

The Mirror We Don't Like

2 Samuel 11:26 - 12:8

Nutshell: David will think he succeeded in his plotting, but God will lay Him low with the truth he'd suppressed. Creatures who can completely deny reality should always be on the lookout for spiritual hazards. We need the mirror of the Word.

I. Context: David killing Uriah to cover his adultery.

II. Text

2 Sam 11:26 And Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah *was* dead. And *she* mourned for her lord.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

Review

- A. The Book of Kingdoms, our 1 & 2 Sam + 1 & 2 Kings, is the story of Israel's kings, beginning with the prophet Samuel, who anointed both of the first two kings, Saul and David
 1. Samuel warned Israel vs. having a king, 1 Sam 10:19, Hos 13:11
 2. **Saul** was apostate *man's* version of king. God previewed *His* version via **David**, 1 Sam 13:14
- ✿ B. 1 Kings 15:5 tells us that David kept God's commands *except* in the Bathsheba incident. This dramatically shapes our approach to each incident in David's life.
- C. The chronicler presents David as God's chosen king, a *picture* of Messiah, but *not* the Messiah; a *reference point* for all subsequent kings of Judah, e.g., 2 Kings 14:3; 2 Chron 34:2
- D. David was anointed king over **Judah**, 2 Sam 2, then **Israel**, 5:1- 5. Trouble between the two begins in 2 Sam 2:12-32.
- E. **DAVID'S WAITING BUSINESS AS KING***
 1. David finally vanquished Jebus (Jerusalem), 2 Sam 5:6-10, where he had taken Goliath's head, 1 Sam 17:54
 2. David retrieved the Ark from its 'wanderings', 6:1-19;

- first, ignoring God's instructions, leading to a death, then properly, with great joy
3. Now David wants to build a permanent form for the Tabernacle. His son Solomon will build Temple.
 - ★ 4. God chose *Abraham* to bless all nations. Now He chose *David's* line to bring forth the King of all nations
 5. David fulfilled his oath to Jonathan through his son Mephibosheth, 9:1-13. *ALL OBLIGATIONS CAUGHT UP.
- F. The Ammonites incited war, but Israel won, 10:1-19.
- G. In 2 Sam 11, the battle with Ammon was resumed
1. David stayed in Jerusalem, as he did in 10:7
 2. There, at nightfall, from his roof, he saw beautiful Bathsheba washing herself, presumably in her courtyard
 3. He inquired concerning her. God gave him warnings to leave her alone. She was married to one of his chief military officers, daughter of another of them.
- H. David committed adultery with Bathsheba
1. Bathsheba, like David, had been holy up to this point
 2. Bathsheba conceived. David looked to cover his tracks.
 3. He fetched Uriah from the battlefield, hoping he'd go home and lay with his wife, 'absolving' David
 4. Uriah refused the comforts of home. No cover for David.
- I. David sent word to Joab to plan an attack where Uriah would be killed. It was accomplished.

Kid-speak: Whom did David have killed last time we looked at his story? Uriah, the husband of the woman David committed adultery with.

Outline:

- I. It Can Look Like We Got Away With It, 11:26-27
 - II. But Everything Hinges on the One, Steadfastly Just Opinion, 27c
 - III. There Are Many Mirrors in Life. Most Make Us Mad, 12:1-6
 - IV. Every Sin is a Betrayal vs. God's Great Generosity, 12:7-8
- J. 2 Sam 11:26, Bathsheba is not the focus. Here she is "the wife of Uriah."
1. David and Bathsheba did wrong. Uriah was upright.
 2. The upright was slain for the wrongdoers' wrongdoing,

- chiefly David's
- K. "Heard that her husband Uriah was dead"
1. Since David does not seem to have returned word to Bathsheba since she sent him word of her pregnancy, this was probably her first good lead on what David had done. Uriah's death was very *unlikely* a coincidence.
 2. It sounds like Bathsheba heard through regular channels, like any other officer's wife
- L. "And she mourned for her lord"
1. "Lord," not the usual word for husband, but not uncommon
 - a. The Biblical roles of husband and wife as lord and 2nd-in-command is clear in the word "lord"
 - b. A godly husband is to *love* his wife, not coerce her
 - c. *Her* command is to submit
 2. This is the 5th "mourning" in 1 & 2 Sam: the 1st two for Samuel, the next for Saul, the next of Joab for Abner; lastly this. The word connotes the deep expression of emotion.
 3. Bathsheba's mourning must have been particularly conscience-stricken. David was too enmeshed in his plotting to let conscience bother him.

Kid-speak: What did Bathsheba do when her husband died? She spent maybe a month doing things to remember her husband and to be sad about him dying. But she was probably really sorry, because she thought, "I probably was partly to blame for him dying."

2 Sam 11:27 And the grieving *period* passed over.

Then David sent and gathered her to his house, and she became his wife; and she bore a son to him.

But the act that David had committed was wrongly done in the eyes of Yahweh.

- M. This "grieving" is an etymologically unrelated *synonym* to the "mourning" in the previous verse.
1. "Pass over" is a very common Heb. verb (554x), usually of physical movement. This is a less usual usage for it. But so is its next occurrence, when Nathan tells David that God has "passed over" his sin.
 2. This grieving refers to Bathsheba. She fully observed the

proper time of mourning for her husband.

- a. The chronicler has revealed her general holiness before this slip: the v 4 priestly language used of her.
 - b. This period of grieving indicates that she had resumed her God-centered frame of mind
 - c. Presumably, she had no knowledge of what would happen to her next
 - d. She probably had worked out in her mind whether or not people would question her pregnancy being from Uriah. She likely accepted this contingency.
- N. “Then David sent and gathered her to his house”
1. Contrasted to the last time he “sent” for and “took” her, v 4
 - a. We recall “sent” being a prevalent theme at the beginning of the chapter. This “sent” provides some resolution to the troubling “sendings” earlier
 - b. The next will be Yahweh “sending” Nathan to David
 2. “Gathered her to his house”
 - a. “Gathered,” a caring act
 - b. David took her from her bereavement and gave her a home. That was making the best of the wrong he’d done.
- O. “And she became his wife”
1. Another wife added to the 6+ he had
 2. *She’ll* be the queen mother we wished Abigail could have been

Kid-speak: David did *very* wrong to lay with Bathsheba and kill Uriah, but he did right to marry Bathsheba so he could make sure that she and the baby were OK.

- P. “And she bore a son to him”
1. So some 9 months had passed since the original incident
 2. Uriah being a Hittite, David was not under obligation to raise an heir to him. He had been Nabal’s kinsman redeemer in marrying Abigail
 3. So it looked to all appearances that David had gotten away with it. In fact, he looked noble.
- Q. “But the act that David had committed was wrongly done in Yahweh’s eyes”
1. A final summation and verdict
 - a. Despite things looking like they might have worked out for David, God was not having it

- b. But God hadn't been in a hurry to pass sentence
- 2. "Wrongly done" is the verb form of the noun for something ill-done or spoiled, highlighting the damaging effects of sin
 - a. But here it is "ill-done" "in Yahweh's eyes"
 - b. Meaning that even though David had made the best of his mess by bring Bathsheba into his protection, his sins had not been extricated or ameliorated
- 3. "The act David had committed" sees David's two big sins as one. He had murdered to cover adultery.
 - a. We could add David's pride in thinking that he had recovered himself
 - b. Remember, God would be a poor father to simply overlook our misdeeds, v 10-11; 13-14
 - c. As we will see in 12:, He can forgive us *and* exact consequences as well. Again, doing *both* is part of His fatherly faithfulness.

Kid-speak: David probably thought he got away with everything, like he planned. But did he?

2 Sam 12:1 And Yahweh sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said to him, "There were two men in one city, *the* one rich, and *the* other [lit., one] poor.

R. Story time! If a prophet comes to you with a story, watch out.

- 1. Nathan already knows what the story 'means', v 7
- 2. God always sends to bring his people back
- 3. He sends you and me, Gal 6:1; Jms 5:19-20; 1 Jn 5:16-17

S. A rich man and a poor man. Our barometer is already set for an injustice.

- 1. The Bible is cynical towards rich folks, Lk 6:24; Jms 2:6-7
- 2. Dependence on God is just very hard when you always have more than enough
- 3. And it's hard to 'simulate' the dependence a poor man knows. No mere agreement that all our stuff belongs to God can get us where we need to get.
- 4. Regular generosity to the poor is an essential lifeline for the rich, Matt 6:2; Heb 13:16

2 Sam 12:2 *The* rich one had very abundant sheep and cattle. 3 But the poor one had nothing except one little ewe

lamb, which he had bought and preserved. And it grew up with him and with his sons together. And it ate from his own portion, and it drank from his cup, and it lay down in his bosom. And it was like a daughter to him.

T. A longer description for the lesser possessions and vice versa.

The rich man's stuff was *ad nauseum*, but we dote on every detail of poor man's one item, as he did.

1. The rich and poor men have one thing in common. Each one owns sheep. But the poor man owns only one.
 - a. The poor man's little lamb is like a family member, even like a daughter to him
 - b. What the family goes through, the sheep goes through. What the poor man ate and drank, the little lamb partook.
2. We note that tender care for animals is not frowned on in Scriptures. They have souls, Gen 1:24 "living souls," lit.

2 Sam 12:4 And a traveler came to the rich one, and he was diffident about taking [lit., to take] from his own sheep and from his own cattle, to prepare for the trekker who had come to him. And he took the ewe lamb of the poor man and prepared it for the man who had come to him.

U. "Traveler" is based on the word for walk/travel. "Trekker" is based on the word for a highway.

1. The idea is that the rich man was willing to sacrifice the poor man's sheep for a relative stranger, the "man coming to him"
2. "Diffident"- he had "pity" (lit.) on his own animals
3. He "took" the poor man's little lamb, as David "took" Bathsheba, 11:4

Kid-speak: God sent Nathan to David to tell him a story. A poor man had one, sweet little lamb that his whole family loved. A rich man had plenty of sheep, but he took the poor man's sheep to make dinner for a guest! Wow, that was wrong! Where do you think this story is going?

2 Sam 12:5 And David's anger glowed intensely towards the man. And he said to Nathan, "Yahweh is alive! -that the man who did this is a son of death! **6** And he shall repay four times the amount for the ewe lamb, seeing that he did this thing, and based on his lack of pity.

- V. David is all worked up over this story! Even knowing it's (probably) not real, he is still boiling. That's how conscience works, Rom 2:1
 - 1. Same word for "pity" in the previous verse
 - 2. The man *did* have pity- on his own stuff!
 - 3. Just as David had 'pity' on his own reputation
- W. "Fourfold," right out of the Law, Exod 22:1
 - 1. David hasn't forgotten his Bible! Just as keen as ever.
 - 2. But now it serves *his* sense of justice
- X. "Son of death" is what Saul said David was: a walking dead man, 1 Sam 20:31
 - 1. Yeah, David walked right into that one, eh. Pronounced his own just sentence.
 - 2. Adultery normally incurred capital punishment. But Yahweh will forego that sentence. We'll discuss that more fully, but David wasn't let off the hook at all.

Kid-speak: David was super mad when he heard the story!
 "That guy oughta die!"

2 Sam 12:7 And Nathan said to David, "You *are* the man! So says Yahweh, the God of Israel, 'I Myself anointed you as king over Israel, and I rescued you out of the hand of Saul. 8 And I gave you the house of your master, and your master's wives into your bosom. And I gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if *that were* too little, then I would have added to you according to these and those things.'

- Y. "You are the man!" 'The man' in the story!
 - 1. A famous quote of God's/Scripture's ability to bring out a negative reaction when holding a mirror up to us
 - 2. We are well-advised to beat any 'Nathan' in life to the punch by taking this accusation with us to Scripture and prayer, seeking conviction: "Show me how *I* am the man."
- Z. "Into your bosom," as Bathsheba had been in Uriah's, 12:3
 - 1. David had Michal as "his master's wife." Unnamed wives from 5:13 probably included some of Saul's wives.
 - 2. All of God's help in escaping Saul, all the transfer of power- it was not enough. How easily ingratitude consumes us!
 - 3. And God's generosity was a hand *held out-* until this. Still, God will be gracious in dispensing justice.

Kid-speak: The man in the story David was so mad at? Who was it really? DAVID! Usually when we're really mad, it's because of something *we* did wrong.

IV. How does this relate to Christ?

God "anointed" David, 12:7, changing the monarchy from Saul's house. David acted ungratefully. THE "anointed one" was grateful and faithful to His Father's house to the end. May we imbibe His faithfulness.

V. For the Walking Wounded (1Thess 5:14, "Uphold the strengthless")
There is no personal weakness worse than direct decisions against God.

VI. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, "Convince, rebuke"): **What have I done wrong?**
How have I lost righteousness?
Do I read Scriptures to hear, "You are the man"?

VII. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, "Exhort/encourage"):
How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?
I will ask the Spirit to generally, continually sensitize my conscience, that I may walk humbly.

VIII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**
"Lord, how easily the best of us can fall. Uphold me."

Wrap-up: "The one thinking he stands must look, lest he fall," 1 Cor 10:12. David thought that he had gotten back on solid ground. God showed him otherwise.

But how can God restore *our* sight when we have blinded ourselves?

After Christ's death, there is an unusual measure of God's personal power present to help us through the simple, faithful ministry of the Word. "Exhort one another daily" largely flows from that same Word that all have heard.

The mature Christian picks up his own Bible *to see* and *able to see* his sin, that he may be realigned.