

**How to Handle Criticism**  
**David & Shimei – 2 Samuel 16:5-14**  
**(8/29/2010 PM)**

1. The Cursing of Shimei (5-8)

***One of the Darkest Days of David's Life***

(5) "Now when King David came to Bahurim"

The exact site is unknown. David was fleeing from Absalom.

- **The reason behind his cursing**

Shimei was related to Saul. He either did not know or did not care that Saul had forfeited his position because of his own willfulness. So he was both an ignorant and a belligerent critic.

**David Was the Object of His Bitterness**

When faced with criticism it is wise to try and look behind the event to try and comprehend the reason. Where is this coming from? Often the particular criticism is a smoke screen for an underlying issue.

- **The actions that accompanied his cursing**

Shimei was apparently following beside and above where David and his men were. The stones indicated his utter contempt for David and his followers. He personally attacked David by slandering his character. The term "rogue" is *Belial* which means a worthless and wicked person. This was applied to people of base moral character. 1 Samuel 2:12, "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." The ESV brings out the meaning "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you worthless man!"

**Shimei Was Breaking the Law in Cursing David**

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

Criticism is often accompanied by unbiblical attitudes and actions. It is always a challenge to look past the verbiage and focus on the issue. As Christians we must always choose the high road. Proverbs 17:14, "The beginning of strife is like releasing water; therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts."

- **The accusations that followed his cursing**

(8) "The Lord has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned..."

The core of Shimei's charge against David was completely groundless. David was not responsible for Saul and his sons' deaths though at the time he was aligned with the Philistines. He was not responsible for Ishbosheth or Abner's deaths though Shimei apparently thought he was. David on two occasions could have killed Saul but did not.

**Criticism Often Comes In Generalities and Exaggerations**

Shimei's criticism was out of ignorance. Often critics don't have all of the facts even though they think they do.

2. The Request of Abishai (9)

***To Kill the Curser***

Shimei's actions were completely foolhardy knowing the reputation of David's mighty men.

- **An example of taking up an offense**

This was no braggart claim he meant every word of it. Abishai was the one who wanted to kill Saul with his own spear (1 Samuel 26:6-8).

**An Illustration of the Carnal Response to Criticism**

Our initial reaction is to strike back, to inflict hurt on the one who hurt us.

3. The Response of David (10-14)

***David Shines Bright in His Dark Moment***

David's response to Shimei's cursing is a model for all of us to follow.

- **Refuse retaliation**

(10) "But the king said, 'What have I to do with you.' This phrase

was used to indicate that a person did not wish to have anything in common with the feelings and views of another. David was, in essence, saying that he did not have the same attitude that Abishai had. This is

the attitude we are commanded to have, Romans 12:19-21.

**Explanation At Times Is Appropriate but Retaliation Is Never Appropriate**

- **Examine the criticism**

David had an attitude of submission in the face of Shimei's cursing. David realized that this was all part of the consequences of his own sin. He accepted Shimei's abuse as from the hand of God and part of his discipline. There is usually something I can learn through a criticism no matter how unjust.

**What Part of the Criticism Can I Own?**

- **Commit the situation to the Lord**

(12) "It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing this day."

David did not seek to justify himself, but turned it over to God. David had faith that one day God would balance the books. He chose to humble himself and allow himself to be cursed. He knew that when God saw his heart of repentance, He would respond mercifully to him. God would ultimately replace Shimei's cursing with blessing.

1 Peter 5:5-7, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." David's acceptance did not stop Shimei's cursing.

**God Always Blesses His Children for a Humble Spirit**

In time God did indeed deal with Shimei. David pardoned him when he returned to Jerusalem (19:18-22). Solomon restricted his movements and later had him executed for his disobedience (1 Kings 2).