

Introduction

If the heart determines everything in a person's life, we would be remiss in looking at David's life if we did not look at his sinful side.

- What we see in David's story, as in *all* biblical stories – *God is the hero*.
 - The kingdom was not safe in: Samuel's hands, Saul's hands, or even in David's hands.
 - Each character had his own personal sin to deal with.

Today I would like to tell you another story in David's life – one of the best bad examples I know.

- It is the story of one of God's own servants falling into sin.
- What we will see from this story is that *nobody is immune*.
 - We always have to be on guard.
 - Any one of God's servants can allow the flesh to take over and act in an ungodly way.

Today we will be in 2 Samuel 11-12, but it will take me a few minutes to get there.

Background

David, for all of his godliness, was still a sinner.

- In a way, the sinful character traits that he showed in his sin with Bathsheba were already there beforehand.
- David had already proven himself to be a man quite skilled at:
 - *Killing people* -- 200 Philistine foreskins -- even though Saul demanded only 100 Philistine foreskins as a bride price, David killed 200 Philistines -- simply to impress his future father-in-law (1 Sam 18:26-27).
 - *Deceiving people* -- David lied to Ahimelech the priest of Nob regarding why he was there (1 Sam 21:1-9).
 - *Using women as objects of personal gain* -- David married Saul's daughter Michal, not out of love, but because "it pleased David to become the king's son-in-law" (1 Sam 18:26).
 - He married two wealthy, influential women from Judah (Abigail, Ahinoam), increasing his wealth and standing in the area (1 Sam 25:39-43).
 - In total, he had at least 8 wives -- some of whom were daughters of neighboring kings (2 Sam 3:1-5) -- and numerous concubines as well.

By the time David had become king over Israel he had already built into himself certain *sinful traits* that came back to haunt him.

- Many times that becomes our punishment for sin – *God allows us to become a kind of person we don't want to be*.
- He allows us to develop our own sinful character.

2 Samuel 11:1-5

Our story takes place "*in the spring, the time when kings normally go out to battle*" (vs 1).

- For some reason David sent Joab his general and "all Israel" to fight against the Ammonites, but "*David stayed home in Jerusalem*."

- All able-bodied men were out at war – but David stayed at home.
 - While men are out risking their lives, David was at home “killing time.”

Walking around on the roof of his palace, David looked over the wall, and saw a woman bathing.

- She wasn't being immodest or trying to expose herself to anyone – after all, the king was supposed to be out at war!
- It was a warm spring afternoon, and she was trying to escape the heat of her house, so she went out into the privacy of her walled courtyard to bathe.
 - Little did she know that someone was lurking from above.
- David "saw" her and that she was "*very beautiful*" (vs 3) – lit. "the woman was *very good* in appearance."
 - He asked about her and found out that she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, one of his best soldiers.
- David didn't care who she belonged to, so he sent for her, "*took her*" and he lay with her.

Explanation

David knew what God had said about the matter.

- He had made his own copy of God's Law, had studied it, and even had taught it most of his life.
 - "You shall not *covet* your neighbor's wife."
 - "You shall not *commit adultery*."
- But David did it anyway.

Temptation leads to sin like that -- we've seen this before.

- The writer uses the *same words* as the first temptation and fall into sin by Adam and Eve.
 - Eve "*saw*" that the fruit was "*good*" (a delight to the eyes), and she "*took*" the fruit and ate (Genesis 3:6).
- The New Testament writer, James puts it this way, "Each one is tempted when he is carried away and *enticed by his own lust*. Then when lust is conceived, *it gives birth to sin*; and when sin is accomplished, *it brings forth death*" (James 1:13 - 14).

David was tempted, he yielded to that temptation, and he "took" someone else's wife.

- He took her like she was a mere object to be used.
 - In fact, at the end of the incident she is merely called "the woman" (vs 5).
 - He treated her like she didn't even have a name!

A sinful heart treats people like objects to be used rather than as precious souls to be loved.

Lo and behold, Bathsheba became pregnant.

- Uriah was off at war, so David had a problem on his hands.

2 Samuel 11:6 - 15

To fix his problem, David tried three things to cover his tracks:

1. **He sent Uriah home to sleep with his wife** -- David sent for Uriah, asked him how the battle was going, then sent him home to be with his wife for the night.
 - Uriah refused, "How could I sleep with my wife when my fellow soldiers, all of Israel and Judah, and even the ark of the covenant is out on the battlefield!" (vs 11).
 - Ironically, Uriah was speaking to someone who was not on the battlefield, and had slept with Uriah's own wife!
 - Instead, Uriah slept at the door of the palace.
2. **David got Uriah drunk** -- hoping that Uriah would go home.
 - Uriah instead slept at the palace with the king's servants (vs 13).
 - Uriah refused to compromise his values for a moment's pleasure – *if only David had done that!*
 - Uriah drunk was more godly than David sober.
3. **David had Uriah killed** -- David sent a letter to his general Joab with orders to have Uriah killed in battle – in fact, David made Uriah carry his own death warrant (vs 14 - 15).

Explanation

David knew what God's Law said on the matter – he had studied it, memorized it, and taught it to other people.

- "You shall not kill!"

But David didn't care.

- *A sinful heart considers human life expendable.*
 - People are mere objects that can be used and discarded when inconvenient.

When the word came back that Uriah had been killed in battle, David shed no tears, and brushed it off as nothing (vs 25).

- "These things happen in war; don't worry about it" (vs 25).
- David had become a hardened, uncaring sinner.

2 Samuel 11:26 - 27

Bathsheba grieved for her dead husband.

- Then immediately after David sent for her, she became his wife, and she gave birth (vs 26 - 27).
- Everything *seems* to be fine.
- After all, *he is the king* and can do whatever he wants.
- The crime is covered up -- no one seems to care.

Up to this point the story something is missing.

- This entire sordid story of lust, sex, deceit, and murder is told *without any mention of God at all* – *a God-less perspective.*
 - David was in control, and God was silent – until now.
 - David had thought he had gotten away with his sin – after all, he was the king, wasn't he?

But just because God was silent up till now does not mean that God was absent – *He watches.*

- *"But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the Lord"* (vs 27b).

2 Samuel 12:1 - 6

God's grace pursued David and exposed his sin.

- God sent His prophet Nathan to David to confront David.

Nathan told David a story about a rich man who had many sheep and a poor man who had only one ewe lamb that he loved dearly.

- The rich man had a visitor, and instead of killing one of his own sheep to feed his guest, he *"took"* the poor man's lamb, killed it, and fed it to his guest.

David, having been a shepherd himself, was furious, *"surely the man who has done this deserves to die!"*

- He must pay four-fold for the lamb he took (cf. Exodus 22:1).
- He had *"no compassion;"* therefore, he must be shown *"no compassion"* (vs 6).

2 Samuel 12:7 - 15

Nathan pointed his finger in David's face and said, **"You are the man!"** (vs 7a) – "That's exactly what you have done."

- "David, you have pronounced your own sentence.

God has done *everything* for you in the past – has shown you amazing grace (vs 7 - 8).

- He *anointed* you as king.
- He *delivered* you from King Saul, when Saul tried to kill you.
- He *gave* you Saul's palace, and all of Israel and Judah.
- If that was not enough, God would have given you more!

But instead of serving Him, you *killed* Uriah, and you *took* his wife!

- Here, now, are the **consequences** for your sin.
1. **"The sword shall never depart from your house"** (vs 10a).
 - Violence would mark David's family (chapter 13 - 19; 1 Kings 1 - 2).
 - Four of David's sons would experience a premature death (the baby [12:18], Amnon [13:29], Absalom [18:14-15], Adonijah [1 Kgs 2:25]).
 2. **Your wives will be taken and disgraced before everyone** (vs 11).
 - David's "secret" sin would be answered with blatantly public sin (vs. 11 - 12).
 3. **The child born of that unholy union will die** (vs 14).
 - That child would die because of David's sin.

Explanation of David's Sin

"David, let me explain to you what you have done – what your sin means to God.

1. **You have "*despised*" (treated with contempt) the word of the Lord"** (vs 9).
 - He treated God's commandments as if they didn't matter.
 - You *knew* what God's word said, but you *rejected* it.
 - He blatantly disobeyed three of God's Ten Commandments.
 - "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife."
 - "You shall not commit adultery."
 - "You shall not kill."
 - David thought that he could hide behind the fact that:
 - He was the king.
 - Someone else did the dirty work in killing Uriah.
 - David knew what God's Word said .
 - *He dismissed God's word as irrelevant.*
 - *He despised God's Word.*

2. **David, you have "*despised*" the Lord Himself** (vs 10).
 - "You have *despised* Me" (vs 10).
 - The Lord had done so much for David in his life (vs 7 - 8).
 - Previously, whenever David sought the Lord's will, God clearly revealed it to him.
 - Whenever he did not seek God's counsel, David got into trouble.
 - But *at this point in his life David wanted to live as if the Lord didn't matter*, or worse, *was inconvenient*.
 - Considering what David wanted to do with Bathsheba – the Lord was going to get in the way.
 - God was inconvenient.
 - God was unwanted.
 - From the time of the sin until David confessed, at least 9 months had passed.
 - David lived out of fellowship with God for months.
 - Either David believed that God didn't know about his sin, or that God didn't care.
 - Or worse, David didn't even think about God at all.
 - God said, "*You have despised Me.*"
 - Treated me with contempt.
 - Dismissed Me as being unimportant in your life.

3. **David, you have led others to "*blaspheme*" God** (vs 14).
 - "*By this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme*" (vs 14).
 - Others were watching David and all of Israel.
 - They knew that David followed Yahweh.
 - They knew that David was supposed to be different because Yahweh was different than the other gods.
 - Israel's God was supposed to be holy, righteous, and just.
 - Now they saw Israel's king, God's earthly representative, act like everyone else.
 - David lied, killed, and stole someone else's wife.
 - "Israel's God is no better than anyone else!"

- "Their God makes no difference!"
- "Who needs Him?"

Explanation

The apostle Paul said of the Jews, "For the name of God is *blasphemed* among the Gentiles *because of you*" (Romans 1:24).

- His name should be hallowed, revered, and blessed by all.
- But when others see *no marked difference* in the lives of God's followers – *Why on earth would they want the God that we say that we serve?*

David had led others to blaspheme God.

David immediately repented of his sin.

- **"I have sinned against Yahweh"** (vs 13) – two words in Hebrew.
 - No excuses or conditions.
 - A broken heart.
 - Genuine confession of sin.

David immediately received God's forgiveness for his sin.

- **"Yahweh himself has also put away your sin; you shall not die"** (vs 13b).
 - *True repentance brings God's forgiveness.*
 - David deserved to die, but he received God's grace.
 - His relationship with God was immediately restored.

But the consequences of his sin remained.

1. Violence.
 2. Disgrace.
 3. The child would die.
- David suffered these consequences for the rest of his life.
 - *Forgiveness of sin is not the same thing as forgiveness of consequences.*

2 Samuel 12:15 - 25

God "struck" the child (vs 15), just like David had "struck" Uriah (vs 7).

- The child died "on the seventh day" (vs 18) before he could be circumcised on the eighth day (Leviticus 12:3) and brought into the covenant community.
- The child died before they could even give it a name.
- Compared to the next child,
 - Who received two names – Solomon, Jedidiah
 - Whom "the Lord loved"
 - Born to "David's wife" (not Uriah's widow)
- The first child was *cursed by God* because of David's sin.

To me, the unnamed child who died is the *true tragedy* here.

- By no means was he responsible.
- He was completely innocent of the crime.
- He was "struck" by God for the sin of someone else – and *died!*

I ache every time I read it.

- It's *not fair* for the child.
- It's ugly, brutal, mean, and I don't like it.
- An *innocent soul* dying so that David could be forgiven.
 - It's ugly!
 - But *atonement* always is.

That's the *same lesson* God taught His people every time they brought a sacrifice to that altar as a sin offering.

- An innocent animal died so that they might be forgiven.
- "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 3:23).

For forgiveness to take place, somebody has to pay the price.

- That's the only way Jesus Himself could look at a guilty person and say, "Your sins are forgiven."
- He knew that on one horrible Friday afternoon He, the innocent One, would hang on a cruel cross to suffer and die for those sins.

"Surely He bore *our griefs* and carried *our sorrows*.

Yet we considered Him smitten, *struck down by God*, and afflicted.

He was pierced through for *our transgressions*,

And crushed for *our iniquities*.

The punishment that brought *our peace* fell on Him,

And with His stripes *we are healed*.

All we like sheep have gone astray.

Each of us has turned to his own way.

But the Lord has *laid on Him* the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:4 - 6).

An innocent soul dies for the sin of someone else.

- It's ugly, brutal, mean, and cruel -- and I don't like it.
- But *oh, how I cling to that!*
- *It's my only hope!*

For information about Brentview Baptist Church and its ministries,
please contact the church office at:
3512 Charleswood Dr NW, Calgary, AB T2L 2C3
Phone: 403-284-4691 Fax: 403-284-0132 email: mail@brentviewbaptist.com
Website: www.brentviewbaptist.com