

# WHEN DISCERNMENT **BREAKS** DOWN! 2 SAM. 16:1-4

David's discernment broke down at a crucial point with Ziba – why?

## I. Discernment breaks down when questions are not asked!

**2 Samuel 16:1** And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, **Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him**, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. **2 Samuel 16:2** And the king said unto Ziba, **What meanest thou by these?** And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink. **2 Samuel 16:3** And the king said, **And where is thy master's son?** And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. **2 Samuel 16:4** Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

**But pastor, David asked questions!!!**

**He did...of Ziba**

**He did not...of Mephibosheth**

**& not ...of himself**

**& not...of anyone else**

**Proverbs 18:13** He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, It is folly and shame unto him.

**Proverbs 18:15** The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; And the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

**Proverbs 18:17** He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; But his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

### David missed:

➤ **One-sided answers**

➤ **Possible confirmation bias: seeing only what you want / expect to see**

When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

➤ **His very limited perspective**

He could have asked questions of other people.

## II. Discernment breaks down when “gifts” are accepted!

**2 Samuel 16:1** And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, **Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.** **2 Samuel 16:2** And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? **And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.**

**“Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes”** (ferentis): I fear the Greeks, even when they bear gifts!

Aenid by Virgil 29-19 BC

Commonly translated into English: **Beware of Greeks bearing gifts!**

**Exodus 23:8** And thou shalt take **no** gift: **for** the gift blindeth the wise, **and** perverteth the words of the righteous.

**Deuteronomy 16:19** Thou shalt **not** wrest judgment; thou shalt **not** respect persons, **neither take a gift: for** a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, **and** pervert the words of the righteous.

**1 Samuel 8:3** And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, **and took bribes**, and perverted judgment.

**1 Samuel 12:3** Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: **whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?** and I will restore it you.

**Proverbs 15:27** He that is greedy of gain **troubleth** his own house; **But** he that hateth gifts shall live.

**Proverbs 19:6** Many will intreat the favour of the prince: And every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.

**Proverbs 29:4** The king by judgment establisheth the land: **But** he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

**Proverbs 17:8** A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: Whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

**Proverbs 17:23** A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom To pervert the ways of judgment.

**Proverbs 18:16** A man's gift maketh room for him, And bringeth him before great men.

**Proverbs 21:14** A gift in secret pacifieth anger: And a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

**Ecclesiastes 7:7** Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; **and a gift destroyeth the heart.**

**Ezekiel 22:12** In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

**Amos 5:12** For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: They afflict the just, **they take a bribe**, And they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

**Micah 7:3** That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, The prince asketh, **and the judge asketh for a reward**; And the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: So they wrap it up.

### Thoughts:

- **Gifts are rarely just gifts**
- **Gifts usually require / demand gifts - in return!**
- **Gifts are no gift to &/ for discernment!**

### III. Discernment breaks down when motives are overlooked!

**2 Samuel 16:4** **Then said the king to Ziba**, Behold, thine are **all** that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

**2 Samuel 9:1** And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

**2 Samuel 9:2** **And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba**. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. **2 Samuel 9:3** And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, **Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.** **2 Samuel 9:4** And the king said unto him, **Where is he?** And **Ziba said** unto the king, **Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.**

**2 Samuel 9:9** Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, **I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.** **2 Samuel 9:10** **Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.**

### IV. Discernment breaks down when time is limited!

**2 Samuel 15:13** And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. **2 Samuel 15:14** **And David said** unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, **Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.** **2 Samuel 15:15** And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

#### There is a time:

- **To blink**
- **To think**
- **To blink & then think**
- **To blink & then think with other people**