

David and Bathsheba

Over the last week we have explored the wonderful traits of David's character that show us a heart dedicated to the Lord. It is these aspects of David's personality that have caused him to be remembered in Acts 13: 22 *"He [the Lord] testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'* In fact, David had done everything God wanted him to do. The Lord promised he would have rest from all his enemies (2 Sam7:11). David was enjoying a time of peace, something unheard of for most of his adult life. His country was at peace, the Philistines had been pushed out of the Promised Land, and the Moabites, Edomites, Arameans, and surrounding nations had been defeated by force or by treaty.

David was at the pinnacle of his success as King of Israel. The Lord was with him, and he knew it. His obedience and zeal for the Lord culminated in the outpouring of blessings and revelation of God's plan for David's dynasty: an everlasting kingdom upon which his descendant would be forever enthroned.

But this week we will be watching as David makes a series of catastrophic choices that lead him down a path of sin and destruction. It is amazing to me that a man who so deeply loves the Lord could lose sight of all that Lord had done for him and through him. He will fall from the heights of a successful reign to the depths of a mire of sin filled with deceit, abuse of power, murder, and the death of two innocents.

A Warm Moonlit Night

As you start this week's homework, pray that the Lord will open your heart to the lessons David must confront in dealing with his choices. Nowhere is it more clear than in this passage that the wages of sin is death.



Read 2 Samuel 11:1-27.

Where is David? _____ Where is he supposed to be? _____

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Evidently David felt the Ammonites were not a serious threat and that Joab could handle the siege of Rabbah. Remember in Chapter 10, David had just defeated the Arameans, the hired mercenaries of the Ammonites. The last verse of chapter 10 says “*the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites anymore.*” Instead of being where he should have been, David stayed in Jerusalem. This seemingly simple little decision to delegate a task to another begins a series of events that David can't control. As King, it was most certainly David's responsibility to lead his army to war. Relinquishing his role of leadership to his general allowed David too much idle time on his hands.

♥ This is the first crossroads, the first choice that David makes down the wrong path. As you read this passage, either mark in your Bible (if you are so inclined) or list the verses where David is at another crossroad, and again makes the wrong decision. (I counted 10.)

Do you think David loved Bathsheba?

Deuteronomy 17:17 warns kings against taking too many wives. What does it say would be the consequence?

What does Proverbs 4:23 say about the heart?

What does Jeremiah 17:9 say about the heart?

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How do you think David's heart lied to him?

Now let's take a closer look at what David is doing. Who does it say Bathsheba is in verse 3? _____

- Who was Eliam? See 2 Sam 23:34 _____
- Who was Ahitophel? (2 Sam 15:12) _____
- Who was Uriah? (1 Chronicles 11:26, 41) _____

Complete Numbers 32:23 "*you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will _____*". What happens next to Bathsheba (v.5)?

♥ What does 2 Sam 11:6-13 tell us about the character of Uriah the Hittite? Uriah's name means "Jehovah (Yahweh) is my light (flame)"¹. What does this add to your understanding of Uriah?

♥ How do you think this example of Uriah would have made David feel? What should it have done?

What does David do next to "cover-up" his affair with Bathsheba?

What do you think Joab knew, understood, or surmised by these instructions.

¹ Easton's Illustrated Dictionary

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What does verse 25 tell you about the state of David's heart?

How does verse 27 describe the Lord's response to David's actions? "*But the thing David had done _____ the LORD.*" *Yara'* is the Hebrew word translated "displeased" in the NIV. *Yara'* means grieved, grievous, evil².

What began for David as idleness and temptation escalated to acts that grieved the Lord for their evil and selfish intent. The events set in motion by David's sinful choices will carry ramifications through the rest of his reign and life. What is set in motion here will bring jealousy, dissension, discord, insurrection and death to not only to David's family, but to the entire kingdom. The great privileges that came with David's kingship also came with great responsibilities. The choices and actions he tried to keep hidden would not remain concealed; their consequences reverberated throughout the kingdom. David's actions lead to irreparable damage. In the midst of all those choices the Lord attempted to dissuade David from pursuing a path of disobedience. David had been experiencing the Torah blessings of Deuteronomy 28. If he continued his path of sin the kingdom would suffer the consequences of his disobedience also outlined in Deuteronomy 28. The Lord provided opportunities for David to adjust his course and repent before it was too late.

♥ Throughout David's descent into the depths of sin and depravity, the Lord provided multiple opportunities for David to confess and repent. Each time David chose the path that led further into sin. What were some of the ways the Lord tried to get David's attention? Why do you think David persisted on the destructive path he chose?

² Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary

Nathan Rebukes David



Read 2 Samuel 12:1-31.

Who did the Lord send to speak to David? _____

♥ Nathan used a parable in confronting the King with his sin. Why do you think Nathan used that approach?

Why did you _____ the word of the LORD by doing what is _____ in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

♥ Look up John 14:21. What does this verse say about David's actions?

Turn to Exodus 20: 1-17. Which commandments did David break?

According to Leviticus 20:10, 24:17 and Deuteronomy 22:22, what was the penalty for the adultery and murder?

♥ What are the consequences of David's sins? Reread verses 10-14. List the consequences and then compare with verse 6. What is the significance?

Because of David's sin and disobedience strife would enter his household that would almost succeed in tearing it apart. We are told that the *"sword will never depart from [David's] house"* and that *"evil will come up from within his household."* We see the four-fold restitution David's judgment in the parable required come to play in Nathan's

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pronouncement against David and his household. Not only will the four consequences mentioned in verse 10-14 come to pass, but we will see a four-fold judgment of early death in David's family. According to the following verses, list who dies and their relation to David.

12:18 _____

18:14-15 _____

13:29 _____

1 Kings 2:25 _____

David finally confessed his sin at this point. Evidently it was a heartfelt confession of his sin, unlike Saul when he was confronted with his sins. (1 Samuel 15:24). What do verses 13-14 say regarding David's sin?

The Lord in his sovereignty decided that David would not die for his sins. David was truly repentant for his actions. In this act of compassion for David we see Exodus 34:7 modeled. The Lord is truly *"the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin."* The Lord freely forgave David immediately upon David's heartfelt confession even before sacrifices were offered. Although David's sin was forgiven, the consequences of his sin were not removed. David had shown contempt for the Lord. With brazen arrogance David had taken what was not his and killed to cover his sin. In showing contempt for the Law, the Covenant by which God had promised to provide and protect his people the Israelites *if* they abided by his Law, David showed utter contempt for the Lord.

The next verse reveals that there will be a death. It is always difficult to accept the death of an innocent, especially the death of a baby. We must remember to look at "who God is" instead of "what he has done" in circumstances like these. We must acknowledge his holiness as much as we rely on his faithfulness. We may not understand why he has made this judgment, but we must trust that it is for the good of his kingdom – on earth as well as in the heavenly realm.

Verse 14 tells us the baby must die. What is the preceding reason given in this verse?

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Complete James 1:15 *Then, after _____ has conceived, it gives birth to _____; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to _____.*

Before we move on, let's consider Nathan's role. As the Lord's prophet, the Lord sent Nathan to confront David with his sin. Certainly this is not a mission that would have been enviable. The New Testament tells us in Galatians 6:1, "*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*" 2 Timothy 2:24-26 offers similar instruction.

♥ What are your thoughts on rebuking someone you know is choosing a path of sin and separation from the Lord?

Nathan's rebuke had to have come about a year after David's first meeting Bathsheba. The baby had already been born. David had managed to "cover-up" his sin to this point, but it did come back to reveal itself through the words of Nathan. (Numbers 32:23 tells us that we can be sure that our sins will find us out.) It is not long before Nathan's prophecy of the death of David and Bathsheba's baby is carried out. Knowing this prophecy, what does David do and why?

Where did the illness of the baby and his imminent death drive David? (v16, 20)

What else did David know regarding the death his child (v23)?

Despite the harsh judgment and punishment of David and Bathsheba, in what way did the Lord bless them?

What do verses 24 and 25 say of the new son?

Despite this period of grave sin and judgment, the Lord was still with David (unlike with Saul) in protecting and increasing the kingdom. How does this chapter end?

- What does it mean towards the justified accusation against David in verse 14?
- Where did David go in verse 29 (as opposed to where he was in 2 Samuel 11:1)?

We see David defeating the Ammonite capitol of Rabbah, and taking the crown of the former King in a show of conquest. He then moved on to other towns in the Ammonite territory, also subjecting them to his authority. The captured towns' people are put to work rebuilding the towns and fortifying them as they become part of the Israelite-held territory. The plunder that David takes from the Ammonites we are later told is dedicated for the purpose of building the Temple (8:11-12 and 1 Chronicles 29:2-5). This passage of David subduing the enemies of Israel reminds us that the Lord's promises to David of Chapter 7 are still in effect. David will still reap the blessings promised, but they will be tainted by the consequences of his sins against the Lord. Despite David's utter lapse in moral character, he is redeemed from sin and the Lord will still carry out his plan through David.

♥ What does this passage of sin and redemption reveal to you about God's plans for your life when you realize you have tumbled head-long into sin?