

## 13—Barzillai’s View of David: A King Worthy of Respect

### 2 Samuel 19



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“Now Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. And he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very rich man.”

2 Samuel 19:32 (NKJV)

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Have you ever found yourself going through a rough patch in life? Even young people face tough times. Some young kids must watch their parents struggle with marriage problems and even through the pain of divorce. Sometimes we see friends or relatives move away, pass away, or get pulled away into the world and our friendships are injured. Maybe our rough patches are just moments where we are struggling in school, in sports, or much worse, our spiritual lives!

Those moments can really cause us to spiral downwards. They can make us feel alone. We may become discouraged and depressed.

This is why encouragement is so important. We need people in our most discouraged moments who can uplift and sustain us through those hard times. Have you ever had a friend who said or did the right

thing at the right time to lift you out of that mire?

Proverbs 15:23 says, “A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!” Proverbs 25:11 also says, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver” (NKJV). Or, maybe this paraphrase makes a bit more sense, “The right word at the right time is like a custom-made piece of jewelry” (MSG).

As we study the life of King David we see he went through a series of discouraging events. Perhaps the low-point was when he literally was kicked out of his own hometown because his son, Absalom, had mounted up a strong enough army to send him away. Can you imagine how it must have felt to be forcibly moved from your own home because of your son’s threats? Even worse, David was the king being kicked out of the capital!

Thankfully, David had some people in his life who helped sustain him through that difficult period. One such person was Barzillai, the Gileadite. We first come across Barzillai, along with others, after David has left Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 17:27-29. Let’s see what we can learn from this Gileadite.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Do a quick review of the events the following passages. How do you think David is feeling after these realities?
  - David’s son Amnon rapes Tamar, his half-sister (2 Samuel 13:1-19).
  - David’s son, Absalom, avenges Tamar and has Amnon killed (2 Samuel 13:20-33).
  - Absalom is banished but gains followers (2 Samuel 13:34-15:6).
  - A civil war ensues as the followers of Absalom clash with the incumbent king, David (2 Samuel 15:7-13).

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- David is forced out of Jerusalem and crosses the brook Kidron (2 Samuel 15:13-16, 23).
  - He is pushed out of Israel all the way into Gilead, across the river Jordan (17:22,24,26).
2. What does Barzillai do, along with others, in 2 Samuel 17:27-29? Why does he do it? What great lessons can we learn from this example of compassion?

3. Now, notice how the tables turn upon Absalom after this moment in the following passages. Do you think Barzillai and his companions had a role to play in the renewed vigor of David's army?

- David organizes his soldiers (2 Samuel 18:1-2).
- They go out to war with Absalom's army and over 20,000 people die that day (18:5-8).
- Absalom's hair is caught in a tree and he is slayed and his conspiracy is conquered (18:9-17).
- After David mourns, he begins the journey back to his home that was taken from him (19:14-15).

4. After this victory, we are reacquainted with Barzillai in 2 Samuel 19:31-39. As you go verse by verse through this text, what words would you use to describe Barzillai? How did David feel about this aged servant?

5. Now, fast forward to the final days of David as king. As Solomon begins to take the throne, what advice does David give to Solomon in the following passage (1 Kings 2:1-2, 7)? Though this is years later, what is generated in the hearts of others when we give and do good to them (Luke 6:38)?

**Key Lessons:**

- When people are hurting, be one of their helpers!
- Remember those who help you in hard times, these are true friends (Proverbs 17:17).
- The love of Barzillai was remembered by David and he always wanted to return the favor. Likewise, the love of Jesus compels us to live for Him (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

**Additional Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_