

Breaking the Stalemate: Overcoming Pride and Seeking Reconciliation

1. Stubborn Pride Keeps Us Stuck

Joab knew that David desperately wanted to see his son Absalom, yet David refused to make the first move. His pride kept him from reconciling with Absalom, even though it was tearing him up inside.

- **Personal Reflection:**

How often have I found myself in the same situation? There's a relationship I want to mend, a conflict I want to resolve, but my pride keeps me from taking the first step. I wait for the other person to apologize or make the first move, even though I know deep down I want restoration. This passage reminds me that stubbornness and pride only prolong pain. Instead of waiting, I should have the courage and humility to initiate reconciliation.

2. The Power of a Well-Told Story

Joab, seeing David's hesitation, orchestrated a plan using a wise woman from Tekoa. Through a clever parable, she helped David see his own hypocrisy—he was willing to pardon a stranger's son but not his own.

- **Personal Reflection:**

Sometimes, I need a fresh perspective to recognize my own blind spots. It's easy to judge others while failing to see my own contradictions. Am I holding someone to a higher standard than I hold myself? Do I expect mercy for myself but demand justice for others? I need to be open to correction, even if it comes in a way I don't expect.

3. Partial Reconciliation Isn't Enough

David finally allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem, but he refused to see him. For two years, Absalom lived nearby, but David ignored him, creating even more resentment.

- **Personal Reflection:**

Reconciliation that doesn't involve full restoration only leaves wounds unhealed. If I say I forgive someone but still keep them at a distance, have I truly forgiven them? Do I allow bitterness to fester under the surface because I don't want to fully engage with the person again? True healing requires honest communication and a willingness to fully restore the relationship when possible.

4. When We Ignore People, They Find a Way to Get Our Attention

Absalom tried multiple times to get Joab's attention, but Joab ignored him. Finally, Absalom had Joab's barley fields set on fire—forcing him to show up.

- **Personal Reflection:**

When people feel unheard or overlooked, they often resort to drastic measures to be noticed. Have I ignored someone's attempts to reconcile or reach out? Am I dismissing someone's pain, only for it to manifest in destructive ways? Instead of waiting for "barley

fields to be set on fire” in my relationships, I should listen, respond, and address conflicts before they escalate.

5. Hidden Bitterness Leads to Greater Betrayal

When Absalom finally met with David, there was an outward display of reconciliation, but inwardly, Absalom had already started plotting against his father. The unresolved tension and lack of true restoration eventually led to full rebellion.

- **Personal Reflection:**

Superficial apologies don't heal deep wounds. I need to ask myself: Are there unresolved hurts in my relationships that I've only patched over instead of truly dealing with? If I ignore them, resentment will grow, and the consequences could be devastating. Real peace comes when I confront and address issues fully—not when I pretend everything is fine while harboring bitterness inside.

Final Takeaways

- **Swallow Your Pride:** Don't let stubbornness keep you from restoring relationships that matter.
- **Be Open to Correction:** Sometimes, it takes an outside perspective to reveal our own hypocrisy.
- **Don't Settle for Half-Reconciliation:** If forgiveness isn't complete, resentment will remain.
- **Acknowledge Others Before They “Set Your Fields on Fire”:** People need to be heard. Ignoring them only leads to bigger problems.
- **Deal With Wounds Before They Turn Into Betrayal:** Unresolved hurt leads to greater rebellion. Address the heart of the issue before it escalates.

Bottom Line:

This passage is a reminder that **avoiding conflict doesn't resolve it**—it only makes things worse. True reconciliation takes humility, full engagement, and open-hearted honesty. Instead of waiting for the other person to make the first move, I need to be bold enough to take that step myself. Letting wounds linger only leads to bigger consequences later. Today, I choose to pursue peace and reconciliation in my relationships.