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A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

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Through Another Man's Eyes

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Do you remember the Old Testament story of Eliam? Ok, maybe not. Eliam is a rather obscure character in the Old Testament. In fact he is only mentioned twice, but here's his story. Eliam was a father of a little girl. Like all fathers he loved his daughter and watched her grow into a beautiful young lady. The day finally came that Eliam gave his daughter's hand to a young man to be his wife. Eliam's daughter and son-in-law were making a life together when tragedy befell them. One day, when Eliam's son-in-law was away at work, several men came to his home, took his wife away, and gave her to their leader, and he had sexual relations with her. Not only that, but this man of power also had Eliam's son-in-law murdered.

For the record, Eliam's son-in-law was Uriah. His daughter was Bathsheba. And the man of power was King David. Ah!, now you know the story. It was just told from a different perspective, through the eyes of Eliam. We know and love King David in spite of his murderous and adulterous actions. We "brush off" his mistakes and count him as one of our heroes.

But here's my question. Do you think Eliam viewed David as a hero? Through the eyes of Eliam, how do you suppose the man who murdered his son-in-law, and stole away his daughter was viewed? Do you think it might have been harder for Eliam to forgive David, than it has been for us? Surely, but that brings me to my point.

We can talk about forgiveness all day long and know all the right answers, but we may not appreciate how much work this spiritual discipline requires. Forgiveness is easy until you really need to forgive someone. Loving your enemies is easy until you really have an enemy of your own.

Friends, don't get overconfident in your ability and willingness to forgive. Continue to work at and mature in this spiritual discipline. And when you think you've arrived, go back and try looking through the eyes of Eliam.