable at such an age to take such a journey, change his place of abode, and manner of living.

Ver. 35. *I [am] this day fourscore years old*, etc.] Not that that day was precisely his birthday, but that he was about such an age, very little under or over; very probably he was full that age:

[and] can I discern between good and evil? signifying, either that his intellectual powers were impaired, and could not distinguish what was right and wrong, and so could be of no service to David in his privy council, or any court of judicature, he was fit for no post or office under him; or that his natural senses were not quick to distinguish between good and bad, particularly between good and bad food, which he could neither discern by smell nor taste, as follows:

can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? have any gust or relish of, or take any delight or pleasure in eating and drinking; so that the most delicious food, and richest wines, and all the dainties of a king's table, would signify nothing to him:

can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? either being so deaf that he could not hear them at all, or however not with any delight; the evil days being come upon him, in which he could take no pleasure in the diversions of a court:

wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? he could neither take any pleasure himself, nor be of any service to the king, but on the contrary a burden to him; not only on account of his sustenance, and being obliged to have servants to attend him, which might be the least part of his burden, but his company would be disagreeable and troublesome, through the infirmities of old age upon him.

Ver. 36. *Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king*, etc.] That is, go a little way after he was over Jordan with him, and then return to his own city:

and why should the king recompense it with such a reward? the sense is, why should the king recompense so trifling a thing as I have done, and which was but my duty, with such a reward, as to maintain me in so grand a manner at his court?

Ver. 37. *Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again,* etc.] To his own city, after he is gone over Jordan, and seen the king a little way on his journey:

that I may die in my own city: the city of Rogelim, where perhaps he was born, and had lived all his days, and where it is natural for people to desire to die, even in their native place:

[and be buried] by the grave of my father, and of my mother: or “in” their grave, as Kimchi and Ben Melech, in the sepulchre of his fathers, where men usually choose to be buried:

but behold, thy servant Chimham: who was his son; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions express it, my son Chimham:

let him go over with my lord the king; not only over Jordan, but to Jerusalem with him:

and do to him what shall seem good unto thee; advance him, and put him into any post or office the king should think fit, or bestow a pension upon him, or give him an estate to live upon, or whatever he pleased.

Ver. 38. *And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me,* etc.] He admitted of him instead of his father:

and I will do unto him that which shall seem good unto thee; he puts it to Barzillai, and leaves it with him to ask what he would for his son, and he would grant it. We nowhere read what it was that Barzillai asked, or whether he asked anything; only this we read, that some hundreds of years afterward there was a place called the habitation of Chimham near Bethlehem, (^{<34117>}Jeremiah 41:17); which makes it probable that David gave him a paternal estate of his there, since Bethlehem was his city; and the Targum on that place is expressly for it; (see Gill on “^{<34117>}Jeremiah 41:17”):

and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, [that] will I do for thee; whatever suit he should make to him, or whatever favour he should ask of him hereafter, when returned to his own city, he would grant it to him, if it could be possibly done; such a sense should he always retain of his kindness to him.

Ver. 39. *And all the people went over Jordan,* etc.] That were with David:

and when the king was come over; over Jordan, had got to the other side of it, whither Barzillai accompanied him:

the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; took his leave of him with a kiss, as friends were wont to do at parting, thanked him for all his favours, wished him well, and prayed to God to bless him with all blessings temporal and spiritual:

and he returned to his own place: his own city Rogelim, having crossed over again the river Jordan.

Ver. 40. *Then the king went on to Gilgal*, etc.] Which, according to Josephus^{f332}, was fifty furlongs from Jordan, six miles and a quarter:

and Chimham went on with him; after Barzillai had left them, and accompanied the king to Jerusalem:

and all the people of Judah conducted the king; to Jerusalem; who came to meet him, (^{<0095>}2 Samuel 19:15);

and also half the people of Israel; or a part of them, as the word used signifies, and not always an equal half, so Kimchi observes; even such of Israel as went out with David at first, and the a thousand men of Benjamin that came to meet him, (^{<0097>}2 Samuel 19:17).

Ver. 41. *And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king*, etc.] A large number of them, the other part that did not come over with David, some of their principal men, who met him upon the road:

and said unto the king, why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen thee away; secretly, privately, and unknown to them, and were bringing him back to Jerusalem:

and have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan? him, and his family, and soldiers.

Ver. 42. *And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel*, etc.] Such of them as went down to fetch the king back, replied to the men of Israel that now met them, and objected to their conduct:

because the king [is] near of kin to us; being of their tribe, and his palace was within their borders, and therefore they were proper persons to bring him home:

wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? for bringing the king back, and being the first in it; for who so proper as they, not only to do their duty, but to show their affection to the king as early as possible?

have we eaten at all of the king's [cost]? they had maintained themselves at their own expense, going and returning; they had no self-interest or selfish views to serve, but on the contrary had been at a considerable charge to meet the king, and conduct him home:

or hath he given us any gift? no, he had not, nor did they expect any; it was not with a view to any reward that they had taken this step, but purely out of affection to the king, and for the good of their country.

Ver. 43. *And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said,* etc.] They replied to them, as follows:

we have ten parts in the king; being ten tribes, reckoning Simeon in the tribe of Judah, within which it lay, (^{<0690>}Joshua 19:1);

and we have, also more [right] in David than ye; being more numerous than they; or, according to the Targum, they had more affection and good will towards David than the men of Judah, though he was of their tribe, and dwelt among them; since the rebellion was begun, and was cherished and carried on among them:

why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? they were as ready and as desirous as they to fetch the king back; and since they were far the largest body of men, and the far greater part of the nation, they thought they ought to have been consulted in an affair of so much importance, and that doing it without them was slighting them, and casting contempt upon them, and insinuating as if they were enemies to the king; or, as the Targum expresses it,

“was not my word first to bring back my king?”

the first motion was from them, as appears from (^{<0091>}2 Samuel 19:11); and therefore the thing should not have been done without them; they should have been apprized of it, that they might at least have joined them, and shared in the honour with them of bringing the king back:

and the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel; not those that are here recorded, but what followed, and are not written, being so very warm and indecent; and David being silent in this hot

dispute between them, which was interpreted taking the part of Judah, the men of Israel were incensed at it; and hence arose a new rebellion, of which more in the next chapter how it began, and was crushed.