

David's Return to Jerusalem Part 1

by Chuck Smith

David's grief and guilt over Absalom's death lead him to change his behavior and seek forgiveness, but he struggles with forgiving those who have wronged him.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: 2 Samuel 19:1, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "David"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the return of David to Jerusalem after the death of his son Absalom. The people of Israel were divided and unsure of how to respond to David's mourning for his rebellious son. David's commander, Joab, confronts him and warns him of the consequences of his actions. Despite the turmoil, David takes his place as king and the people come before him. Pastor Chuck uses this story to illustrate the importance of repentance and the consequences of our actions.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit, like a dove Will descend upon your life and make you whole
Now it was told Joab, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom. And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all of the people, for the people heard say that day how that the king was grieved for his son. And those that had been out to battle came by stealth back into the city, as people who were ashamed steal away when they flee from battle.

In other words, those that had been victorious in battle, rather than having a return, a victory march, a gala celebration, they snuck back into the city like they had been defeated. Because of David's grieving as he did for his son Absalom, it caused him to be ashamed. So the king covered his face and the king cried with a loud voice, Oh my son Absalom, oh Absalom, my son, my son.

He was really carrying on. And Joab came into the house to the king and he said, You have shamed today the faces of all of your servants, which this day have saved your life, and the lives of your sons, and of your daughters, and of your wives, and the lives of your concubines, in that you love your enemy and hate your friends. For you have declared this day that you regard neither princes nor servants, for this day I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all of us had died, then it would have pleased you well.

David, what you're doing is absolutely wrong. You've got to face up to the fact that had Absalom prevailed today, you, all of your other children, all of your wives, and all of your concubines would have been slain. That was his intent and purpose.

Here you're wailing over the fact that this kid is dead. But David, he determined to hurt you, and all of your servants. And it appears, David, that you wished really for us to be defeated, and Absalom to be victorious, and then you would have been satisfied, you would have been pleased.

David was blaming himself for what Absalom was. When David had sinned against Bathsheba, when God said, your sin is forgiven, the Lord also said, but you're going to have to pay a price. The sword will not depart from your house.

The shameful thing you did in secret is going to be done openly by your own family. And David was feeling the remorse of his own guilt for his sin. And feeling the guilt for his sin, he really desired punishment.

It is an interesting thing that guilt does create within us a subconscious desire for punishment. I cannot feel freed from the sense of guilt until I feel that somehow I have paid the price. I have been punished.

When we were children, if you grew up in a good home, you had no problem with the guilt complex. I had no problem with the guilt complex growing up. My father took care of that.

And I had a lot of applied psychology in the right place that relieved me of my sense of guilt. The sense of guilt is a horrible thing. It can weigh you down.

It can actually make a neurotic out of you. And usually the subconscious desire for punishment is manifested in neurotic behavior. The neurotic behavior is actually the subconscious designed to bring punishment upon you.

David, though forgiven, was still feeling the sense of guilt. And as he saw what Absalom was doing, he realized that this is the pattern that I set before this boy. And he felt the sense of responsibility, and he felt that it was his guilt.

And it probably would have pleased David had Absalom killed him. And the sense of guilt can be so great that you can wish yourself dead. There have been times when I wish I were dead, when I was guilty and I hadn't faced the music yet.

The hardest thing in the world was to eat dinner when I was guilty. And I knew that right after dinner, my father and I were to have a meeting in the bedroom. And though I was usually a very hearty eater, under those circumstances, it was hard to swallow the food.

My head would be down. I knew that all of my brothers and my sister were looking at me. They knew I was guilty.

I knew if I looked up, my father would have a stern look in my direction. I really didn't feel like a member of the family. I was an outcast.

I was guilty, and everybody knew it. After dinner, my dad and I would go in the bedroom, and I'd get the, invariably the question would come, why did you do it, son? I never did have a good answer. And then, either an apricot switch or a belt.

Kids didn't have the protection in those days that they have today. Thus we behaved ourselves. My father would leave the room and close the door, and it'd be dark.

And I would lie there on the bed, wishing I were dead. Wishing I could just die. Because then when they came in the room and saw me lying there dead, they would really feel sorrow.

And the thought of all of them grieving over my casket caused me to feel sad. But pretty soon, all of the excitement of the games and all in the other room was more than I could stand, and I would get up and wash my face and go on out, and, hey, it's all over. I'm not guilty anymore.

I can join the family. I can join the fun. The guilt is gone.

I've been punished. When we get older, it becomes more complex. The sense of guilt is something that still weighs heavy on us.

And we desire that somehow we can atone, we can pay, we can be punished. And David was still feeling the sense of the guilt of the sin that he had done, and he saw it in Absalom, and he saw it manifested, and he felt responsible for Absalom's deeds. And thus his grief over Absalom's death.

In other words, it's my fault that this kid is the way he is. It's my fault that he rebelled. It's my fault that he has done these things.

Had I been the kind of a father that I should have been, it could have been a different story. And so David's great remorse and grief was really over his own failure. As much as his feeling sorry and his love for Absalom, he took the responsibility and the sense himself.

And as Joab said, it looks like you would have been pleased more if he would have killed you. If we would have all died and they brought back news, Joab and all your troops are dead and Absalom's on his way, then you probably would have been happier. And that's very possibly true.

Joab here was acting in David's best interest and in the best interest of the kingdom. There has been a general revolt against David. Absalom has led it.

Though the armies of those who had rebelled have been defeated, yet the spirit of rebellion still hangs. And if David doesn't change his behavior, these men who put their very lives in jeopardy to save David are not going to go out again. And David will perish and someone else will take the throne.

So Joab's strength and advice to David at this point is straight, but it is good. It is wise. So Joab said to him, now you get out of here and you go out and speak comfortable words to your servants.

Because I swear by the Lord, if you don't go out there, there will not tarry with you one man this night. And it's going to be worse for you than all of the evil that befell you from your youth until now. Man, if you don't go out there and change your behavior and speak comfortably, these guys feel ashamed, David.

You've made them feel bad. Now you go out there and you speak comfortably to them. Listen, they're going to desert you.

And man, the trouble you're going to face is nothing compared with all of the trouble you've had from your birth until now. You haven't seen anything, David, like what you're going to see if you don't change and behave yourself right now. So the king arose and he sat in the gate.

And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king is sitting in the gate, and all of the people came before the king, for Israel had fled every man to his tent. The enemy had fled, and so David's men all came before him. And all of the people were at strife.

There was still the division throughout Israel. The tribes of Israel saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies and delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines, and now he has fled out of the land for Absalom. In other words, is David able to protect us anymore? Though he has delivered us from the enemies and the Philistines, he fled from Absalom.

And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Why don't we speak a word of bringing the king back? And so there was this buzz. Israel said, Hey, we turned against David, but man, this is the guy that saved us from our enemies and from the Philistines.

We went to Absalom's cause. Absalom's dead. We better maybe get the king back.

We better bring David back. And the king sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priest, who he had left in Jerusalem. And he said, Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house? Seeing the speech of all Israel has come to the king, even to his house.

David hears it. There's all of this rumbling going in Israel. The people are saying, Boy, we better bring the king back.

But he didn't hear anything from Judah. Now, he wasn't of the tribe of Judah. Reigning, really, in Jerusalem, the area of the tribe of Judah.

And so he sends to the two priests and says, Hey, all over Israel, the buzz is, Hey, let's bring the king back. But you guys ought to really be taking the lead in this movement. Say to Amasa.

Now, Amasa was the general over Absalom's army. He was a cousin of David. He was not as capable a leader as was Joab and Abishai.

Though he had a superior army, Joab and Abishai put him down. They defeated him. But David said, Say to Amasa, Are you not of my bone and of my flesh? Aren't we cousins? God do so to me and more also, if you be not captain of the host before me continually in the place of Joab.

Now, he says, Give Amasa a message. I'll make him the general. I'll put him over the troops instead of Joab.

He was still angry that Joab had disobeyed his command and had killed his son Absalom. So he's offering, really, the leadership of his armies unto Amasa, who led the armies that revolted against David. And he bowed the heart of all of the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man.

So they sent this word unto the king, Return and all of your servants. So the message comes to David. Return.

Interesting sort of Jesus, who is the rightful king over the earth, who came as the Messiah, was despised and rejected, and has left the kingdom. But before he left, he said, You will not see the Son of Man again until ye say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. In other words, until you really pray for his return.

During the Great Tribulation, Israel's eyes will be open and they will pray for the return of the king. So the king returned and he came to the Jordan River and Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king to conduct the king over the Jordan River. Gilgal was the first place where the children of Israel camped when Joshua led them into the land.

After they crossed the Jordan River, they encamped in Gilgal. From there, they went against the city of Jericho. But that was the first place of encampment.

The men of Judah came down to Gilgal. While David came to the Jordan River, they are across the river now from each other. And Shimei, the son of Gerar, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hastened and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David.

Now, you remember this guy, Shimei, don't you? He was the guy when David was leaving, was throwing rocks, cursing David, and throwing dirt in the air. And David's one bodyguard, Abishai, said, let me go take off his head, David, please. Why should this dead dog curse the king? And David said, no, let him curse.

Maybe God has said to him, curse me, you know. So let it go. Now the king is coming back.

Shimei thought he would never see David again, and he was just getting in some last licks. But now David is coming back. And Shimei knows that his neck is still on the line, so he hurries down with the men of Judah to meet King David.

And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, so Shimei was probably a pretty powerful leader in Benjamin, the tribe of Benjamin. And Ziba, the servant of the house of Saul and his 15 sons and his 20 servants were with him. And they went over Jordan before the king.

That is, these guys just came swimming across the Jordan River to meet the king. And there was a ferry that was going back and forth to carry the king's household and all of his goods. And Shimei, the son of Gerah, fell down before the king as he was come over Jordan.

And he said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou 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 heart. Don't take it to heart, David, you know. Don't.

All that cursing and throwing of rocks and everything else. Those perverse things I did, you know, please don't take it to heart. Didn't mean it.

Don't impute iniquity to me. For your servant does know that I have sinned. Therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all of the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.

And Abishai, the guy who wanted to take off his head before, the son of Zeruiah, answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this because he cursed the Lord's anointed? And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? For do not I know that I am this day king over Israel? No, it's a day of rejoicing, not a day of revenge and bloodshed. Therefore, the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die, and the king swore unto him. So David swore to him, Hey, you know, as the Lord lives, you won't die.

I won't put you to death. Commendable on David's part. Unfortunately, David didn't really forgive Shimei.

Later on, when David was dying and he was talking to his son Solomon who was to succeed him on the throne, David said, I want you to remember what that guy Shimei did, how he cursed me and did those horrible things when I was fleeing from Jerusalem. Take care of him, son. You know what to do.

We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study through the book of 2 Samuel in our next lesson as we continue to follow David's return to Jerusalem. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us. But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one, you can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives and they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details.

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And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse study through the book of 2 Samuel. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today. And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith.

Looking forward to a glorious week as we wait to see what God has in store, as we seek His will, and as we open our hearts to Him. May God bless you and lead you and guide you according to His perfect plan as you walk with Him. In Jesus' name.

Every year, Pastor Chuck gives his prophecy update to prepare Christians to be ready to give an answer for anyone who wants to know what the Bible has to say about the future. So it is with great excitement that The Word for Today presents to you this year's Maranatha VI Conference entitled, The Forming Confederacy. Join Pastor Chuck Smith, Mark Hitchcock, Don Stewart, Doug Hamp, and Ariele Eldad, the former senior commander of the Israeli Defense Force, as they help us to comprehend and unravel scriptures pertaining to the imminent forming confederacy coming against the nation of Israel.

I encourage you, as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, to become informed about what the Bible says about the signs of the times and prophecy being fulfilled right before our very eyes. For more information on how you can order the Maranatha VI Prophecy Conference on DVD with a bonus MP3, call The Word for Today at 800-272-9673 or visit us online at thewordfortoday.org. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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