

THEME: HEART

KEEPING A HEART FOR GOD

2 Samuel 16:1-18:18

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“How do we keep a heart for the things of God amidst the trials of life?”

2 Samuel 16:1 When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skin of wine. ² And the king said to Ziba, “Why have you brought these?” Ziba answered, “The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to drink.”³ And the king said, “And where is your master's son?” **Ziba said to the king, “Behold, he remains in Jerusalem, for he said, ‘Today the house of Israel will give me back the kingdom of my father.’”** ⁴ **Then the king said to Ziba, “Behold, all that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours.”** And Ziba said, “I pay homage; let me ever find favor in your sight, my lord the king.”

I. CONFIRM BETRAYAL BEFORE ACTING ON IT.

Proverbs 18:17 The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.

⁵ When King David came to Bahurim, there came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera, and as he came he cursed continually. ⁶ And **he threw stones at David** and at all the servants of King David, and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. ⁷ And **Shimei said as he cursed, “Get out, get out, you man of blood, you worthless man!”** ⁸ **The Lord has avenged on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned, and the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, your evil is on you, for you are a man of blood.”**

⁹ Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head.” ¹⁰ But the king said, “What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who then shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’” ¹¹ And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, “Behold, my own son seeks my life; how much more now may this Benjaminite! **Leave him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to.** ¹² **It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me,^[a] and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing**

today."¹³ So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust. ¹⁴ And the king, and all the people who were with him, **arrived weary** at the Jordan.^[b] And there he refreshed himself.

II. ASK GOD TO BLESS YOU FOR UNJUST CRITICISM.

¹⁵ Now Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. ¹⁶ And when Hushai the Archite, **David's friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"** ¹⁷ And Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" ¹⁸ And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, for whom the Lord and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain.¹⁹ And again, whom should I serve? Should it not be his son? **As I have served your father, so I will serve you.**"

²⁰ Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What shall we do?" ²¹ Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house, and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." ²² So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof. And Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. ²³ Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.

2 Samuel 17:1 Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. ² I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee. **I will strike down only the king,** ³ and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man,^[a] and all the people will be at peace."⁴ And the advice seemed right in the eyes of Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

⁵ Then Absalom said, "Call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he has to say." ⁶ And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "Thus has Ahithophel spoken; shall we do as he says? If not, you speak."⁷ Then Hushai said to Absalom, "This time the counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good." ⁸ Hushai said, "You know that your father and his men are mighty men, and that they are enraged,^[b] like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night with the people. ⁹ Behold, even now he has hidden himself in one of the pits or in some other place. And as soon as some of the people fall^[c] at the first attack, whoever hears it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.'¹⁰ Then even the valiant man, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will utterly melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man, and that those who are with him are valiant men. ¹¹ But my counsel is that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as the sand by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. ¹² So we shall come upon him in some place where he is to be found, and we shall light upon him as the dew falls on the ground, and of him and all the men with him not one will be left. ¹³ If he

withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we shall drag it into the valley, until not even a pebble is to be found there.”¹⁴ And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.” ***For the Lord had ordained^[d] to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring harm upon Absalom.***

¹⁵ Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, “Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so have I counseled.”¹⁶ ***Now therefore send quickly and tell David,*** ‘Do not stay tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.’”

^{21A} They said to David, “Arise, and go quickly over the water, for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you.”²² Then David arose, and all the people who were with him, and they crossed the Jordan. By daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.

²³ When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and went off home to his own city. He set his house in order and hanged himself, and he died and was buried in the tomb of his father.

III. TRUST GOD’S PLAN TO WIN IN YOUR LIFE.

2 Samuel 18:5 And the king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.” And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders about Absalom.

⁶ So the army went out into the field against Israel, and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim.

⁹ And Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak,^[a] and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. ¹⁰ And a certain man saw it and told Joab, “Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.” ¹⁵ And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him and killed him.

¹⁸ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself the pillar that is in the King's Valley, for he said, “I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.” He called the pillar after his own name, and ***it is called Absalom's monument^[d] to this day.***

³¹ And behold, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, “Good news for my lord the king! For the Lord has delivered you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you.” ³² The king said to the Cushite, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” And the Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man.”³³ ^[d] And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the

gate and *wept*. *And as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"*

IV. FOCUS ON GOD'S VICTORY AND YOUR PERSONAL LOSSES.