

Study #18

2 Samuel 16:1-23

Text:

- v. 1 When David had gone a short distance beyond the summit, there was Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, waiting to meet him. He had a string of donkeys saddled and loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred cakes of raisins, a hundred cakes of figs and a skin of wine.
- v. 2 The king asked Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fruit are for the men to eat, and wine is to refresh those who become exhausted in the desert."
- v. 3 The king then asked, "Where is your master's grandson?" Ziba said to him, "He is staying in Jerusalem, because he thinks, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom.'"
- v. 4 Then the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." "I humbly bow," Ziba said. "May I find favor in your eyes, my lord the king."
- v. 5 As king David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul's family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out.
- v. 6 He pelted David and all the king's officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David's right and left.
- v. 7 As he cursed, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you scoundrel!"
- v. 8 The Lord has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. The Lord has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood!"
- v. 9 Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his head."
- v. 10 But the king said, "What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord said to him, 'Curse David,' who can ask, 'Why do you do this?'"
- v. 11 David then said to Abishai and all his officials, "My son, who is of my own flesh, is trying to take my life. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone, let him curse, for the Lord has told him to.
- v. 12 It may be that the Lord will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today."

- v. 13 So David and his men continued along the road while Shimei was going along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went and throwing stones at him and showering him with dirt.
- v. 14 The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.
- v. 15 Meanwhile, Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him.
- v. 16 Then Hushai the Arkite, David's friend, went to Absalom and said to him, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"
- v. 17 Absalom asked Hushai, "Is this love you show your friend? Why didn't you go with your friend?"
- v. 18 Hushai said to Absalom, "No, the one chosen by the Lord, by these people, and by all the men of Israel - - his I will be, and I will remain with him.
- v. 19 Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not sever the son? Just as I served the father, so I will serve you."
- v. 20 Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give us your advice. What should we do?"
- v. 21 Ahithophel answered, "Lie with your father's concubines whom he left to take care of the palace. Then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench in your father's nostrils, and the hands of everyone with you will be strengthened."
- v. 22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he lay with his father's concubines in the sight of all of Israel.
- v. 23 Now in those days advice Ahithophel gave was like that of one who inquires of God. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel's advice.

Ann Landers

Dear Ann Landers: Please print something that a lot of teens will understand. It's a message to my mother. Yes, Mom, I know my 'little disappointments' are no big deal. I'm just a kid. What problems could I possibly have? When I'm an adult I'll find out what real trouble is. This is what you keep telling me. But I really do have problems - - serious ones that bug me a lot. Why don't you understand? They may be petty to you but they are very important to me. You say you had a miserable childhood and that by comparison mine is easy. Yours was harder physically maybe, but not emotionally. You say I am ungrateful, that I take everything for granted and don't appreciate anything. You keep telling me how much you sacrificed for me. I'm sure you don't realize how hard I try to please you. When you come home from work tired you feel you have a right to be demanding and nasty-tempered. You tell me to shut up when I start to talk about my day. When you are in a rotten mood you expect me to cater to you. I feel like crying

when you don't notice any of the things I do to please you. Instead you beef about the work that isn't done and complain because I didn't set the table right or the vegetables are a little overcooked. You tell me these are supposed to be the best years of my life. Don't you remember that the change from adolescence to adulthood can be very rough? It's hard for me to believe you were young once. Give me a break, Mom, I want to get along with you. Please meet me halfway. - - I AM YOUR DAUGHTER.

DEAR DAUGHTER: I wonder how many teenagers you spoke for today. On behalf of all of them I want to thank you for a very good letter.

Introduction:

In our first episode of David Part III we witnessed the bringing of Absalom back from exile to the city of Jerusalem, although he was not allowed to see the king's face for two years. And then after they did see each other, Absalom spent four years preparing for his own rival kingdom. He sought permission to go to Hebron, and there the conspiracy took place. Absalom is taking over and David is fleeing the city of Jerusalem.

(David's family falls apart | after 3 yrs. | 2 yrs. in Jerusalem | 4 yrs.)

Absalom is coming up from the southwest to Jerusalem and David is fleeing northwest from Jerusalem.

What a sad and tearful time in the life of David.

Psalms 38

"O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath; and chasten me not in thy
burning anger.

For thine arrows have sunk deep into me, and thy hand has pressed
down on me.

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine indignation; there
is no health in my bones because of my sin.

For mine iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they
weigh too much for me.

My wounds grow foul and fester because of my folly.

I am bent over and greatly bowed down; I go mourning all day long.

For my loins are filled with burning; and there is no soundness in my
flesh.

I am benumbed and badly crushed; I groan because of the agitation of
my heart.

Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my sighing is not hidden from thee.
My heart throbs, my strength fails me; and the light of my eyes, even that has gone from me.
My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; and my kinsmen stand afar off.
Those who seek my life lay snares for me; and those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction, and they devise treachery all day long.
But I, like a deaf man, do not hear; and I am like a dumb man who does not open his mouth.
Yes, I am like a man who does not hear, and in whose mouth are no arguments.
For I hope in thee, O Lord, thou wilt answer, O Lord my God.
For I said, May they not rejoice over me; who when my foot slips, would magnify themselves against me.
For I am ready to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me.
For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.
But my enemies are vigorous and strong, and many are those who hate me wrongfully.
And those who repay evil for good, they oppose me because I follow what is good.
Do not forsake me, O Lord; O my God, do not be far from me.
Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.”

Psalm 55

“Give ear to my prayer, O God; and do not hide thyself from my supplication.
Give heed to me, and answer me; I am restless in my complaint, and am surely distracted;
Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the pressure of the wicked; for they bring down trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me.
My heart is in anguish within me; and the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me.
And I said, ‘Oh that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.
Behold, I would wander far away; I would lodge in the wilderness.
I would hasten to my place of refuge from the stormy wind and tempest.
For it is you, a man my equal, my companion, and my familiar friend.

We who had sweet fellowship together; walked in the house of God in the throng.
As for me, I shall call upon God; and the Lord will save me.
Evening, and morning, and at noon, I will complain and murmur; and he will hear my voice.
He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me; for they are many who strive with me.
God will hear, and answer them, even the one who sits enthroned from of old, with whom there is no change, and who do not fear God.
Cast your burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never allow the righteous to be shaken.
But thou, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.”

Heslop in his Sermon Seeds from the Psalm says, “Trouble, false accusation and persecution have been the lot of the faithful followers of Christ throughout all the ages. Every righteous Able has had his unrighteous Cain to club him. Every loving Isaac has been beset by sneering Ishmael’s. Every David has been opposed by his jealous Saul’s and dirty Doeg’s. Every sanctified man on earth has been brought face to face with unexplainable sorrow and inexplicable grief. Even a Job, a Daniel and a Joseph had slanderous foes with whom to contend and fight. The most heartbreaking grief endured by David was the sinister stab in the back by his own son Absalom.”

The saints of all ages have been tried and tested. WE are being fitted for a crown and a kingdom. Today the Christian lives in the midst of crosses and losses. Soon the crosses will be exchanged for a crown. As fish swim in the sea without harm, and as the life of a sailor is subject to storms, so present passage from Egypt to Bethlehem may be stormy and dangerous, but God plans to get us home without harm. We are now in enemy surroundings. The world in which we live is a dull world. The plow, the furrow, the harrow, the sickle, and the flail, and the mill precede the loaf. To be gold we must pass through fire. The chaff must be separated from the wheat. Here is the answer to many of our whys.

There may come times of testing and trial in the life of a believer, when the heart is overwhelmed with griefs and burdens too heavy to bear. And it is not always caused by personal and willful sin, unbelief or trifling. When chastisement is needed, all the true children of God humbly, uncomplainingly submit. A holy heart commends and approves all the ways of God, but even when the heart can find no reason or cause, as in the case of Job, the will nevertheless surrenders, submits and refuses to charge God foolishly. The

child of God knows that his Father is too wise too err and too good to be unkind. Those whose hearts have been once overwhelmed will understand.

Though waves and billows o'er me pass
In 'whelming floods of ill,
Within the haven of God's love,
My soul is anchored still.

For through the stress and strain of life,
My thread of faith may break.
The cable of his faithfulness
No storm can ever shake.

F. B. Meyer in his book Peace, Perfect Peace says, "It is comforting to know that others have traversed the same dark valley, and that the great multitudes which stand before the Lamb wearing palms of victory came out of great tribulation. Where they were, we are; and by God's grace, where they are we shall be."

Ron Lee Davis in his book A Forgiving God in an Unforgiving World says, "During the height of the Vietnam War there was a record that was number one on all the charts for some twelve weeks entitled 'An Open Letter to My Teenage Son.' This record sold millions of copies which should give you some sense of how popular this message was during those divisive times. With patriotic music and the roll of snare drums in the background, the father reads a letter he has written to his son. In the letter he tells his son how lovingly he remembers the years when he was growing up, and how much he loves him now. Just before the father reads the final line of this moving, stirring, loving letter, the music suddenly stops. And in the silence that follows he says, 'But son, if you burn your draft card, I no longer have a son.' That's conditional love. That's love that fails. God forgives; God loves. His love never fails."

David is experiencing all the heartache and the hurt in his life in this episode today simply because he never really did forgive Absalom and build back the relationship like it should have been.

Joyce Landorf in her book Irregular People says, "Perhaps the most hurtful breach in the communication department is that irregular people simply cannot verbally express love and approval. The same 23-year-old girl I wrote of earlier said near the end of her letter that she knew she was loved by teachers, friends, and especially by a couple in her church who had been virtually a family to her. Yet she wrote, 'My heart cries out for the approval of my father. I told my adopted dad, 'I know you love me, and I love you too.

But I need to hear my natural dad say he loves me.” My heart breaks for all of us who would dearly love to have acceptance and approval from irregular parents, brothers, sisters-in-law, and so on, but at the same time I feel sad for the irregular people themselves. How awful to be so crippled in our spirits that we cannot express love or give acceptance freely.”

We could well call this 16th chapter:

“CHEATED, CURSED, & CHASTENED”

- v. 1 When David had gone a short distance beyond the summit, there was Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, waiting to meet him. He had a string of donkeys saddled and loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred cakes of raisins, a hundred cakes of figs and a skin of wine.
- A. About 60 years
- B. Been king $30 - 7\frac{1}{2} - 22\frac{1}{2}$
- C. Lost two children
- D. Losing a kingdom to Absalom
- E. How can he do this to me! I've given him everything a kid could ever want.

2 Samuel 15:30

“And David went up to the ascent of the Mount of Olives and wept as he went. And his head was covered, and he walked barefoot. Then all the people who were with him each covered his head and went up weeping as they went.”

David and his part reached the summit of the Mount of Olives and had just gone a short distance beyond the summit when there was Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth waiting to meet him.

(David your son is going to be a king rejected too! | The opera ain't over till the fat lady sings | You don't know it but you'll be back and so will Jesus.)

When Saul and Jonathan died on Mount Gilboa in the battle with the Philistines, Mephibosheth was five years old and the nurse grabbed him up and began to run evidently tripped and fell and dropped Mephibosheth. She probably fell on him and he experienced a double ankle fracture. As a result he has been crippled in both feet all of his life.

When David found him, he gave him all of the real estate from Saul's estate, plus he gave him Ziba and his whole family of servants to care for all of Mephibosheth's land holdings.

Mephibosheth moved to Jerusalem and was actually adopted into David's family because he took all of his meals with David's sons and ate at the king's table.

Ziba has prepared a pretty impressive gift for David and his followers. It is described in the rest of verse 1.

(Everything there except a partridge in a pear tree!)

1. String of donkeys
 2. 200 loaves of bread
 3. 100 cakes of raisins
 4. 100 cakes of figs
 5. a skin of wine
- v. 2 The king asked Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fruit are for the men to eat, and the wine is to refresh those who become exhausted in the desert."

Ziba had brought donkeys for David and his household to ride upon. How different this is from the horses and chariot and the fifty men running ahead of Absalom as he moves about.

- v. 3 The king then asked, "Where is your master's grandson?" Ziba said to him, "He is staying in Jerusalem, because he thinks, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom.'"

If, in fact, this were true and Ziba was not actually trying to cheat David out of some favors, you could hardly believe the selfishness of the human heart because David had given and done so much for Mephibosheth.

This quoting of Mephibosheth as thinking, "Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom" seems so out of character for him on this occasion.

Ziba probably felt that this was the time to make his move to get a big chunk of property since it was unsure who would take the throne: Absalom, David, or maybe even the house of Saul again.

Anyway, he lies to David and David just takes him at his word and believes him. Well, why not. His own son had betrayed him. It would come as no surprise to have another friend betray him too.

("They cheer like mad until you fall and that's how long you last!" | Ziba took advantage of Mephibosheth's handicap and took all the donkeys..)

Winter, in commenting on this motive of Ziba's coming, says, "Why did Ziba come to David? Ziba came to bring provisions for David and his men. He also gave a report on Mephibosheth. Ziba may have misrepresented Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth later came before David in the same submissive manner he manifested when David first befriended him in 2 Samuel 19:24. On the other hand, Mephibosheth may have felt that he could step into the breach between David and Absalom and usurp the throne in the name of his father Saul, Israel's first king."

v. 4 Then the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." "I humbly bow," Ziba said. "May I find favor in your eyes, my lord the king."

Well, Ziba got all that he came after because the king gave all of the estate of Saul now into the hands of Ziba.

You can sure smell a lot of pride in the words, "I humbly bow," which Ziba spoke to David in response to his allocation of the land which belonged to Mephibosheth.

(Cheated by one, cursed by another.)

v. 5 As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul's family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out.

David and his group have continued to head northeast from Jerusalem. Shortly after meeting Ziba, a little ways beyond the summit on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, he continues, heading northeast. As he approached Bahurim, there was a man from the same clan as Saul's family.

His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out.

Whereas David was cheated by Ziba, he was cursed by Shimei.

Poor David! He's at the lowest point of his whole life. The whole world is crushing in on him, and here comes Shimei. You'll never forget Shimei after we have completed this study. He is a snake and a real fink.

Alexander Whyte says, "Shimei was a reptile of the royal house of Saul. When Shimei saw David escaping for his life out of Jerusalem, Satan entered into Shimei, and he came forth and cursed David as he passed by."

(What do you get for 30 yrs or successful sacrificial leadership! Someone to swear at you. Thanks a lot!!)

Matthew 5:11,12

"Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely on account of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

- v. 6 He pelted David and all the king's officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David's right and left.
- v. 7 As he cursed, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you scoundrel!"
- v. 8 The Lord has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. The Lord has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood!"

Verses 7 & 8 in the living Bible give us even a more graphic picture of Shimei's speech:

- v. 7 "Get out of here, you murderer! you scoundrel!" he shouted at David.
- v. 8 "The Lord is paying you back for murdering King Saul and his family. You stole his throne and now the Lord has given it to your son Absalom. At last you will taste some of your own medicine, you murderer!"

Shimei tell three lies, one right after another:

1. The Lord has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul.
2. The Lord has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom.

3. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood.

Can't you just feel the tiger in David when he hears these lies? This is your basic reprobate who makes it his business of kicking you while you are down.

When you're in the pits, along will come a Shimei and hit you below the belt.

(Guy sitting under a bird in a tree – "Go ahead everybody else does.")

Winter raises the question, "What caused Shimei's hatred for David? Shimei blamed David for the demise of the house of Saul. Such a misconstruing of the facts demonstrates why David was so careful to prevent his being linked directly in any way to the death of Saul. Even though David had slain the Amalekite who brought him word of Saul's death and killed the two assassins of Ishbosheth, some of the people still thought that David was responsible for the fall of the house of Saul. Shimei viewed David as reigning where a son of Saul ought to be reigning. Shimei believed that God had brought a just penalty on David and delivered the kingdom into the hands of Absalom his son as a punishment for David's having taken over the throne from Saul.

Theodore Epp points out, "One of David's most humiliating experiences during this retreat from Jerusalem was the verbal abuse heaped upon him by Shimei, a Benjamite and a relative of Saul. What do we do when men falsely accuse us? Our natural impulse is to justify ourselves. It is only human to want to set things right. David, however, recognizing that God was permitting this, refused to take any action against Shimei. He had learned the truth that he so well expressed in Psalms 37:5.

'Commit thy way unto the Lord. Trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass.'

"This is exactly what David did in this instance. David also knew that God would bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon day. We too may have to face slander and lying and cursing at times. But let God vindicate us. David accepted this situation, knowing it was not the punishment of the judge but the chastisement of his heavenly Father. He rested his case with the Lord. It was during this time he wrote Psalms 3 and 62."

David has really mellowed since way back in his earlier career. He was denied hospitality rights by Nabal and he commands 400 of his men to put their swords and is on his way to wipe out Nabal and his whole household.

Tim LaHaye in his book Your Temperament: Discover Its Potential says, “Dr. Henry Brandt, a Christian psychologist has probably helped more people than any other person in that profession. He certainly had a profound influence on this writer’s life, both personally and in my role as a family counselor. He made a profound statement that I have never forgotten in relation to maturity. He defines a mature person in relation to his attitude toward his own strengths and weaknesses. A mature person is one who is sufficiently objective about himself to know both his strengths and his weaknesses and has created a planned program for overcoming his weaknesses.”

David certainly demonstrates that he had matured greatly in this area of his life.

Psalms 37:8

“Cease from anger and forsake wrath.”

Proverbs 25:28

“He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.”

Proverbs 16:32

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”

Edwin Young points out, “David’s son Absalom had led a revolution. We find leaving Jerusalem, walking up the Mount of Olives. He is barefooted with his head covered. As he weeps and groans, his mighty men, the royal remnant, surround him. Absalom has won the hearts of the people, and David believes that Absalom soon will try to kill him. At that low moment, this defeated man encounters Shimei. David was guilty of many sins, but he was not guilty of Shimei’s charges. He had tried to protect the household of Saul. Also, Absalom took the kingdom. The Lord did not give it to him. Talk about kicking somebody when they are down. When there seems to be no hope for David, Shimei came, throwing stones and cursing. He abused David. Just look at the situation. When I seem to be experiencing that darkest days of my life and the whole world is turning on me, Shimei begins to throw rocks at me and abuse me. Do you identify with that? If you do not know a Shimei, stick around, you’ll meet several. When everything is glorious and beautiful, we don’t hear Shimei. When we are down, Shimei is waiting. There is always an Abishai who advises, the way you deal with a Shimei is to cut off

his head. Use your ultimate force. Knock him down, and beat him up, throw him out, fire him. Many people handle problems in that way.”

There was a lady who became ill and checked into a hospital. The doctor made his diagnosis. “You definitely have rabies. I would advise you to make out a will as soon as possible.” He left the patient for a few hours. When he returned, she had a paper filled with names. The doctor said, “You must have a lot of people you want to remember in your will.” “No, I haven’t gotten around to my will yet,” she said. “I’m first making a list of all the people I’m going to bite!”

John Davis points out, “As David continued eastward to Bahurim, he was met by Shimei, a member of Saul’s household. He evidently stood on the hill that over looked the road followed by David and his company, and cast stones at the king and his servants. He cursed David, charging him that he was a bloody man and belial. It could well be that Shimei was accusing David of the murders of Abner, Ishbosheth, and Uriah. The patience and restraint that David showed on this occasion were most amazing indeed. One should recall the very opposite attitude in David’s response to the slanderous words of Nabal in 1 Samuel 25. On that occasion he was prepared to take the life of that man without hesitation. It will be remembered that through the wisdom of Abigail he was spared the embarrassment of meaningless retaliation. That lesson has been well learned, and the patience exhibited on this occasion indicated that David had committed the whole affair into the hands of his God. It is also possible that David regarded the charges of Shimei as justified to the extent that he had committed murder with regard to Uriah.”

Whyte points out, “But for many years now, and more and more of late years, my Bible opens of itself to me at the place where Shimei cast stones and dirt at David till David says, ‘So let him curse because the Lord has said to him, “Curse David.”’ Only may I endure my schoolmaster to the bitter end better than even David did. Let me take insults and injuries and slights and slings from men and God’s hand itself as David that day took Shimei’s curses. Nay, things that would seem to you to have nothing in the world to do either with my past sins or with my present sinfulness, let me have David’s holy instinct. Let me lay down David’s holy rule, to look at everything of that kind that comes to me as so many divine calls and divinely opened doors to a deeper humility. Graces also grow by what they feed on, and humility grows by deliberately dieting itself on such humiliations as these, both human and diving.”

Psalm 61:2-4

“From the end of the earth I call thee when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for thou hast been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy. Let me dwell in thy tent forever, let me take refuge in the shelter of thy wings.”

- v. 9 Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his head.”

(Tough to do what he's doing without a head!)

Abishai, Asahel, and Joab were all sons of Zeruiah, David's sister. Asahel died in a conflict with Abner during the civil war before David became king over the whole land.

Abishai volunteered to go with David down into the camp of Israel and begged David to stab Saul just one time with his spear, because that was all it would take. David, on that occasion, rebuked Abishai and had them take the spear and water jug and leave Saul unharmed.

Here Abishai is wanting to take care of David's problem in a similar way.

“Why should this dead dog curse my lord the King? Let me just go over and remove his head from his body.”

(Abishai is the Clint Eastwood of the O.T.!!)

One is reminded of Clint Eastwood as he stands with his 357 magnum pointed at you, saying, “Make a move and you'll make my day!”

Here Abishai gives rather direct counsel. “Just cut off his head!” You always have an Abishai around to say, “Hey! You don't have to take that! Let me go over there and cut him off. I'm good at this. Why, you have your rights. Stand up for yourself! Don't be a doormat. Let's cut off his head.”

(I can take care of this quick! Just one whack!!)

Shimei is a real fink. He's way out of line, and David is innocent, at least of what Shimei accuses him. So David had a choice. He can become offended or not.

Psalm 119:165

“Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.”

Winter points out, “Abishai called Shimei a dead dog. He thought it terrible that he was cursing his king. He proposed to go over and behead the man. Such a proposal was typical of Abishai’s spirit. It was Abishai who had suggested killing Saul as he lay sleeping as he and David slipped into his camp. Abishai had also been involved in killing Abner at Hebron.”

v. 10 But the king said, “What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who can ask, ‘Why do you do this?’”

What a great verse! “But the king said, ‘What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruiah?’”

He, of course, is putting Joab here together with Abishai, and sharing with them that their policy has always been instant retaliation. David has never taken vengeance into his own hands.

“If he is cursing, because the Lord said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who can ask, ‘Why do you do this?’”

You never ask the Lord why He does something. You can only ask the question, “What can I learn from this experience that He has permitted to come into my life?”

(Change your why’s into what’s and you have submitted yourself to the divine curriculum.)

These sons of Zeruiah always have a chip on their shoulders, and they’re always out for revenge. They all had a very short fuse, too. And David said, “What have I to do with you” a dozen times.

F. B. Meyer in his book Peace, Perfect Peace says, “But God always keeps the discipline of sorrow in his own hands. Our Lord said, ‘My Father is the husbandman. His hand holds the pruning knife. His eye watches the crucible. His gentle touch is on the pulse while the operation is in progress. He will not allow even the devil to have his own way with us, as in the case of Job, so always. The moments are carefully allotted; the severity of the test is exactly determined by the reserves of grace and strength which are lying unrecognized within but will be sought for and used beneath the sever

pressure of pain. He holds the winds in His fist and the waters in the hollow of his hand. He dare not risk the loss of that which has cost him the blood of his son. God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tried above that you are able.”

- v. 11 David then said to Abishai and all his officials, “My son, who is of my own flesh, is trying to take my life. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone; let him curse, for the Lord has told him to.

David now reveals the real wound in his heart. “My son, who is of my own flesh, is trying to take my life.” That is far more severe than a Benjamite who is from the house of Saul coming to curse me. And David says, “Leave him alone; for the Lord has told him to.”

David recognizes the chastening hand of God in this which has taken place. And he is going to learn patience and self-control when I comes to being attacked by words from Shimei.

“FROM HIS HAND”

I will not take that bitter thrust,
Which rent my heart today
As coming from an earthly soul - -
Though it was meant that way
But I will look beyond the tool,
Because my life is planned;
I take the cup My Father gives –
I take it from His hand.

Now those who watch may wonder why
These things do not disturb.
I look right past the instrument,
And see my Lord superb.
The trials which would lay me low,
Must pass through His command;
He holds the outstretched cup to me,
I take it from His hand.
-- Mrs. Ray Merrill

“But my God shall supply all your need
according to his riches in glory by
Christ Jesus.”
Phil. 4:19

v. 12 It may be that the Lord will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today.”

This is really unbelievable. David’s reaction and statement in verses 10-12. “The Lord is in it. The Lord is all and in all.”

David never got offended. He never took it personally. This really speaks to us. We’ve got such thin skins. We are so sensitive and so delicate. At the slightest little pinprick, it will put us in the hospital, just about.

We need a soft heart and thick skin. That is the answer - - really thick, like a rhinoceros, so we can overlook all the little silly comments that the Shimeis of the world are going to make.

Also, David received this cursing of his enemies as part of the discipline of God. He had no desire to avenge himself. All the curses and abuse that could ever come to him were simply the ministry of God to help him toward maturity and Christ-likeness.

David recognizes that God was permitting this, and he refused to take any action against Shimei. He believed what he wrote:

“Commit thy way unto the Lord. Trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.”

Let God be the one who vindicates you.

Romans 12:19

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God. For it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine. I will repay, says the Lord.’”

1 Thess. 5:15

“See that no one repays another with evil for evil. But always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.”

Winter points out, “The Lord will look on my affliction.’ This was David’s belief. He trusted that it would be so, that the Lord would see what was happening to him, and would requite his good for the cursing which he was receiving at the hands of some of his people. It is enough for the Christian to trust God to heal his hurts.”

Paul Jorden points out, “What an outstanding statement of forgiveness. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught that Christian character does not permit retaliation. He said that if we are struck on the right cheek, we are to turn the other also. If we are asked to go one mile, we are to go two. Christ was saying that God is in control of the Christian’s life, and that vengeance is in the hand of God. During this very emotional climb on the Mount of Olives, a lesser man than David could well have taken delight in seeing Shimei’s head separated from his shoulder’s”

(Why not Absalom?)

The big question that comes before us at this time, as we see David handle this thing with such finesse, is why could he not do the same for Absalom his son, and ultimately have avoided probably all that is taking place right now in his life.

Ackroyd says, “David’s response is in line with what we have seen in chap. 15. If the Lord has told him to curse David, this emphasizes David’s acceptance of the possibility of judgment. Shimei’s cursing is placed alongside Absalom’s rebel activity. Then two interpretations of God’s judgment are thus drawn together.”

Psalm 61:2-4

“From the end of the earth I call to thee when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for thou hast been a refuge for me, a tower of thy strength against the enemy. Let me dwell in thy tent forever. Let me take refuge in the shelter of thy wings.”

- v. 13 So David and his men continued along the road while Shimei was going along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went and throwing stones at him and showering him with dirt.

Ackroyd points out, “Again in this verse a space in the Hebrew manuscripts may be seen as a point at which Psalm 3 could be read. It’s title runs ‘When he fled from Absalom his son.’ A midrash (Jewish commentary) on verse 3 of the psalm has ‘How can there be salvation for a man who had taken the lamb captive and slew the shepherd, and who caused Israel to fall by the sword,’ thus underlining the way the psalmist rests all his confidence in God alone.”

- v. 14 The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

Putting up with Shimei and all of the stress of physical travel and the emotional wells being broken up with tears flowing freely, caused them to arrive at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

(Strengthened himself in the Lord his God... Ashes of Ziklag.)

I am sure the way this was done was to use the gifts that had been given by Ziba to meet their needs.

Psalm 94:19

“When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, thy consolation delight my soul.”

Psalm 107:28-30

“Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to be still so that the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad because they were quiet. So he guided them to their desired haven.”

Psalm 118:18

“The Lord has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death.”

The final scene of our chapter now that David has arrived at his destination switches back to the capital city of Jerusalem where Absalom and his men have arrived. We have seen David:

CHEATED by Ziba

CURSED by Shimei

CHASTENED by the hand of Absalom

In fulfillment of the words of Nathan as he spoke the message of the Lord in 2 Samuel 12:11,12

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household. I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he shall lie with your wives in broad daylight. Indeed, you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel and under the sun.’”

- v. 15 Meanwhile, Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him.

As Absalom and his men make their way northeast to Jerusalem from Hebron, Ahithophel is also with them.

- v. 16 Then Hushai the Arkite, David's friend, went to Absalom and said to him, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

It was Hushai who in the last study volunteered to stay and to be a liaison between David and the palace. It is David's desire that Hushai frustrate or thwart the counsel of Ahithophel.

Hushai, who in reality is there in Jerusalem to keep David informed of what was going on, professes his allegiance to Absalom and immediately got on the new king's good side.

- v. 17 Absalom asked Hushai, "Is this the love you show your friend? Why didn't you go with you friend?"

Absalom has two questions for Hushai because he knows that he is a close friend of David's:

"Is this the love you show your friend?"

"Why didn't you go with your friend?"

(Ask those of yourself Absalom!)

You will notice that Absalom does not say, "Is this the love you show for my father, or why didn't you go with my father?" He has no love or feeling of compassion or closeness with his dad at all. He is not my father or my friend; it's your friend.

- v. 18 Hushai said to Absalom, "No, the one chosen by the Lord, by these people and by all the men of Israel - - his I will be, and I will remain with him.

- v. 19 Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not serve the son? Just as I served your father, so I will serve you."

After this great declaration of loyalty, how could Absalom do otherwise than to receive Hushai into his confidence and court with great enthusiasm.

Hushai is a great man with words. “Whom should I serve?” Question. “Should I serve the son?” Question. “Just as I served your father, so I will serve you.”

v. 20 Absalom said to Ahithophel, “Give us your advice. What should we do?”

Absalom got into the palace and then turned to Ahithophel and said, “What next?” This is why, I think, Ahithophel had a lot to do with Absalom’s rebellion. I think he goaded and inspired and helped Absalom behind David’s back because of his grudge against David about Bathsheba.

v. 21 Ahithophel answered, “Lie with your father’s concubines whom he left to take care of the palace. Then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench in your father’s nostrils, and the hands of everyone with you will be strengthened.”

v. 22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he lay with his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel.

Ahithophel sends Absalom up on the roof where David and Bathsheba started, and tells him to go in to his father’s concubines. This will show all Israel that Absalom has taken over, and also it fulfills the curse that Nathan pronounced on David for his sin with Bathsheba back in 2 Samuel 12. Ahithophel was a powerful enemy. Both David and Absalom thought he got his words from the Lord. Not so! He was as crafty as many politicians and even religious leaders today.

Absalom wants to rub salt into the wound. The people are leaving David and following Absalom. The kingdom is crumbling for David. He asks Ahithophel what to do next, and the rest of the chapter is an ugly picture. They put the tent on the roof so that David will have a lasting reminder of what he did to Ahithophel’s granddaughter, and how deeply we hate him.

Winter points out, “Absalom’s people followed Ahithophel as if he were God’s true spokesman. His counsel was good over all, but it was not the counsel of God.”

Up on the roof was the place where David’s original sin took place, and this is where Ahithophel and Absalom choose to place the tent in the sight of all Israel.

Hercus expresses it graphically when he says, “A tent was spread on the roof of the palace, the very spot where David had admitted to his heart that fatal

temptation that had such terrible issues, and in the sight of all Israel he assumed possession of the royal concubines, and thus consummated the irremediable rupture between himself and his father.”

Ackroyd points out, “To take the harem of the deposed ruler is to be understood as indicating the full claim to the rights of the throne. Absalom is thus declaring an absolute breach with David and the dye is cast for the overthrow of either David or Absalom. The significance of David’s leaving the ten concubines in Jerusalem now becomes clear in making the real judgment on David.

2 Samuel 20:3

“Then David came to his house at Jerusalem, and the king took the ten woman, the concubines whom he had left to keep the house, and placed them under guard and provided them with sustenance, but did not go in to them, so they were shut up until the day of their death, living as widows.”

Deut. 22:30

“A man shall not take his father’s wife, so that he shall not uncover his father’s skirt.”

- v. 23 Now in those days the advice Ahithophel gave was like that of one who inquires of God. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel’s advice.

The chapter ends with a word about Ahithophel and how the advice which he gave as a counselor was received by both David and Absalom. It was like that of one who inquires of God.

We have seen David CHEATED, CURSED, and CHASTENED in this particular passage of Scripture. How his heart must break, and how he must hurt over this situation.

Conclusion:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: Even your close friends can become selfish in a time of crisis.

Lesson #2: David does not try to defend himself against Shimei.

Lesson #3: When we recognize our trial comes from the hand of the Lord, we have no right to ask, "Why do you do this?"

Lesson #4: David does not retaliate or seek revenge in this situation.

Lesson #5: David has matured greatly in the areas of patience and self-control.

Lesson #6: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Lesson #7: God's chastening hand falls upon David in judgment by Absalom's action.

Psalm 119:67,68

"Before I was afflicted, I went astray. But now I keep thy word. Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes."

Psalm 119:71

"It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn thy statutes."

Psalm 147:3

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

F. B. Meyer in his book Peace, Perfect Peace says, "What is character without sympathy, submission, patience, trust, and hope that grips the unseen as an anchor. But these graces are only possible through sorrow. Sorrow is a garden, the trees of which are laden with the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Do not leave it without bringing them with you. Sorrow is a mine, the walls of which glisten with precious stones. Be sure and do not retrace your steps into daylight without some specimens. Sorrow is a school. You are sent to sit on its hard benches and learn its black lettered pages lessons which will make you wise forever. Do not trifle away your chance of graduating there."

Ron Davis in his book A Forgiving God in an Unforgiving World says, "God has established his universe with both a material order and a moral order. An example of the workings of the material order is the law of gravity. We may not like the law of gravity. We may disagree with it. We may choose not to believe in it. But our belief or lack of belief in it does not alter the fact that gravity operates in the material universe, part of the impersonal, natural

order established in the beginning by God. If a man exercises his God-given free will and throws himself from the top of a tall building, we can be sure that he incur some exceedingly unpleasant consequences upon his arrival on the pavement below. Was God there pushing him off the building?

Ridiculous. Is God angrily pulling him down to the pavement so as to hurt him and exact vengeance? Certainly not. This man exercised his own free will. He violated the natural law of the universe, and he incurred the reasonable, predictable cause and effect consequences. The moral order functions in much the same way. When we violate moral laws, we risk the reasonable, predictable, cause-and-effect consequences associated with that violation. But God is not directing his personal anger toward us at such moments.”

In the book about Corrie ten Boom Her Life and Her Faith by C. C. Carlson we read, “When deprived of everything except life itself, some people go mad or become filled with hatred. Others find meaning out of suffering. Viktor Frankl, author-psychiatrist, who survived three years in the infamous Auschwitz concentration camp, wrote, ‘In the concentration camp every circumstance conspires to make the prisoner lose his hold. All the familiar goals in life are snatched away. What alone remains is the last of human freedoms, the ability to choose one’s attitude in a given set of circumstances. In solitary confinement Corrie ten Boom thought of the poetic triplet that she later repeated hundreds of times throughout the world:

‘Look around and be distressed,
Look inside and be depressed,
Look at Jesus and be at rest.’”

Courage is born in adversity. But Corrie said she was not brave; that she often pull her dirty blanket over herself and prayed, “Lord, I am weak and cowardly, and of little faith. Hold me close. Thou art the conqueror, give me courage.” From that dependence, that surrender to her Lord, Corrie accomplished feats that were astounding for a woman in her fifties weakened by malnutrition and ill treatment.”