

Exposition of
2 Samuel 11:1 through 12:14

Sermon Series:
Spiritual Lessons from OT Kings

Sermon Title:
Consequences of Sin
Lesson from King David

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INTRODUCTION

In the previous message from this series from the spiritual lessons of the OT Kings, David was a man committed to seeking God's direction. I pray that your hearts were encouraged with the principals presented to us in the Bible regarding God's faithfulness to His covenant promises, and particularly upon those who seek and enquire after him.

Last week we were encouraged by the faithfulness of David, however in today's message we are granted a warning from the life of David during a time when he failed to seek after and walk with the Lord.

We learned in our last message how David was previously able to subdue kingdoms and all the challenges of the enemies of Israel, however today we will learn how he was greatly defeated by his own personal desires and carnal lust.

This defeat of David is, I trust, very instructive for all believers. Recall, how that I said, our going through the lives of some of the Jewish monarchy is not only for increased knowledge of ancient Bible antiquity, but rather to glean from these precious records of Scripture the wells of wisdom and spiritual lessons that are for us to learn and mature from.

One such lesson I hope we all agree that is obvious in today's text is that the most lethal threats to our souls, do not come from outside of us but from within our own hearts. This thought may bring to your remembrance James 1:14, 15 where we are taught that the lust of a person's own heart is the thing which produces produces sin.

As believers, in a fallen world, we no doubt will be faced with many external threats and temptations and so it is vital that we realize and honestly confront those areas of particular weakness in our lives and then, as a soldier, who is cautious and careful, alert and mindful of the enemies schemes and tactics, be on guard

against such temptations that may penetrate our hearts and stir up sinful desires from within.

In today's text, David faces the tragic consequences of his sin. He faces the responsibility for what he had done and even though David repented and was remorseful, God being just and honoring His holy law, administered judgment upon David and his house. The consequences of sin, as we learn today, most of the time, often affect others besides ourselves.

BODY

v.1 THE POTENTIAL FOR SIN

READ 8:1 (David was in the battle)

8:14 (The LORD preserved David in these heroic epics of war)

8:15(He exhibits great fruits of a son of the faith)

9:1 (He exhibits great kindness & mercy to Mephibosheth)

10:1-2 (David's willingness to live at peace with past enemies & the reason for the conflict)

10:18 (Again, David is at his post, in the fight)

Today's lesson took place in the beginning of the year. This was the time of year when traditionally the majority of battles were fought. Why? Well, the harvest time would have been over and the armies could be formed, (remember that these are Algerian peoples and they would have needed grains and foods to feed the armies, additionally, the fields would have now been dry enough for chariots and marching.

And although this is the time of year when the text says that 'kings go forth to battle' David neglected this responsibility and sent Joab his immediate subordinate instead and he potential for David's eventual sin is revealed here with the account of his "neglect."

This affords us a sad reminder; that the potential for sin can be seen in a life many times before the sin is actually conceived, or put another way; sin does not just suddenly overtake us.

The turning of a heart away from obedience is frequently the result of a process and involves many dynamics, including gradual disobedience, failure in personal devotion, and rebellion against the promptings of the Spirit of God.

v.2 THE CASUAL BEGINNING

The scene moves to a very personal part of David's life. He had been taking long afternoon nap when he arose to walk upon the roof of the palace.

Following the theme of his “negligence” from v.1, here we can immediately observe that he was not only neglecting his military duty, but also his prayer life. Throughout the Psalms we learn that David would pray in the morning, afternoon and the evening and throughout the day offer emergency prayers and thanksgiving prayers. But that is not the scene we see represented here. Instead he displaying an undisciplined life, a settled downed type attitude as he takes a stroll upon the roof. This walking atop the roof was not an uncommon practice in this hot region of the Middle East, where rooftops were cooled by occasional breezes and it is reasonable to assume that David’s palace was higher than all the surrounding buildings as it looked out over the court below.

The closest indication of the condition of David's personal temperament is the notation that he had remained behind (v.1) rather than going out to battle and that he was not pursuing his prayers and it is during this period of neglect of his responsibilities and spiritual disciplines that this particular temptation crosses his path.

From the rooftop he saw a woman "washing herself." The text does not indicate that David was intentionally searching for this discovery. The implication is rather that while he was walking, this sight simply caught his attention. Of course this draws into perspective the unexpected nature that accompanies the many temptations we face. One would be a fool to ignore the principals given us in Scripture to 'make a covenant with our eyes' and to 'keep our eyes from beholding vanity', these principals, like the loving and protective nature of God's moral law afford us practical and useful guidelines to live upright and unspotted lives in a God-hating world.

To neglect such principals, and allow everything of this world to enter through what John Bunyan calls the Eye-Gate and into Man-Soul is not only terribly naive, but also potentially harmful to one's own soul.

Some interpreters believe that Bathsheba was going through a ceremonial bath which David would have recognized. The text in verse 4 confirms that she had completed the ritual purification, or cleansing, required of Jewish women at the end of each menstrual cycle.

The place and temptation for sin was not something David sought after, but it "crossed his path" when he noticed this beautiful woman. However, the depth of the desire of David to pursue what he knew to be a capital crime can be seen as the details of David's persistence are described.

v.3 THE PURSUING OF SIN

Here David reveals to us what we mentioned last week in passing, which was his indifference to a particular Law of God in Deut. 17:17 which prohibits David from having multiple wives, additionally the Moral Law of God as established in the Garden with our first parents Adam and Eve furthermore prohibits him

from such an enquiry into who this women was and even though he is informed of her being a married women, to Uriah none the less (which ought to have been a great big flashing warning light to David alerting him to the dangers of this temptation) he still proceeded.

The Puritan's would refer to people possessing 'darling sins'. The idea was that as parents have little darling children, who when they cry, would give them food to eat and milk to drink taking great care to protect and coddle the little darling. Likewise, **there are some who are guilty of this very same thing with regard to known sin they coddle instead of crying out, seeking God over and over again to aid them in putting it to death.**

QUOTE "The great thing that a Christian has in his eye, in all the duties he performs, and in all the ordinances that he attends, is the blood, death and ruin of his remaining sins." (Thomas Brooks - Vol.5,p.20)

David's 'darling sin' David's 'special sin' is that very thing which is now clouding his thinking, it is seeking like a roaring lion to devour him and attempt to make mockery of the God who David confesses before all men.

v.4 FULFILLMENT OF DESIRE

Up until this point, the full impact of his intention has been withheld from the reader until now, the sinful desire that had been fostered, coddled and pursued by David is here revealed.

David has turned a casual discovery into an occasion for sin. He daringly pursues his desires though he is aware of the potential of the consequences. In addition, notice that David was bold enough to involve his servants in pursuing Bathsheba.

But David did not come from that first casual glance to adultery all at once. The record of the text carefully reveals a process of events with each succeeding event the potential for fulfillment of the lustful desire became greater and greater.

- The emphasis of the description is upon the willfulness of David. Succeeding events are recorded from the perspective of what David does: He “sent messengers.” he “took her,” and he “lay with her.” Bathsheba's participation is also noted: “and she came in unto him.” However, the greater emphasis of the text is upon David's deliberate actions.

- This all goes to teach us that people are not forced to sin. An individual is not overwhelmed by desires and driven to sin by uncontrollable urges. On the contrary, an individual gradually pursues desires and lusts, which build in intensity, and no one except the individual who chooses to pursue the path of sin is responsible for this process.

Entrance to the path of sin may be casual, even accidental, at first, as was the case with David, but if followed, it eventually leads to tragedy. No one but David is held accountable for his persistent pursuit of the sinful path. He was not suddenly overwhelmed. He chose to pursue a passion that was allowed to grow to catastrophic proportions.

Just as in David's case, a person's responsibility for sin cannot be transferred to another person. We all know very well that sin may involve a number of people and a number of circumstances; however, individual responsibility for each person's part in that sin cannot be removed this of course is the nature of sin and its consequences in the economy of God.

- The tragedy of David's adultery is not only a transgression of God's Moral Law, not only against the Nation's Judicial Laws, but also it is compounded in two particular ways.

Bathsheba was the daughter of Eliam (ee-LIE-am) and the wife of one of David's warriors – Uriah (you-RYE-ah). Eliam's identity is unclear from the Scriptures. However, it was unusual for the name of a woman's father to have been used to identify her when her husband was named, therefore, in view of that fact, Eliam was probably a person of distinction, some sort of noble perhaps. Also, the reputation and valor of Uriah is a major part of the story (he is named in the listing of David's mighty men 23:39)

So, the fact that David would boldly commit adultery knowing the faithfulness and nobility of her family adds to the tragedy of this entire event that is unfolding.

v.5 RESULT OF SIN

The result of David and Bathsheba's sin was the conception of a child. It is simply noted here that Bathsheba reported it to David, thus a light is beginning to expose this evil deed and the following consequences of the sin begin to develop.

It is at this moment that David no doubt, begins to really be confronted with the reality of what he had done. Prior to this, he deceived himself by thinking that he was not hurting anyone, it would be a little secret between him and Bathsheba, but now it will be known by all and bring great consequences along with it.

And it is at this point in the text that the emphasis of this narrative begins to focus on the child. We discover that the next section (vv.6-13) begin to describe David's attempt to cover up his sin by manipulating Uriah, and in all that, the child is still very much a part of the story as David seeks to escape responsibility for the adulterous affair by trying to make the child appear to be Uriah's rather than his own and then focus on the child continues as Nathan later confronts David (13:1-14) and reveals that judgment upon David was going to include the death of his child.

How vivid this illustration is to show that often times, our sinful choices have the potential to impact the lives of others and not just ourselves, and in this case particularly the next generation.

Consider how children and infants today, often suffer and share in the consequences of the sins of their parents. Even though adults know the potential for the tragedy that can fall upon future generations, they still continue in their self-centered lifestyle and choices.

Many times abortion, neglect, and abuse result in the total destruction of the parent-child bonds that were intended to serve as an illustration of God's general love, mercy and care for all his creation.

~ Now, the biblical account records David's attempt to cover up his sin in verses 6-25. David actually tried three different times to cover up his sin before he was temporarily successful.

vv.6-17 ATTEMPTED COVER UP OF SIN

His first attempt was simply to bring Uriah back from battle and have him go home to his wife (vv. 6-9), No doubt, David expected no complications from this plan. Of course, David's hope was that the conception would then be attributed to Uriah's visit with Bathsheba.

This first attempt failed when Uriah proved himself faithful to his king by sleeping at the door of the palace rather than with Bathsheba (v.8-11). Note, the stark contrast of valor and honor in Uriah's character and the deceived backslidden character of David. Oh, how we may be found as faithful and true as Uriah...seeing that our call and enlistment in Christ's army is one of duty and sacrifice. This picture of Uriah placing the honor of God (represented by The Ark) and the kingdom (Israel/Judah) and the

honor of his authority (Joab) along with his fellow brethren and soldiers above his own personal comfort is such a noble example to all those who profess Christ as the Great Captain of their salvation.

Here Uriah explains that he would have felt unfaithful if he had laid with his wife ‘Go down to thine house and wash thy feet.’ (v.8) while his comrades and the ark of the Lord were still on the battlefield.

(vv.12-13) The failure of David’s second attempt is recorded in verses 12 and 13. David again tried to place Uriah with Bathsheba for the night. This time he called Uriah to eat and to drink until he was drunk. However, this attempt also failed, because Uriah once again refused to ‘go down to his house’ and find comfort in his wife.

(vv.14-21) On his third attempt, David's compulsion led to more drastic measures. Just as his pursuit of his desires for Bathsheba had increased until he committed adultery, so did David's drive to cover up his sin led him to plot the murder of Uriah. Verses 14-21 describe how David had Uriah placed in the "hottest" part of the battle, where he knew that Uriah couldn't survive (v. 15). This was the part of the conflict where Joab, in light of David's orders, placed Uriah and **it's the inevitable death of this faithful warrior (Uriah) that makes David's wicked plan to cover up his sin seem complete therefore, leading David into a false security of deception believing that he has escaped the consequences of his sin.**

~ (vv.18-24) Joab sent a messenger to David to convey the news of the death of the faithful warrior Uriah and we notice with how particular the messenger was cautioned by Joab to carefully and cautiously explain the circumstances of his death (vv. 20, 21), This emphasis of Uriah's death, no doubt would later be used by God

the Spirit to serve as another indictment against David's conscious regarding this the evil sin and corruption.

vv.22-25 FALSE SECURITY & DECEPTION

With the news of Uriah's death, there seems to be a false sense of security which comes over David. His deception is shocking, and reminds of the words of the prophet **Jerimiah in 6:14** **“They have healed also the hurt [of the daughter] of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when [there is] no peace.”** As an illustration of his deception that he has gotten away with this treachery, David encourages the messenger not to worry about Uriah's death and to encourage Joab not to worry. His false sense of security and callousness is fully revealed here when he tells the messenger that death was just part of the risk taken in battle and that “the sword devoureth one as well as another.”

I hope that you would agree that here, David's sinful passion and desire to cover up his sin is clearly seen as he deceives himself by explaining away his responsibility for Uriah's death with hypocritical ease.

Throughout today's text David demonstrates for before us character traits that are quite the opposite of those he had displayed in our last message from 2 Samuel 5, where we saw a man that was made humble by the awareness that God had brought him to such prominence and power and a man that sought after the Lord and obeyed His commandments. But how did all this happen? What has led to this point of his great fall?

Unconfessed sin had changed the character of David as a person and like David there are many whose character begins to be changed by pet sins that will deny such a change and try to justify their actions instead of bowing to the truth of God's Word regarding their sin...but nevertheless, a perceivable reversal of

character will be evident just as it is here in David's life which brings God great displeasure.

vv.26-27 GOD'S DISPLEASURE

These two verses further emphasize David's responsibility for all that had occurred, yes we must admit that Bathsheba had also been involved and she would bear her share of the responsibility, however, today's text emphasizes the major responsibility for this tragedy on the lap of king David.

He had abused his power as king. He had been able to command and manipulate messengers, servants, generals, and even Bathsheba. And did all this, he abused his power, to only fulfill his sinful desires.

v.26 It is very telling regarding the hardening effects of sins upon David's heart, where we see Bathsheba went into a genuine time of mourning upon hearing the news of Uriah's death, but there is no mention of remorse or compassion from the lips of David.

Even though Bathsheba had participated in David's sin, it was only after David had taken her to his house (v. 4). She became his wife, but only after he had fetched her to the palace to be married (V. 27). Back in verse 4 the forceful word "took" and in verse 27 again the word "fetch" are powerful indications of David's assertion and abuse of power over Bathsheba and thus making him liable for the majority of the blame which is so obvious.

This ability to use his position as king to manipulate throughout this text, allowing David to pursue his lust, carry out his evil desires, and eventually devise a cover-up for his sin almost gives the impression that there was no limit or authority above him as the king. However, the limitations of David's power, an Authority that is larger, and bigger than king David and for that

matter all earthly kings comes into focus with the summary statement in the latter part of verse 27: "The thing that David had done displeased the Lord." Which literally means "was evil in the eyes of the Lord".

This narrative now changes with the introduction of the power, the authority, and the judgment of the Lord. **It must have seemed a time of satisfaction and achievement to David that all his actions had culminated in his marriage to Bathsheba. However God's assessment of David's deeds was quite different from David's.**

This of course, is one of the ironies of sin, that through the deception of our weak flesh, it is seen as the fulfillment of our own desires and the obtaining of our personal satisfactions, however, in reality, after being sifted through the grid of God's Word, it is found evil in the sight of the Lord which results in hurtful consequences.

12:1-14 THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN ANNOUNCED

In 2 Samuel 7:16 Nathan had been the messenger through whom God declared to David that his house and kingdom would be established forever. Now, David had become sinful and deceptive, and Nathan must declare judgement upon David and his house.

12:13 DAVID'S REPENTANCE AND THE AUTUMN SUN

David's immediate response to the declaration of God's judgment was to confess his personal responsibility for transgressing against the Lord; "I have sinned against the Lord." He acknowledged his unfaithfulness and disobedience to the commandments, blessings, and responsibilities that the Lord had given him. Specifically, he had rebelled against the Lord himself. Therefore, David's

confession is appropriate. He said that he had sinned "against the Lord,"

This confession did not negate the requirement of God's justice. That God had "put away" David's sin did not mean that its consequences had been eliminated. The next pronouncement in the verse emphasizes this by clarifying that David would live but the child would die. The consequence of his sin would be borne by the young child Bathsheba was carrying. This is representative of the manner in which Christ bears the judgment for the sins of individuals today. His death paid the penalty for our sins. God's justice was satisfied by Christ when He bore the judgment for our sins upon Himself. This is the wonderful work of Christ on behalf of His church.