



(Like David) A Woman After God's Own Heart #7 Developing a Forgiving Spirit (2 Sam. 16-19)

I. The Story

- A. The setting: David has sinned with Bathsheba and Absalom has successfully conspired to take the throne from David. (See 2 Sam. 15:6, 10, 12)

As David flees Jerusalem he comes to Bahurim (possibly the Mt. of Olives, 1 ½ miles northeast of Jerusalem and has an encounter with Shimei)

- B. Shimei – (son of Gera – from Saul's clan) – "A reptile of the royal house of Saul" (Alexander Whyte)
1. Curses David (inviting God's retribution – Gen. 12:3. It's the equivalent of blasphemy – Ex. 22:28)
 2. Pelts David with stones – expressing his great displeasure
 3. Demands that David get out of Benjamite territory
 4. Accuses David of spilling "blood."

The Living Bible reads: "Get out of here, you murderer, you scoundrel!" he shouted at David. "The Lord is paying you back for murdering King Saul and his family [that was a lie]; you stole his throne [another lie] and now the Lord has given it to your son Absalom [that's the third lie – the Lord never gave David's son the throne; Absalom took the throne]! At last you will taste some of your own medicine, you murderer!"

- C. Abishai – he is quick to respond to the "dead dog" by suggesting that Shimei should be executed.
- D. David's response to "leave him alone."

"David realizes that the curse of Shimei is not an "undeserved curse" (Prov. 26:2). The phrase "the cursing I am receiving" (v. 12) is literally "his curse" – that is, God's curse. Thus in all three verses of the literary unit, David while still pleading for divine mercy, reckons with the punishment that God is inflicting on him. His statements constitute a "confession of guilt" with respect to his crimes against the Saulides, and -especially in v. 12 – he expresses his confidence in the fact that although the Lord's "response cannot be anticipated or predicted it can be trusted" (*Expositor's Commentary*, p 1033)

- E. After David is restored as King (2 Sam. 19) he returns to Jerusalem. As he is crossing the river Jordan he is met again by Shimei (2 Sam. 19:16-23)

This time Shimei affords David the respect due him – vs. 18-19

He asks David to forgive him – vs. 19-20

As Abishai again demands justice, David extends mercy – vs. 21-23 “Most of us would rather sit on a judgment seat than a mercy seat.”

- F. “Mercy” – not receiving what we deserve (“grace” – receiving what we do not deserve)
- Micah 6:8 “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”
- Prov. 11:17 “A kind man benefits himself, but a cruel man brings trouble on himself.”
- Matt. 5:7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”

II. So what? Forgiveness is required

- A. Forgiveness of others is not an option, it is required by God. We are to forgive as Christ has forgiven us. (Col. 3:13)
- Look at the parable in Matt. 18:23-25
- It’s not forgiveness if:
1. We offer conditional forgiveness: “I will forgive...if you...”
 2. We only partially forgive: “I forgive you, but don’t expect me to...”
 3. We delay forgiveness: “I will forgive you, just give me some time....”
- B. What does it mean to forgive someone who has hurt us?
1. Forgiving is not necessarily forgetting. Our minds don’t work that way. But knowledge and a repeated focus are two different things.
 2. Forgiveness is not tolerating sin. No one should be a doormat for someone else’s continual sin. It’s okay to forgive another’s past sins and at the same time take a stand against future sins.
 3. Forgiveness does not demand revenge or repayment for offenses suffered. “You mean I’m supposed to let them off the hook? Yes, you let them off your hook, realizing that they aren’t off God’s hook. Unforgiveness keeps you hooked to that person and your past.”
 4. Forgiveness means resolving to live with the consequences of another person’s sin. The choice to live in the freedom of forgiveness or the bondage of bitterness. “If we are to forgive as Christ has forgiven us (Eph. 4:31-32), then we, like Him, must take offenses of others upon ourselves.”

Discussion Questions:

1. When is it easier for you to forgive? When we are firmly ensconced on our own arrogance...or when we have been partially reminded of our own shortcomings?
2. Have you ever struggled with unforgiveness? How did you deal with it?