

**BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL**  
**EMOTIONS DISTORT PERCEPTION**  
**2 SAMUEL 16:1-14**

**Introduction**

David is fleeing from Jerusalem, as Absalom and his army move on the capital city. **David, his family, and his loyalists flee to preserve both the city and the people from a potentially destructive civil war.**

If you've ever had a bad day, you can sympathize with David just a little. He is facing rebellion and takeover by his son Absalom, consequently losing his place as leader of Israel. **He had to drop everything and flee the palace and his city and both he and the people with him are full of emotions!** (*2 Samuel 15:30*)

**David was stressed at this point and quite possibly even in a state of depression at this point in his life!** Can you see why that would be? If you have ever been stressed and/or depressed because of being betrayed by someone you loved dearly, you can probably relate to David's state of mind!

As we follow this story of David on the run again in Chapter 16 I think that we can see **all of this stress has affected David's ability to think clearly and we see that David's perception was distorted.**

**What I want us to see tonight is that when we are stressed or depressed it can cause our perception to be distorted! It doesn't have to, but it can!**

**I. OUR EMOTIONS CAN DISTORT OUR PERCEPTION OF OTHERS! (Vs 1-4)**

**All of the emotions of stress/depression from this whole ordeal Distorted David's perception of both Mephibosheth and Ziba!**

We saw last time how David was **obviously not thinking very clearly!**

**A perceptive man** should have been able to reason that something was wrong here and not jump to conclusions!

But Ziba actually convinced David that Mephibosheth had an actual plan to take over the throne! (Its almost laughable if you think about it)

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Ziba bringing David some much needed provisions probably aided in swaying David's view of the matter!

**David didn't stop to think of his relationship with Mephibosheth** since the time he brought him to his table!

**David didn't stop to think of where Ziba got these provisions to bring to him!**

**David didn't stop to think that Ziba might have an ulterior motive!**

As we saw last time, Ziba **used this occasion to betray and slander Mephibosheth and David bought into it!** You would think that David would have known Mephibosheth better than that!

**But in David's depressed and desperate condition,** he accepted Ziba's word ...**probably at no other time would David have bought into this story, but he wasn't in a right state of mind and he was desperate for these supplies!**

**His perception of Mephibosheth was colored by his emotions and his perception of Ziba was colored by it also!**

**Our emotions can distort our perception of others ...**

**They can cause us to readily believe things we would not ordinarily believe!**

**They can makes us readily accept things as truth that we would not ordinarily accept!**

**They can make us place trust in people we ordinarily would not trust!**

**They can make us doubt people we ought to trust!**

*OUR EMOTIONS CAN DISTORT OUR PERCEPTION OF OTHERS...*

II. **OUR EMOTIONS CAN DISTORT OUR PERCEPTION OF GOD! (Vs 5-12)**

Here we see this story of Shimei (Vs 5 calls him “*a man of the family of the house of Saul*”)! We find him here **cursing, casting stones and accusing David** of the death of Saul and Jonathan and his household!

Well, **this was false and uncalled for on the part of Shimei!**

**David didn’t have anything to do with the shedding of Saul’s blood or Jonathan’s blood or any of Saul’s household!**

We saw in our studies in *1 Samuel 29* that when the Philistines gathered their armies together against Saul and all of Israel, David was sent home by King Achish because the princes of the Philistines didn’t trust David to fight Israel! Remember that?

So, David and his men went home to Ziklag to find that the Amalekites had been there and kidnaped their families and burned everything else! (*1 Samuel 30*)

They eventually caught up with the Amalekites and recovered everything and everyone that had been taken! **And then David and his men went back to Ziklag.**

**So when the Philistines fought the battle against Israel at Mount Gilboa where Saul and three of his sons died, David was not even close to being in the vicinity of the battle!**

**But Shimei seems to think that David was somehow responsible.** He voices his opinion that because of his part in bringing down the house of Saul that the LORD is using Absalom to bring him down!

So he cursed at David and threw rocks at him and those with him!

Abishai gets enough of all this and requested that David let him go over and take Shimei’s head off! I like Abishai for that!

But David denied his request...look at David’s response to Abishai in verse 10.

*“...let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?”*

Now listen, **David is God’s anointed...He’s a man after God’s own heart...He’s Blessed by God.**

**David knew how to treat God’s anointed and went to great lengths to keep from harming King Saul because he knew that King Saul was God’s anointed and The LORD would determine when Saul’s reign ended and David’s began! Remember that?**

**David often sang of God’s goodness and His mercy and His lovingkindness and his watchcare.**

And **the accusations being thrown at him were lies ... falsehoods!** But David looked at this situation and said, *“...the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David.”*

**Do you see how that when we are under stress and/or depressed, it can distort our perception of God.**

**Instead of seeing the goodness of God, the mercy of God, the blessings of God, the love and kindness of God, we begin to wonder .... Why is God doing this to me? Is God trying to destroy me? Maybe God doesn’t love me. Maybe trusting God is a lie ... maybe I’ve been placing my trust in a false hope ...!**

But listen, **that is distorted thinking caused by a wrong state of mind!**

**Whenever we begin to doubt God’s love for us, we need only to go back to Calvary to see the great love He had for us!**

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**III. OUR EMOTIONS CAN DISTORT OUR PERCEPTION OF OURSELVES! (Vs 11-14)**

The offer of Abishai there to was saying, *“let me go over there and cut him down to size”* (about a head shorter!)

**Abishai is standing up for God’s man here ... he is distressed at the disrespect directed at the Lord’s anointed** — he has the same attitude that David had about Saul! But David stops Abishai ...

David is saying here by his actions, *“I don’t deserve any better. My son is rebelling, God has forsaken me ... and I deserve to be condemned like this.”*

**Our emotions in a stressful situation can distort our view of ourselves!** Listen closely, **we never deserve the goodness and blessing of God ... but this is not mere humility that we are seeing here on the part of David—this is his emotions speaking!**

*“Woe is me ... I’m a nobody ... Who cares about me ... I’m having a pity party and I don’t want anyone to remind me of what God has done for me and the position God has put me in and the work God has given me to do .... I’m just worthless.”*

**Conclusion**

**Emotions from a stressful situation can lead to us to stop trusting and depending on the Lord! When we stop truly believing God knows best or when we believe that God has deserted us or when we are focused more on ourselves than we are of God, that’s not a good place for us to be in!**

Because our emotions can distort our view of others, we can make bad decisions! Our emotions can distort our view of God and we begin to accuse God in our mind! Our emotions can distort our view of ourselves and we lose sight of our purpose, because we lose sight of our value in the sight of God!

Let’s not do that! If we find ourselves sinking in despair, we need to run back to the LORD just as fast as we can and not let our emotions get the best of us!