

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Nov. 27

MONDAY

Shimei, at the head of an army of 1000 men of the tribe of Benjamin, went down to the Jordan River to meet David and his forces who were returning to Jerusalem. Some of his men crossed the Jordan to bring David's supplies back over first. When David finally crossed, Shimei was there to welcome him. Shimei apologized for having forsaken David in days past, and begged for his forgiveness.

READ: II Samuel 19:16-20

Back in chapter 16, Shimei had verbally attacked David "something awful" as my grandmother used to say. He sees the error of his way and makes haste to do the best he can to set things right. He has no guarantee that he will succeed. But he does his best to make amends for his earlier behavior. We, too, cannot undo the evil that we have done, but we can do much to make it right somehow. If not the behavior, at least the relationship which it damaged.

TUESDAY

Hearing Shimei's confession, one of David's advisors, Abishai, wanted him to be executed for treason. David rebuked Abishai saying that this was a day for rejoicing, not killing. David was once more the King in Jerusalem!

READ: II Samuel 19:21-23

David exemplifies forgiveness in his treatment of Shimei. I want to be that way, don't you! That even when I find myself in a position to strike back at those who have somehow wished evil or brought harm upon me - for the work that God is performing within me - I will not do so. Lord, help me this day, for I know that I have been forgiven greatly by you!

WEDNESDAY

Mephibosheth was Saul's grandson, and he went down to meet King David. He was unkempt and not prepared to entertain royalty. David asks him why he had not left with David's other supporters, when they had fled Jerusalem for their own safety?

READ: II Samuel 19:24-25

David is challenging Mephibosheth's loyalty by asking him why he did not go with David during his exile. The principle is this: you deserve to share in the victory only when you have fought in the battle. That principle holds true for you and me today. The glory that is to come, and the riches of God's greatness which are to be poured out upon his people are reserved for those who "fought the good fight" of faith.

THURSDAY

Mephibosheth defends his failure to accompany David in his exile from Jerusalem, and pleads for his mercy.

READ: II Samuel 19:26-28

Mephibosheth explains that he intended to go but because he was lame, he depended on Ziba to get him a donkey for the trip. But Ziba somehow betrayed him. Then he throws himself to David's mercy saying that being a grandson of King Saul, he deserves nothing from David. And because David has already been so generous, he will not dare even ask for anything more. His cry for mercy is ours, when we see ourselves as we really are. "I deserve nothing good. But you're the God who does good and never stops."

FRIDAY

David accepts Mephibosheth's explanation and orders that certain fields be divided between him and Ziba. But when he hears that, Mephibosheth declines the offer.

READ: II Samuel 19:29-30

What's interesting here is that David seemingly gives a test to Mephibosheth: he offers him half of the fields (which used to be his and now belong to Ziba) to see if Mephibosheth is after the reward or not. When Mephibosheth refuses to take the reward, David has his answer. If one confesses faith and follows the Lord for what he can get out of it for himself, he knows nothing of true faith or following. It is God's glory that is the issue! Not the benefits that come my way. Oh that we will live today for the glory of God!

SATURDAY

A wealthy and loyal supporter of David had provided for him and his men while they were in exile. Later, David invited him to return to Jerusalem and re-locate there. That would allow David the opportunity to repay his kindness.

READ: II Samuel 19:31-33

The fact that Barzillai is 80 years old and not only supplied materials for David's forces in exile, but physically made the trip himself to join David, says a lot! 80 years old and still determined to be active in things that matter. The things that matter most are the things of eternity, and Barzillai's story says to us, "Keep going. Don't let up. Keep on living for God and looking for Jesus! Press on till the very end!" Amen?

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