

Spiritual How-to's
Retaliation
Debbie Chaney

Intro. How do you respond when someone does evil to you, or says evil about you?

What's your "go to" response?

Retaliation is defined as – "the return of like for like, the doing to another what he's done to you. Requit, revenge, evil, reprisal"

Are you more like **Teflon or Velcro**? Do things like that just slide off of you (like Teflon), or do those things stick in your memory (like Velcro)?

Are you prone to retaliate? Get back, get even, payback?

I. Two stories about retaliation. One Teflon, one Velcro.

A. Teflon first – David & Shimei 1 Samuel 16:5-12; 2 Sam. 19:19-23

1. Shimei is following king David around throwing stones at him. Throwing dirt on him, cussing him out and demeaning him with "you worthless and useless man".
2. David's nephew, Abishi asks why David is allowing this and could he please go and cut off Shimei's head.
3. David tells him and all his servants, "PERHAPS the Lord will look on the wrong done to me by Shimei & the Lord will return good to me in place of his cursing."
4. Years later, after David is restored as king over all of Israel, Shimei comes to David and asks to not remember what he had done nor take it to heart.
5. Abishai again asks David for permission to kill Shimei
6. David did not retaliate, but promised Shimei life instead
7. THIS IS TEFLON when it comes to retaliation – the wrong done to David did not stick to him nor enrage him to repay evil for evil.

B. Velcro – Akku Yadav's murder in 2004

1. A man living in New Delhi is known to have raped 200 women living in the Kasturba Nagar slum.
2. He often bribed officials, courts, & police to evade arrest or capture.
3. Police even alerted him to coming accusations. He would then go and threaten the women with rape again or to scorch them with acid.
4. Hearing of his arrest and likely release again, a once victim, Narayane, rallied other of his victims to swarm the courthouse with whatever weapons they could find. Vegetable knives, rocks, etc.
5. As he was led past the mob of women, he again made threatening remarks to them.

6. This was the last straw for Narayane and the women and they began beating Yadav for more than 10 minutes, leaving him butchered, penis-less and dead on the courtroom floor.
 7. THIS IS VELCRO retaliation. The wrong done to the women had stuck with them and they repaid evil for evil.
- C. Initially, I thought comparing these 2 stories was a great imbalance. Shoot, if I were Narayane, I would be so inclined. How can you compare name calling, rocks and dirt throwing with repeated rape? Of course it's easier to let go of the former and retaliate for the later. Am I miss stating this?

II. But here's the kingdom principle that Jesus reveals – "The OT law of Retaliation, and eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth isn't going to get you anywhere and is now superseded by no tit for tat. Ignore insignificant insults and trivial losses. Don't bother to retaliate – maintain your dignity, your self respect, your poise." Matthew 5:38-39
MSG & AMP

- A. Well, ok. Maybe in the **smaller cases**, like David and Shimei. Words and curses, maybe a little physical scuffle. Ok, maybe.
1. I'll be like Teflon and will shake off those "minor offenses".
 2. But surely not the major ones!?
- B. Jesus goes on to say if someone hits you – take it. If they drag you into court & sue you – give them more than they ask for. If someone forces you to go 1 mile, go 2.
Matthew 5:40-41
- C. He's setting forward a principle here, that when our rights are violated, our response should not be to get even, get back. Payback. Retaliation. Why?**
- D. The Kingdom of God runs on God's justice, not our own. On him repaying, not us. On His rescue to save us, not us to save ourselves. Romans 12:17-21; Proverbs 20:22**
- E. Peter tells us this about God's kingdom justice – "Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, give a blessing, for you have been called for this very purpose. " 1 Peter 3:9 ESV, MSG**
- F. Even the **law says, "Vengeance is Mine, and retribution..."** This is God speaking, not man! Deuteronomy 32:35
- G. The first awareness that must grip us when we have been wronged is – God, You see this, You know what's happening here.** Help me to be Teflon with this and trust your justice. Just like David with Shimei.

III. Even in the major offenses. The big hurts and abuses in our life! The Akku Yadav, Velcro type of hurts! Why? Because One stronger than Yadav and even stronger than David has modeled for us how to be Teflon and trust God's justice. That is Jesus Christ.

- A. **Jesus was betrayed by a friend.** What did He do? Jesus received his kiss of betrayal and called Judas “friend”. Matthew 26:50
- B. Jesus was accused **falsely by witnesses.** What did he do? Jesus remained silent. Matthew 26: 63
- C. They **spit** in His face, **struck** him, and **slapped** Him. What did He do? He turned the other cheek. Quite literally. Both cheeks were beaten severely.
- D. The **bound** Him and **led** Him away. What did He do? He went further than they asked Him. He went all the way to the cross. Matthew 27:1-2, 35
- E. He was **accused** by the religious leaders. What did He do? He gave no answer. Matthew 27:12
- F. Pilate’s wife called Him a **righteous man**, yet the crowds called for his destruction. Matthew 27: 19-20
- G. **Jesus was scourged, stripped, crowned with thorns, spit on, hit in the head repeatedly, mocked, beaten, whipped, stripped again and nailed to a cross. Where He was laughed at, mocked, insulted, humiliated, forsaken, betrayed, and finally killed.** Matthew 27:24-54
- H. On the cross, He even cried out to God asking **why God had forsaken Him.** Matthew 27:46
- I. Jesus **trusted God and yet it appeared that God had abandon Him.** Matthew 27:43
- J. These are major offenses. Big hurts and abuses.**
- J. THIS IS VELCRO WORTHY RETALIATION. BUT JESUS IS TRUSTING GOD’S JUSTICE.**
- K. Philippians 2 tells us these things about Jesus’ mindset –
 - a. Even tho Jesus was God, He set aside that status and power
 - b. He set aside the privilege of deity and became a slave, a man
 - c. he lived and died selfless and obedient trusting in God’s justice
 - d. What was His reward?
- L. His death was temporary. He came back to life by God’s justice and power. God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name above all others.

IV. Now those of us who are faced with abuse, humiliation, and mistreatment – big and small, can choose to live free from getting even, paying back and retaliation.

- A. **We can choose to live by the Golden Rule of Jesus’ kingdom –**
 “Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.” Matthew 7:12
- B. Rather than by the dog eat dog, cut throat, payback, get even mindset of this present age – doing to others what they have done to us.
- C. Jesus modeled it for us and also empowers us to trust in God’s justice and not take it into our own hands.
- D. Let’s choose to be Teflon and not Velcro.

Underdebraspalm.com