

## 2<sup>ND</sup> SAMUEL

### Week 30, chapter 19 and 20

We've got a lot to cover today, and we'll move along at a pretty good rate. However shortly I'm going to get on a little detour for a few minutes to make a point that some may appreciate but others may not, so please bear with me.

As we resume our study David is returning from his rather short stay in Machanayim, across the Jordan River, and is on his way back to Jerusalem. Absalom's rebellion is over, a peace treaty has been struck, a re-coronation ceremony at Gilgal to re-install David as King of Israel has just occurred, and now David is meeting a cast of characters on his journey home that he had also met on his way out of town as he was fleeing for his life just a few weeks earlier.

Among the first to greet him was the aged **Shimei**, a Benjamite, who threw himself on David's mercy hoping that since it was a Middle Eastern tradition that a newly crowned king often granted pardons for offenses of his subjects, that he would be the recipient of one of those get-out-of-jail-free cards. Although one of David's commanders (**Avishai**) wanted to do away with Shimei on the spot, the ever-political David did the expected and granted **Shimei** pardon (at least for a time). That Shimei brought 1000 of his tribesmen with him to greet David undoubtedly had something to do with David's decision. We read an excerpt from 1Kings 2 that shows how on his deathbed the still bitter David instructed Solomon to execute **Shimei** for his cursing of David (years after it had happened) and as a dutiful son, Solomon followed through.

Then **Mephibosheth**, Saul's lame grandson, also appeared and hailed David. Let's pick up our story from there. Turn your Bibles to 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 19.

**RE-READ 2<sup>ND</sup> SAMUEL 19:25 – end**

A few verses earlier we learned that **Tziva**, the calculating and sneaky estate steward that theoretically worked on behalf of his master **Mephibosheth**, greeted David as he was literally crossing the waters of the Jordan River; Tziva brought with him 15 sons and 20 of his personal servants (thus we see that **Tziva** had arranged things such that the weak and insecure **Mephibosheth** had utterly no control over his own steward). The idea of course was to be noticed and remembered as a man who had remained loyal to King David at a time of a national emergency, and this was in hopes of currying the king's favor. Besides, as far as David was concerned, **Tziva** was now the master of King Saul's former estate and thus an influential aristocrat.

Verse 25 explains that the crippled **Mephibosheth** hadn't cared for his legs, trimmed his beard, or washed his garments since the day the king had fled; this was a traditional expression of mourning. But when David saw him the first question out of his mouth was: "Why didn't you go with me, **Mephibosheth**?"

I explained in our last lesson that this event of David returning to Jerusalem to resume his reign is either a very good analogy of when Messiah Yeshua returns in His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, or it is actually and intentionally prophetic of that event. There are varying views on this (some scholars seeing no relationship whatsoever), but my opinion is that this is probably prophecy. And last week I used one of several elements of David's return from exile to explain a well-known New Testament prophecy that otherwise is little more than a throw away statement of dubious value. It is the statement that when **Yeshua** returns it will be as lightning that travels from the east to the west. I'll remind you that lightning is not at all restricted to travel from east to west, and only randomly travels any direction in particular (and by the way, the ancients fully knew that). It is my conviction that this New Testament prophecy is being fulfilled after the pattern of David's return to reassume his kingship (David's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming if you would) in which David is traveling from the east (from the Trans-Jordan) to the west (to Jerusalem on the west bank of the Jordan River). I see a similar pattern in **Tziva and Mephibosheth's** relationship with King David as in Yeshua's relationship with His own brethren, the Hebrew people, and with the eventual involvement of the gentile church. Let's talk about that the little detour now.

Let's first recall just who **Mephibosheth and Tziva** are. Mephibosheth is a crippled Hebrew man who was a grandson of King Saul, David's friend Jonathan's son. He was in hiding when David initially took the throne because it was feared that King David would do what many kings typically do when they win the crown: they eliminate all of the former king's family. But David had such respect for King Saul, and such love for Jonathan, that he sent for Mephibosheth and

decided to care for him as he would a direct royal family member.

**Tziva** was a gentile who had been left in charge of Saul's considerable estate after King Saul, his sons, and most of his closest relatives were killed in battle with the Philistines. After Saul's death his sole remaining son **Ishbosheth** became king for a short time but he too was then killed, ending the Tribe of Benjamin's claim to the throne of Israel. So essentially this gentile estate steward Tziva suddenly found himself as not just an employee in charge of this considerable royal estate, but there was no one in authority over him. He had just won the lottery, or so he thought.

When David brought Mephibosheth back from hiding, he gave Saul's old estate to him and told Tziva that Mephibosheth was now his master. Needless to say this didn't sit too well with the gentile **Tziva** and he apparently began plotting how to make Mephibosheth irrelevant and once more enjoy the stature he had stumbled into after **Ishbosheth's** death. Absalom's rebellion and David's temporary absence from the throne offered Tziva just the opportunity he needed to climb over Mephibosheth and back to the top of the ladder.

Recall that as David was walking towards the Mount of Olives, **Tziva** came to him with some donkeys loaded with food and wine as a parting gift. David asked Tziva why his master didn't come on such a somber occasion and his answer was that not only did **Mephibosheth** not see the need to come but that Mephibosheth considered this to be a happy day because now the throne would go back to the tribe of Benjamin, Mephibosheth's own tribe. The angered and insulted David told **Tziva** that all that Mephibosheth formerly owned now belonged to Tziva.

Some weeks or months have passed, Absalom's rebellion has been put down, and now here stands **Mephibosheth** as David is returning home to the throne and David confronts Mephibosheth for not showing loyalty by following him. Mephibosheth says that he intended to but Tziva had deceived him. Mephibosheth was in progress of saddling a donkey to come and accompany the king into exile, but since he was lame he wasn't able to be quick about it. In the meantime Tziva observed Mephibosheth's intent, essentially stole Mephibosheth's goods and some of his donkeys and presented them to King David as gift from himself and then lied to him about Mephibosheth. The result was that the gentile **Tziva** became Master of the estate (at David's unjust order), something that had always been meant for the Hebrew Mephibosheth.

As we look back over the centuries we see that this is an accurate pattern of what happened

with Yeshua and His countrymen, and how gentiles came to dominate the Church even though Messiah always made it clear that first and foremost He came to deliver His own people who were to be the Master of the estate.

<sup>DRA</sup> **Romans 1:16** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and to the Greek.*

And that, in fact, the inclusion of gentiles (the Greek) into the redemption process had everything to do with saving the Hebrews (also called "all Israel").

**(Rom 11:25-27 CJB)**

<sup>25</sup> ***For, brothers, I want you to understand this truth which God formerly concealed but has now revealed, so that you won't imagine you know more than you actually do. It is that stoniness, to a degree, has come upon Isra'el, until the Gentile world enters in its fullness;***

<sup>26</sup> ***and that it is in this way that all Isra'el will be saved. As the Tanakh says, "Out of Tziyon will come the Redeemer; he will turn away ungodliness from Ya'akov***

<sup>27</sup> ***and this will be my covenant with them,... when I take away their sins."***

So what happened was this: Yeshua, the anointed king, came to His people the Hebrews and many accepted him as Messiah but most did not. As time went by more and more Jews (which by Jesus' day was a standard label for all the Hebrews even though it wasn't technically correct) starting accepting Yeshua as the Messiah until the New Testament tells us there were thousands upon thousands of Jewish Believers; but then something happened. As the Gospel was taken to the gentiles (particularly by Paul), gentiles not only starting believing in droves, they also began to outnumber the Hebrews who believed in Yeshua. After all; the sheer number of gentiles in existence in that era was at least 100 times greater than the total number of Hebrews. So it naturally follows that in no time at all (in less than a century after Messiah's death) the number of gentile Believers had overwhelmed the number of Jewish Believers and so the gentiles simply brushed aside any opposition and gained absolute control of what we now call "the Church".

By the early part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. the gentile Bishops who now ran the institutional Church decided that Jewish Believers needed to stop being so Jewish in their observances and instead adopt the ways of the gentiles, and to let go of such things as the Sabbath, the Biblical Feasts, and more if they were going to worship Jesus.

Most of you have heard since Sunday School of the so-called Early Church Fathers. Usually the first Church Father is said to be either Ignatius or Clement and there were several others who both overlapped and followed them. But there is one interesting common feature about the Early Church Fathers: all were gentiles. Isn't it interesting that in Christian parlance the first Father of the Church was a gentile, as were all subsequent to him? Does it now make sense as to why the Jews see Christianity as a gentile religion? It was characterized by gentiles in that way since around 100 A.D. Never mind that the Bible points to James (1/2 brother of Jesus) as the likely first recognized leader of the Church, or that the Hebrew Paul ought to figure in that mix as well. Or that Peter is called by the Catholics the first Pope. But since about 100 A.D., the Church wasn't even considered the Church until it was a thoroughly gentile religious institution

The gentile church had ignored Paul's warning of Romans 11( <sup>25</sup> ***For, brothers, I want you to understand this truth which God formerly concealed but has now revealed, so that you won't imagine you know more than you actually do***), and determined that despite the Scriptures clearly saying otherwise that they (we) now had more right to the Hebrew estate than did the Hebrews.

The early gentile Church leaders cleverly began libeling the Jews as bloodthirsty Christ killers and openly stated that Jews ought to have no part in worshipping the Jewish Messiah; Christ was now the gentile Messiah who belonged to the gentile Church. Naturally this erected an impenetrable wall through which Jews could not pass. Of course the Roman-based church conveniently forgot that although some of the self-serving Jewish leadership in Pontius Pilate's day had been happy and eager to see Yeshua executed, it was the gentile Romans who condemned him, mercilessly whipped him until He no longer looked human, and then killed him. It was the gentile Roman soldiers that nailed Him to the hideous Roman death stake, and it was a gentile Roman soldier that pierced Christ's side with a Roman spear to ensure that he was indeed dead (and this as His Jewish followers helplessly looked-on, lame and in despair).

Look at the obvious parallels from 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 19 and the prophecy simply jumps off the pages. ***Mephibosheth*** was the rightful Hebrew owner of the Israelite estate (a part of the Kingdom of God), and the anointed King David came to rescue and restore him. But the gentile ***Tziva***, who was graciously given the privilege to partake and benefit of the Jewish estate, under the terms

of Jewish covenant law, was not satisfied in his role. Rather he plotted and planned and lied to the king by saying that the Jewish Mephibosheth wanted no part of the anointed king and had given his loyalty to another. **Tziva** coveted being Master of the estate, and he wanted the exclusive favor of the anointed king, and so to accomplish that he built up an elaborate web of lies and distortions about the rightful Hebrew estate owner and in the doing was able to wrest control of the estate away from him and now a gentile felt that he owned it.

My soul aches as I tell you this story and this prophecy and how it became fulfilled. Even though God foreknew this would happen, and thus factored it into His plan of redemption for all mankind, it is a sad and gut wrenching truth that the gentile Church has stolen away the estate of the Jews, claimed it exclusively for ourselves, and then said that the Jews have no part in it (and declare to one another that the Jews want no part in it) and that the anointed heavenly king is through with them anyway. We have manufactured a complete role reversal: the true Master of the estate has become lame and set aside, and the partaker has become the Master (at least in the eyes of the false Master).

Now the king returns and the gentile estate steward runs ahead of the rightful Jewish owner to greet the king. The Jewish estate owner is dispirited, lame and he cannot hurry. He was damaged in life and like the crippled man in the New Testament who went to the Pool of Bethesda to wait for the water to stir in hopes he could crawl into it and be restored, the crowds always beat him to it and thus there was never room for him.

I know that most of you who are listening are aware of a growing thirst among the Jewish people to receive their inheritance and their anointed king, even if they don't know who he is. But the Church has, for centuries, told them that the estate inheritance is no longer theirs, and thus the returning king is for us the "new Masters", not for them the lame and dispossessed. Sadly the vast bulk of folks on both sides have come to accept this deception as God-ordained and the truth. We of Christ's Church have become **Tziva** and we need to repent from this and do all we can to undo the false manmade doctrines we've established and preached to ourselves and foisted upon the Jewish people and we need to return the estate to the rightful owners. When David originally brought Mephibosheth before him and gave him the estate, it was an estate that Mephibosheth didn't realize that he already had legal right to; so it was only that the king was restoring it to him. The Jewish people own the estate inheritance because God set it up for them, beginning with Abraham, and we the Church need to make them aware of it. We need to equip them to handle the task and to assume our roles not as Masters but as lawful (and grateful) partakers and partners in their estate (as Paul points out).

I am so proud of this ministry and all who helped to establish the Seed of Abraham Messianic

Worship Center in Israel. A facility paid for mostly by the generosity of gentile Believers, but for the benefit of the Jewish people. A place in Israel where the Bible (a product of the Hebrews) will be taught by a Believing Hebrew in the Hebrew language, in a Hebrew context, within the Hebrew culture, and where we hope that this teaching will lead these modern day Hebrews to their Hebrew Messiah. This is one small step towards true restoration of God's chosen to their estate inheritance, and I suppose a measure of repentance and reparation on our part. We owe this (and more than we can ever repay) to the Jewish people through whom the Word of God was given to mankind but who had their estate and spiritual inheritance torn from them and misappropriated to the point that most of them don't even know it was for them in the first place.

Fortunately even though David is called a type or foreshadow of Messiah, he is **not** Messiah because David proceeded to do an unwise and unjust thing. The truth that came from Mephibosheth's mouth that revealed the obvious fraud that Tziva had committed still was not sufficient for David to admit he had been wrong in his earlier ruling that had stripped poor lame **Mephibosheth** of his estate and gave it to the arrogant and undeserving **Tziva**. So David adjudicated the matter by declaring it unsolvable: divide the estate equally between yourselves he ordered, as though there were no way of determining who was victim and who was perpetrator. I have little doubt that the infamous story of Solomon dividing the baby between two women each claiming the infant as their own was borne from what his father did when faced with a similar case. And, as what the one woman (who was the real mother) did when she understood that if the baby was indeed divided that it would be destroyed in the process, she loved the child so much that she gave it up to the other woman (who lied about being the mother) to save its life; then so does Mephibosheth do the same by saying that his main concern is for the anointed king to be back on his throne over a united Kingdom of God, so rather than divide up the estate **Tziva** should go ahead and take it all for his own. What mattered to Mephibosheth was his personal relationship with the anointed king and that the king be on this throne; what mattered to Tziva were all the trappings, status and earthly benefits of controlling the estate no matter how he had acquired it.

Well as the chapter continues now we are finally presented with a brighter picture in the form of Barzillai the Gileadite who came from his place in the Trans-Jordan to help escort the king across the river. He wanted nothing of the king, only to see him back on his throne. An old man of 80 years, he was wealthy and content. Of course in typical Oriental manner David wanted to reward Barzillai for his extraordinary loyalty and generosity, but even the mere suggestion of it seemed almost painful for this good man. He basically says that he is so old that he can't taste fine food anymore, he is nearly deaf, and he'd only be a useless burden. So it's rather pointless to treat him to the lavish lifestyle of the palace when he really couldn't enjoy it anyway. Thus he suggests that David take **Khimham** and add him to the royal court. Who **Khimham** is we don't know; probably he was family to Barzillai but that is purely speculation. But the etiquette of the time dictated that Barzillai find some way to accept the king's gracious offer.

In verse 41 David is ferried across the Jordan near Gilgal with a huge entourage of well wishers and those trying to get back into his good graces. We're told that "all" the people of Judah and "half" the people of Israel crossed with him. This has a very loose meaning. First, the "people" are the clan leaders and aristocrats not the general population. Second, "all" just means than everybody who was anybody from the tribe of Judah came, but only some of the leaders from the 10 northern tribes (here called Israel) showed up. The reason for this disparity is simple: although some from the south had joined Absalom's rebellion the north was considerably more excited to be part of it. On the other hand they had never been as committed to having David as their king as Judah had been, and so when David returned he didn't invite the leaders of the 10 tribes to take part in the ceremonial procession.

The Israelites (since Egypt) had allied themselves into groups according to tribes, and once they entered the Land of Canaan those groups became even more defined and entrenched into Judah and Simeon in the south versus all the remaining tribes in the north (generally north of Jerusalem). Benjamin, which was a kind of buffer state between the northern and the southern territories, vacillated back and forth between alliances with the north and south as the political winds changed direction. But at the time of Absalom's rebellion Benjamin was mostly invested with the north because they were still bitter over kingship transferring from the tribe of Benjamin (Saul's tribe) to the tribe of Judah (David's tribe).

Thus as we get to the final few verses of this chapter we see a very serious quarrel break out between Judah and the northern tribal alliance. Because Israel had not been asked to take part in the ceremonies they felt slighted when both David and the tribe of Judah behaved as though the 10 tribes were of little importance (can anyone really blame David for doing this?) So when the parties arrived in Gilgal for the big to-do, there broke out a fierce contention between the northern and southern factions over what Israel saw as unbridled royal favoritism towards Judah.

Israel's argument was that they should be treated with great regard since they had "10 parts in David", with the implication that Judah was the lesser since they had only 2 parts. And of course the 10 parts meant that the 10 tribes should have more sway as a political party than the 2 tribes. But Judah countered that it was natural that they should have been invited en masse to the ceremonies and have David's ear because they were, after all, David's flesh and blood family. Israel reminded Judah that they made known their wish to see David return as king BEFORE Judah did, so what has family got to do with anything? But the men of Judah wouldn't back down, got louder and more insulting in their arguing, and so the only possible result was trouble.



Let's move on to chapter 20.

### READ 2<sup>ND</sup> SAMUEL CHAPTER 20 all

This chapter is usually called Sheba's Revolt. But I contend that "revolt" or "rebellion" is much too strong of a term for what happened. As much as this Sheba wanted a Civil War it never actually materialized. There were certainly heightened tensions, a great deal of threats and the movements of militias and no doubt some blood shed, but it seems that the northern alliance wasn't all that eager to follow Sheba into another war (one that wasn't likely to succeed). This was more of a dramatic and loud dissent by the 10 northern tribes than a rebellion but it did serve to show just how fragile was the union of tribes that David was attempting to govern.

Verse 1 explains that "there" was a scoundrel name **Sheva** who started the trouble. "There" was referring to Gilgal, as there really shouldn't be a division at this point between chapters 19 and 20 as the former just flows into the latter. The term being translated into English as "scoundrel" is a familiar one: **ish Belial**. **Ish Belial** means man of worthlessness. However even that meaning misses the full impact; the accusation is usually reserved for those considered the worst of the worst, the lowest of the low.

**Sheva**, not surprisingly, was of the tribe of Benjamin. Remember **Shimei** (who had boldly cursed David some weeks earlier) was also a Benjamite. So we ought to get the picture by now that David wasn't very popular with the tribe of Benjamin and of course that all had to do with King Saul losing out to David. So **Sheva** sounded the shofar, meaning he called the northern tribes to war, and declared that "we have no share in David". Recall that only a couple of verses ago the northern tribes claimed 10 shares in David. But now we have a defiant reversal and **Sheva** declares that they have no share in David meaning he shall not be their king. Not surprisingly we're told that the men of Judah stuck with David.

We're also told that "all the men of Israel" left the meeting. That is they stormed off in a major huff, resentful and deeply offended by the words spoken by the leaders of Judah. In the Oriental world harsh words can start conflicts as easily as can violent acts.

Verse 3 has David arriving back at Yerushalayim and it seems that one of the first things he addressed was the matter of his 10 dishonored concubines. And we find David's attitude towards them similar to what he displayed towards his wife, Saul's daughter, Michal. Recall that David married Michal, and then Saul got paranoid and took Michal away and gave her to another man, and then David came back and was able to reclaim her. However once he had her back he put her away and likely never slept with her again because we are informed that she had no children until she died. And here we see David do essentially the same thing with these poor concubines. What was their crime? No doubt they were forced (to one degree or another) to have sex with Absalom. While it would go too far to call it rape, this cannot be something they consented to. But in that era these women were part of a harem: David's royal harem. And when a new king was enthroned, he inherited the harem of the former king and thus the conjugal rights. However by **Avishalom** taking each of these 10 concubines into a tent that was placed on the roof of the palace in the City of David, and more or less publically humiliating them sexually, this was not the normal act of a man inheriting a harem but of a son rebelliously trying to displace his father and demonstrating for all to see his declaration of power and authority.

Now there are a variety of opinions as to why David thought to leave these 10 concubines behind when he fled before Absalom arrived. In retrospect this is a rather foolish if not uncaring act. What did he THINK would happen to them? David's response to the sad result is that he put them away, and although he cared for their basic needs he had nothing further to do with them. They are compared to "living widows". That is, their husband is not dead but he may as well be. They were confined to the palace for the rest of their lives and denied sexual relations so that they died childless. While that seems sad and unfair to us in modern times, it was an immeasurable tragedy for Hebrew women in that age. Because it was the deepest held of convictions that the primary purpose of being a woman was to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant by being fruitful and multiplying. To bear no children was not merely sad, it was shameful and the greatest dishonor.