

## VV discussion on [2 Samuel 16](#)

### Ziba and Mephibosheth: Verse 1-4

This chapter opens with a meeting between David and Mephibosheth's servant, Ziba. David had shown Mephibosheth extraordinary kindness, giving him a seat at his table and the assurance of a legacy in Israel through land, servants and family as the son of Johnathan and grandson of Saul.

In verse 1-2 we see Ziba coming to David there with a large amount of provisions for David and his people, as noted by the text. All good to this point. Then in verse 3, Ziba claims that Mephibosheth has sided with Absalom. In verse 4, on hearing Ziba's words, David hands over all of Mephibosheth lands, servants etc. to Ziba.

- What do we think of Ziba and his actions here. What explanations might there be?
- What do we think of Mephibosheth and his actions. What explanations might there be?
- What do we think of David's actions. What explanations might there be?

### Shimei curses David: Verse 5-14

In chapter 15 we read how David and his people passed through the Kidron Valley, came to the Mount of Olives and went up on the mountain there.

In these verses we see a negative interaction between David and Shimei, who comes out to curse David.

- Who is Shimei and where is he from?
- What explanations do we have for his actions?
- Do you think Shimei might be alone in wanting to curse David?

Not only does Shimei curse David but he also throws rocks, and not just at David.

From what I have read, there are some things not recorded in order here. The death's of seven of Saul's sons is recorded in [2 Samuel 21](#), but some commentators think these deaths occurred before Absalom's rebellion. We will look into this further when we get to chapter 21. However, in verse 8, Shimei seems to be cursing David for these deaths. Other blood may be both Saul and the death of his son Ishbosheth and later Abner.

It is implied that Shimei's accusations are unfair as David was not truly responsible for all these death's. Shimei also accuses David of stealing Saul's throne. Shimei's last words are that David has come to ruin because he is a murderer.

- Is Shimei right?
- Who might Shimei represent with his accusations at David.

In verse 9, Abishai (Joab's brother) wants to cut off Shimei's head. David essentially rebukes him "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah." This section records the cursing David receives and how David patiently endures the cursing, stating that the cursing is from God.

- Discuss this cursing and David's reaction.

I would like to take a little diversion to John chapter 18. Note the locations in verse 1 – crossing the Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives where Jesus was arrested. Also compare Abishai's request to cut off Shimei's head, and David's reaction, with the story of Peter cutting off the high priests ear and Jesus reaction in [John 18: 10-11](#).

David tells Abishai to leave Shimei alone because it's God who wants him to curse David ([2 Samuel 16: 10-11](#)). In John 18: 11, Jesus says "should I not drink the cup of suffering the Father has given me."

Read also [Mathew 26: 51-55](#) and [Luke 22: 49-51](#).

Note the part in Mathew 26 where Jesus says those who live by the sword die by the sword.

- How do you think this might apply to David?
- Is it possible that David has given up living by the sword?

Note also the curses that were thrown at Jesus during his trial, journey to the cross and while he was on the cross.

- Read again [2 Samuel 16: 10-12](#) and discuss any parallels or contrasts you find.

There are also parallels in David's story of betrayal by Absalom, Ahithophel and others with Jesus betrayal by Judas and Peter as well as the desertion of all the disciples.

- Discuss parallels and contrasts between David's actions/reactions here and Jesus actions and reactions leading up to and at the crucifixion.

### **Ahithophel's despicable advice: Verses 15-23**

In chapter 15, David sends Hushai back to become a plant to frustrate Ahithophel's advice. I don't know when Hushai plans to do this, but, in my opinion, he drops the ball here. I am getting heartily sick of the way women are being treated in 2 Samuel. What happens to the concubines David left behind makes me want to scream. I want to whack both Ahithophel and Absalom over the back of the head with a shovel here. Ahithophel for suggesting it and Absalom for actually doing it, especially after what happened to Tamar. And where was Hushai? Didn't he think this might be a good time to step in and frustrate some of Ahithophel's advice.

- Given the spectacularly bad (and unconscionable) advice given by Ahithophel, discuss [verse 23](#). You may also be interested how another version [puts it](#). Can we see any dangers in presuming someone is infallible?
- Suggested point for discussion – [Judges 21: 25](#) is a notable example of Jewish irony. Where would 2 Samuel 16: 23 sit on a scale of 1-10 if Judges 21: 25 was a ten. Discuss any parallels.