

“Curse David”
2 Samuel 16:5-13
(Preached at Trinity, October 6, 2019)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Following the life of David reminds us that we live in a fallen world. And David's life was often marked by the consequences of sin.
 - A. David was born of Jesse, one of ten children, the youngest of eight sons. From an early age he was marked as one set apart by God.
As a shepherd boy he demonstrated great faith in God and as a youth, he killed Goliath, the Philistine champion. When Samuel came to anoint the future king of Israel, David was the one chosen of God.
 - B. His early life was marked by Saul's vicious hatred and determination to kill David. Even in the midst of the wicked schemes of man, God's will cannot be thwarted.
 - C. Saul was killed in battle and after a season David became king over both houses of Israel. David, however, was not immune to the sin that has corrupted the hearts of us all. His polygamy weakened his home, divided his children, and resulted in David looking upon other women as potential mates. His sin with Bathsheba would affect the rest of his life. It brought destruction upon his family and greatly impacted the remainder of his monarchy.
2. Beginning in **Chapter 13** we begin to see the impact of David's sin upon his children. We witness the incest of Amnon and the murderous revenge of his brother Absalom. As **Chapter 15** opens we begin to see just how reprehensible Absalom is as we witness his treason against his father. Absalom was narcissistic and completely void of integrity. He was a cold-blooded killer.
3. Absalom patiently put his plan into action, and working deceptively over a period of four years, he managed to steal the hearts of the people from David. By the time David found out Absalom's treachery it was too late to do anything about it.
2 Samuel 15:13-14 NAU - "Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom." ¹⁴ David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise and let us flee, for *otherwise* none of us will escape from Absalom. Go in haste, or he will overtake us quickly and bring down calamity on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."
4. As David fled from Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley he encountered a host of individuals, each displaying various aspects of the human condition.
 - A. Some demonstrated beautiful displays of loyalty and faithfulness. They were willing to remain loyal to David, even unto death.
 - (1) We witnessed Ittai the Gittite, a Philistine who trusted the God of Israel.
 - (2) We saw the arrival of the priests, Zadok and Abiathar. faithful servants of God who saw David as God's anointed king.
 - (3) David also encountered his faithful and loyal friend, Hushai, whom God would use to deliver David.

- B. Not everyone that David encountered, however, was genuine in their displays of loyalty.
- (1) All true loyalty will bear the test of time. Not every pledge of loyalty will prove faithful in the end. The demand upon Christians is to presume the best of people, but to be wise.
 - (2) Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth arrived. He abandoned his loyalty to his master, Mephibosheth and told David that Mephibosheth had committed treason. Sadly, David received his lies and stripped Mephibosheth of his possessions. This will be corrected in **Chapter 19**.
 - (3) It serves as a warning to us not to receive every word that we hear, especially when it comes in the form of an accusation.
5. Now, as David continues his flight from Jerusalem, he encounters yet another individual. This one is shocking in his behavior before King David.
2 Samuel 16:5 NAU - "When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came."
6. We are told that he was of the family of the house of Saul. Saul's death and David's rise to the throne would have had a negative impact upon many of those closely related to Saul. It was a serious blow to no longer be connected to the royal family. Shemei blamed David for this.
- a. We need to remember, David was no friend to Saul. Saul saw David as a serious rival worthy of death. For some this rivalry did not end with Saul's death.
 - b. Shemei was declaring that David's woes were of his own doing; that it was the result of God's just retribution. He was getting exactly what he deserved:
Samuel 16:8 NAU - "And behold, you are *taken* in your own evil"
 - c. **2 Samuel 16:7 NAU** - "Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed"
He was accusing David of murder – not the murder of Uriah, but of the house of Saul.
7. We saw last time how dangerous it is for us to form opinions of jump to conclusions without stopping to rightly examine the evidence.
- a. David received Ziba's words and condemned Mephibosheth without looking to see if there was evidence to support Ziba's claims.
 - b. Now we have this character, Shemei, who has condemned David of killing the house of Saul. By what evidence. Presumably, he is referring to Ishbosheth or Abner. Or perhaps, he is blaming David for the death of Saul by the Philistines since David had been living among them. All of these accusations were false. Shemei had believed what he heard without any evidential support.
 - c. When Saul and Jonathan were killed David was many miles away.
When Ishbosheth and Abner were killed, David was innocent of their blood.
2 Samuel 3:37 NAU - "So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been *the will* of the king to put Abner the son of Ner to death."
And David ordered the execution of those who killed Ishbosheth.
8. Apparently, Shemei had seethed in anger. As long as David sat on the throne Shemei would have kept his peace. The bitterness and rage burned in his bosom, but he kept it privately in his heart. But now that David was deposed he unleashed it with full fury.

9. As I stated earlier, David was encountering many sorts of people as he fled from Absalom—some faithful and loyal while others were terrible displays of our fallen condition. Shemei was of the baser sort. It is a terrible thing to increase the sorrows of a man who is hurting.
William Blaikie wrote: “There is no mistaking the mean nature of the man to take such an opportunity of venting his malignity on David. To trample on the fallen, to press a man when his back is at the wall, to pierce with fresh wounds the body of a stricken warrior, is the mean resource of ungenerous cowardice. But it is too much the way of the world.”¹
10. David’s generals quickly had their fill of his insults:
2 Samuel 16:9 NAU - "Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now and cut off his head."
Joab and Abishai had been in the military from their youth. They were warriors and they meant business. They had little toleration for the banter of Shemei.
11. David, on the other hand, was surprisingly tolerant of his insults.
David’s actions teach us much as we face the insults of this world.
- I. We should face insults with humility
- A. David stands as a type of Christ
1. In His humiliation Jesus gave Himself over to His adversaries
Isaiah 53:7 - "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth."
 2. As Philip Bliss wrote:
*Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*
 3. David patiently endured the slanders and insults of Shemei
- B. Often our anger over insults is the result of our pride
1. We don’t like the thought of being insulted. We are inclined to respond with the heart of Abishai: “Off with his head!”
 2. If truth be known, however, we deserve much greater insults than we have ever received. We find it easy to overlook our insults we’ve aimed at the King of kings.
 3. There is a story about Martin Luther who had frequent encounters with the devil as the devil accused him of all manner of sin.
“Martin, you are a liar, greedy, lecherous, a blasphemer, a hypocrite. You cannot stand before God.” To which Luther would respond: “Well, yes, I am. And, indeed, Satan, you do not know the half of it. I have done much worse than that and if you care to give me your full list, I can no doubt add to it and help make it more complete. But you know what? My Saviour has died for all my sins—those you mention, those I could add and, indeed, those I have committed but am so wicked that I am unaware of having done so. It does not change the fact that Christ has died for all of them; his blood is sufficient; and on the Day of Judgment I shall be exonerated because he has taken all my sins on himself and clothed me in his own perfect righteousness.”

¹ Blaikie, William Garden. (2005). *Expository Lectures on the Book of 2 Samuel*. Birmingham: Solid Ground Christian Books, page 244.

II. We should trust our lives into the hand of God

- A. David saw much of what he was experiencing the result of God's chastisement
1. David had not forgotten God's words delivered by the mouth of Nathan:
2 Samuel 12:9-12 NAU - "Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. ¹⁰ 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' ¹¹ "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 will lie with your wives in broad daylight. ¹² 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun."
 2. Some believe the common translation of **Verse 12** isn't an adequate translation of the Hebrew
2 Samuel 16:12 NAU - "Perhaps the LORD will look on my affliction and return good to me instead of his cursing this day." Instead it could read, "Perhaps the LORD will look on my iniquity."
 3. If this is the true rendering, David is directing attention to God's grace—that God will look upon his iniquity with mercy and bless him with His goodness.
- B. David was willing to place his life entirely at the sovereign mercy of God.
1. David recognizes that Shimei is under the sovereign direction of God.
2 Samuel 16:11 NAU - "Let him alone and let him curse, for the LORD has told him."
 - a. God "told" Shemei in the sense that He has directed his steps
 - b. The NKJV says it well
2 Samuel 16:11 NKJ - "Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him."
 - c. God has ordered it. This is true of every step of our life. This should keep us patient as we face every difficulty.
 2. From David's prospective, if Shemei was God's agent to chastise him he would not resist. David trusted the sovereign mercies of God
 4. God had not rejected His servant David. God deals with us with grace and forgiveness.
 We must not overlook the narrator's introduction to this passage in **Verse 5**. For the first time since the ordeal with Absalom began we are reminded that David was still God's king. He is referred to as King David.
 5. God deals with His people with grace and mercy.

- III. David was a patient and merciful king, but he would also practice justice
- A. As an individual David patiently endured the insults, but as king he had to administer justice.
1. Insults against an individual must be endured with longsuffering
 2. As king, Shimei's actions were treasonous. Absalom was not the king. He never was. Shimei was directly assaulting the King of Israel. Abishai was correct in his desire to remove the head of David's enemy.
 3. David endured Shimei's insults, but justice would be fulfilled
 - a. David's last words before his death was instruction to Solomon regarding Shimei
1 Kings 2:8-9 NAU - "Behold, there is with you Shimei the son of Gera the Benjamite, of Bahurim; now it was he who cursed me with a violent curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.'⁹ "Now therefore, do not let him go unpunished, for you are a wise man; and you will know what you ought to do to him, and you will bring his gray hair down to Sheol with blood."
 - b. And justice was accomplished at the command of Solomon
1 Kings 2:44-46 NAU - "The king also said to Shimei, "You know all the evil which you acknowledge in your heart, which you did to my father David; therefore the LORD shall return your evil on your own head."⁴⁵ "But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever."⁴⁶ So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and fell upon him so that he died. Thus the kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon."
- B. Most people struggle to understand the concept of jurisdictional authority
1. Many take upon themselves authority which is not theirs. They pronounce judgment which is not theirs to pronounce. They receive information that is not theirs to have.
 2. In matters that involve the breaking of the civil law, the civil courts have jurisdiction
 3. In matters of sin, the local church has jurisdiction over the members under its authority.
 4. In matters of the home, the father and then mother have the jurisdiction
In matters of occupational matters, the employer has jurisdiction
 5. These various realms of authority sometimes overlap. This allows for accountability and helps guard against abuse. Our own civil government is divided into three branches so that there will be checks and balances.
 6. Regarding the individual, he must trust justice into the hand of those entrusted with the authority

Conclusion:

1. Shemei's unbridled tongue would cost him his life. He presumed to know the heart of David. He presumed the guilt of David. But he was wrong.
2. He was wrong to falsely condemn another. He was wrong to speak against the one God had placed over him.

Exodus. 22:28 NAU - "You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people."

3. Shemei also exposed his evil heart by judging everyone around him by how they impacted him. Rather than asking how he might be a blessing to others he saw others in terms of their impact upon him.

Matthew Henry:

“See how apt we are to judge of men and their character by what they are to us, and to conclude that those are certainly evil men that have ever so justly been, or that we ever so unjustly think have been, instruments of evil to us.”²

² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*, (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 464.