

## **David's Great Fall: Remembering Uriah**

Call to Worship: Psalm 146

1st Scripture: 2 Samuel 23:8-39

2nd Scripture: 2 Samuel 11

Hymn Insert- *Blessed Be Your Name*

Hymn Insert- *By Faith*

Hymn #195- *Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed*

### **Introduction:**

We have sought to trudge down deep, into the sobering reality of David's great fall. We have seen how his gross sin, was conceived, when he failed to go out to war, with his men, against the Ammonites. And then, we pondered the "way of escape," which God had given him, early on, in the voice of a messenger, who had informed David, that the woman he was lusting after, was the wife of one of his faithful and committed soldiers. Following this, we delved into the disheartening moments, when the sin, which was conceived in David's heart, was born, outwardly manifesting itself, in the act of adultery, which he had committed with Bathsheba. And then, finally, we soberly pondered how, often times, "sin breeds more sin," as David, in seeking to cover his adultery, grossly escalated and aggravated his sin, even to the point of committing the horrible act of murder.

Now, before we move into chapter twelve, to consider the way in which David is finally confronted for his sin, and the repentance that follows, I want to spend one more week in chapter eleven. This morning, we will bring the camera lens, over to the heart of Uriah, to consider the heart of this beloved and righteous man. And, in doing so, I believe that we will also touch upon, another glorious reflection of our Beloved and Blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ! And so, we close out chapter eleven, this morning, by "remembering Uriah."

### **I. Noteworthy Observations About Uriah**

Let us begin then, by considering some noteworthy observations about Uriah, given in our text.

1) At the very basic level, from the outset, we notice that he is Uriah, *the Hittite* (vs. 3). When you trace back the Hittite lineage, you find that they come from the loins of a man, named Heth (Gen. 10:15), who was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Ham (Gen. 10:6), who, of course, was the son of Noah. And so, from the standpoint of ethnic lineage, Uriah came from a cursed line. You will recall that when Ham had sinned against his father, Noah, by uncovering

his nakedness, when he was drunk, Noah pronounced the following curse upon Ham's son Canaan, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren" (Gen. 9:25). And as you work through the genealogy of Ham, you can't help but notice the names of all of the pagan nations, which the Israelites, would be commanded to destroy, upon entering the Promised Land. And among those nations, the famous list of "ites," you had the Hittites, as well.

And so, just from the man's name, we find that Uriah was naturally from a cursed line. However, being among David's army; indeed, among David's *mighty men*, it is clear, that this particular Hittite, found favor in the eyes of God. And his actions, will further confirm this. He would have been a proselyte; that is, a gentile, converted into the Jewish faith, by the grace of God. And so, for the moment, brethren, we can at least get a sweet taste of the grace of God, even, by simply noting Uriah's position among Israel, and especially, among David's mighty men. A gentile, in the Old Covenant, is loved by God, received among His people, and blessed with the graces of regeneration and conversion, the necessary graces, given only to those, who evidence these graces, by sharing a living faith, like Abraham. You might even say, that while Uriah was not a natural Jew, outwardly, he was more of a Jew, inwardly, than most of the ethnic Jews, themselves! [III: Consider the Gentile Centurion, who, when pleading with Jesus to heal his dying servant; in light of his own unworthiness, kept Jesus from coming to his home, and by faith, believed that Jesus had only to say the mere words, which could heal his servant, even from afar, with no direct contact. Jesus said that He had not found such faith in all Israel!]

2) Note the moral integrity of Uriah, manifested in the way, in which he honors both God and king. He obeys David, without hesitation, in so far as his conscience allows him. David sends for him, and he immediately comes to David, though he knows that his proper place, is ultimately, to be fighting under Joab, and alongside of his comrades, against the Ammonites. Anyone might be anxious, or "feel lucky," to avoid the risk of dying in a war. But he knows it is his duty, and his duty is his pleasure, because he knows that his duty, though not necessarily preferable from the standpoint of safety and comfort, is ultimately his service unto God. He had a beautiful wife, waiting for him back at home. He had a life back at home, on the other side of the Jordan River, and yet, he must be about the business of God, where the ark was, defending the people of God.

But when the king calls him, and he receives the order from Joab, he knows that he must go, not as a means of escaping from the pains and difficulties and discomforts of war, but as a

means of properly honoring the authorities set above him. And so, he crosses over the Jordan, and travels quite a distance to the king's palace, in Jerusalem. And the whole time, his intent, is to get back to the war, where he belongs (and where *David* belongs, for that matter), with his men, in defense of Israel, once the king's business with him is finished. And after answering a variety of questions, concerning the status of the war, Uriah, is not merely given permission to go to his own home for the night, but in fact, he is ordered by the king to do so; to go and wash his feet, and rest, after such a long journey. And the king's blessing is so strong and favorable toward Uriah doing this, that he sends a gift of food; a banquet of delicious delicacies, to follow him home. The assumption is, "Uriah, you have come from a long journey. Go home. Relax for the night. Eat, enjoy yourself, enjoy your wife, and then return to me tomorrow." All of this, from the man, whom Uriah doesn't know, has already enjoyed his wife, while he was out at war.

But Uriah's conscience will not allow him to go home, and to lie comfortably with his wife, while the ark and Joab, and his comrades, are dwelling in tents, and out among the elements, enduring the great discomforts of war. And so, contrary to the king's command, Uriah sleeps at the door of the king's house, among the servants of the king. He cannot, in good conscience, take his fill of comfort, and of his wife, when the rest of the army is at war.

And so, the next day, David receives the news, that Uriah did not go home, but rather, he slept by the door of the king's house, and David's deceptive plan is thwarted. David then, questions Uriah about this, and again, Uriah's response is very revealing. Let us look at verses 10-11 again, for a few moments:

"So when they told David, saying, 'Uriah did not go down to his house,' David said to Uriah, 'Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?' And Uriah said to David, 'The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.'"

Notice again, Uriah's concern for God, for Joab, for Israel and for Judah, compels him to deny his own personal interests, even at the behest of the king, concerning his own wife and home. How easy could it have been, for Uriah to take it easy for the night? Consider, the king ordered him to do so, he did come back from a long journey, he came back not of his own will or desire, he probably could have used a good bath, and he would only be enjoying the comforts of his *own* home and wife, for a night. And yet, his conscience would not allow him to do it. Such

an unnatural denial of his own self-interests, was very clearly a sign post from God, meant to shame David, for his self serving, and immoral actions.

David then orders Uriah to stay for one more day, and he does so, again, showing his humble desire to honor the authority of the king. And this time, the king tries to break his resolve; to sear his conscience with the numbing effects of alcohol. David eats and drinks with Uriah, taking advantage of his lower office, by compelling him to drink, until he gets drunk, with the hope that this will break Uriah's resolve and conviction. Surely, if he is drunk, he will go and lay with his wife. But no! Uriah, yet remains by the door of the king's house, until the morning. By the grace of God, his conscience is sustained, even under the numbing effects of alcohol. Uriah remains faithful!

And when Uriah is sent back to the battle, holding his own death warrant in his hand, he delivers the message to Joab, and returns to taking his place in the battle. And when Joab sets him at the forefront of the battle, near the city wall, where the most valiant opposition stood, and where he would be in the sights of skilled archers; indeed, when a very clear and foolish military decision was made, though he did not recognize that it was intentional, he obeyed the order of Joab, without question. He willingly allowed himself to be foolishly put in harms way, because he was a man, who respected authority. He trusted David, and he trusted Joab; indeed, he was concerned for the welfare of both, though they had conspired to have him killed. And so, very clearly, the moral integrity of Uriah, was most honorable!

3) Although he had done nothing wrong; although he had only honored his God, his king, his commanding officer, and his nation, Uriah was killed, unjustly, right there in the battle. He trusted God, and in doing so, he trusted those who were immediately above him...and he was killed. Look with me again at verse 17, "Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And some of the people of the servants of David fell; *and Uriah the Hittite died also.*"

*"And Uriah the Hittite died also!"* A man of God, did all of the right things, and yet, "he died also." He, who was so anxious to maintain his own integrity; he who denied himself of his own, even rightful pleasures, never learning of the ungodly conspiracy, which arose against him...died. And that, on God's watch! And following the customary practice of mourning, his wife would go on to marry his murderer, and the one, who had stolen her, from him.

4) And lastly, we note again that, Uriah was one of David's mighty men, as we saw in our first Scripture reading. He was among those brave and choice warriors, who excelled all others,

in serving to defend and protect Israel and Israel's king. Considering that which we have considered about him here; even in these brief, recorded interactions with David, we can certainly understand, how he would have made that, "hall of fame." For, it is very clear, that the Spirit of God was with this Gentile convert!

## **II. Concluding Thoughts and Applications**

Brethren, having considered some noteworthy observations about Uriah (taken from our text), let us then close, by considering a few concluding thoughts and applications, for this morning:

1) Brethren, while we would certainly commend Uriah for his unwavering faithfulness, even in the face of the king's command, let us also recognize the sovereign grace of God, at work through Uriah, unwilling to let David hide his sin. While Uriah was wholly ignorant as to what was going on; while he was, in no way suspicious of David, concerning David's deceptive plans and all that had taken place between David and Bathsheba (Uriah's wife), God was well aware of all things, and he used the faithfulness of Uriah, as a means of further pinning David down to his sin. David could not escape from his sin, and even when he had gone as far as to murder Uriah, God would send a prophet, to convict David, of the whole package of his sin. In other words, brethren, grace was operative in Uriah, strengthening him to serve God's purposes, in the convicting of David, even though he knew nothing about it.

From Uriah's standpoint, he was simply remaining faithful to his convictions, concerning the ark and the army of the Lord, but by means of this very faithfulness; indeed, a God-originated and Holy Spirit, provoked faithfulness, God would deal with David.

With all of that said, brethren, behold again the wisdom of God, concerning every detail of the unfolding of His providence. We may be ignorant regarding a lot of things in this life; we may be taken advantage of, from all manner of people near and far, but as we seek to remain faithful to God, no matter what we come to understand in this life, we can be certain of this very thing: God is sovereign! God is in control! No one is getting over on God! His will, will be done! And upon that solid foundation, brethren, we can lay, every fear, every anxiety, every suspicion, and every temptation toward any form of paranoia. We don't have to discover all of the secrets of people's hearts and motives in life; our God and Father knows all things. And so, this frees us up to remain faithful; confidently faithful and at rest, in Christ! Christ constantly

bids *us*, brethren, to come to him; to cast our cares upon His sovereign and omnipotent Person, so that, in doing so, we can have rest for our souls, even now, in the present! Uriah died, ignorant of many things, surrounding his closing circumstances, but he died faithful! And that makes all the difference! You can know all of the hidden secrets of this world (concerning people's hearts, government conspiracies, surrounding motives...etc), and die without Christ, a condemned, poor, ruined, and wretched sinner. And you can know nothing of the secrets of this world, and die *in* Christ, a wealthy, justified, blessed, redeemed saint! Rejoice, in that, God's grace is operative in you, and that He might just be using you (indeed, He is using you), even when you don't even know it, both in the convicting and encouraging of others! Let that bring peace to your souls, brethren!

2) Don't lose sight of the statement, "And Uriah the Hittite died also," brethren. For, it has much to say to us, believe it or not, by way of *encouragement*. You see, this is by far, no Hollywood ending for Uriah, is it? I mean, he is the total victim in this, he does all the right things; he is faithful to God and man...and yet, "Uriah the Hittite died also." Could not God have easily delivered him, even as He had done for David, all along? Uriah died on God's watch, didn't he? From our standpoint, this is hard to grasp, and it translates into many so-called "tragedies," that the faithful must embrace, in this life.

But, here is the key, brethren. What does this tell us? It tells us that God's people will suffer unjustly in life, and at times, they will not find deliverance, on this side of the grave. Not every circumstance is a Daniel, delivered from the Lion's den, or a Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, delivered from the fiery furnace, scenario. At times, an Apostle James will die by the sword, and a host of martyrs will suffer martyrdom on fiery stakes, in Roman Coliseums, and in a variety of different ways. John the Baptist will be beheaded, never escaping Herod's prison. Elijah will continue to experience rejection from Ahab and Jezebel, though he has won his showdown at Mt. Carmel, and rain has come, for the first time in three and a half years.

Where am I going with all of this? Well, simply put, we have to be confident in the faithfulness and goodness of God, at times of deliverance, and at times of non-deliverance, knowing that both serve a greater and more glorious purpose, which will be realized in the next life. This is not the end of the story, brethren, under any circumstances, come what may! All that seems to end in tragedy in this life, will prove to have served a great and glorious purpose, in the next. Indeed, "Uriah the Hittite died also," but the story continues in glory! And

interestingly enough, he and David, share the same stomping ground, with not an inkling of hatred or alienation between them. Indeed, they love each other, with a perfect, Christ-like, holy love, right at this very moment. For, their glorious Savior serves as the highest model to that end, putting away all enmity and bitterness, by His cross! And so, we can rejoice, brethren, in whatever circumstances we find ourselves, always remembering that we are not alone, in justice and in injustice, in joy and in sorrow, in health and in suffering...etc. All that was lost and every injustice left unaccounted for, in the sphere of this world, is rectified at the cross, and completed in glory!

3) Lastly, see then, the reflection of Christ, in Uriah, to this end. No greater injustice was served; and no more righteous object of that injustice existed, than all that was bound up, in the cross of Christ! And where this greatest injustice took place, we found the greatest justice taking place, at the same time. By the death of Christ, the Righteous, sinners are saved forever! Indeed, the greatest purpose is fulfilled, where God permitted His Son, to suffer such great injustice, at the hands of His enemies. And, if a great and mysterious purpose was fulfilled by God, in that event, then we can presume that every *less* event, serves the good and righteous purposes of a God, who is all-sovereign, and whose plan cannot be thwarted, in the slightest! Indeed, Uriah died, when doing right, but only as a mere reflection, and a finite shadow, of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died, without any fault whatsoever, of His own! Brethren, let the humble and obedient spirit of Uriah, and more importantly, the humble and obedient Spirit of Christ, motivate us, to maintain a humble and obedient spirit, in whatever we face, trusting the Judge of all the earth, to do what is right and best, at all times!

AMEN!!!

Benediction: Jude 1:24-25