

Life of David: The King Needs a Savior **2 Samuel 11–12**

This morning we return to the life of David, and we have come to a defining moment in his life. This passage is a point of inflection in the trajectory of his life. You know what a point of inflection is in mathematics? Its where a curve is headed one way, and then is headed a different way. Trends were up, and now they are down. That’s exactly where we are in the life of David. Up to this point, everything in David’s life was up, up, up. Not perfect, but definitely trending well. Chosen by God as a man after God’s own heart. Anointed as king over Israel. Defeating Goliath as Israel’s representative champion. Sweet Psalmist of Israel. Patiently waiting in the ranks while being pursued by murderous King Saul. Example of true friendship with Jonathan. Made King of Israel, and God promises that a descendent of his would reign as forever King. Defeating all enemies of Israel on every side. Establishing Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel, and bringing the ark of God into Zion.

Look at Chapter 9:1. David shows *Hesed*—the lovingkindness of God to Mephibosheth. Look at Chapter 10:2. David Shows *Hesed*—the lovingkindness of God to a pagan king who just lost his dad. We expect chapter 11 to continue this trend of lovingkindness, but we find the king imaging the devil who is a liar and murderer rather than imaging the author of lovingkindness and life.

And then we get to our passage, Chapter 11 Verse 1, and we see these seemingly innocuous words: It happened. It happened. It happened. The point of inflection. Up, up, up is going to become down, down, down. Has “it” happened in your life? That decision that lives in infamy? Those words spoken in anger that you can never take back? That thing that you did that you have regretted since, that you’ve played the scene back over and over in your mind, wishing you would have done differently? That moment of forbidden passion that has ruined your life?

It happened. And It continues to happen for so many. Sometimes it is sexual. Sometimes not. But before we read what exactly happened, we must remember that “It” happens in all of our lives. Why? Because:

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” (Romans 3:23)

Let’s look at this passage in four scenes. And then next week, I want to take a look at David’s response to this event in his live in one of the Psalms.

Scene 1: The King Enslaved to Sin

Read 2 Samuel 11:1–5. It is springtime. The weather is getting warmer. Sun is staying out longer, and David is now around 50 years old, and has experienced the blessing of God for decades. Sometimes we think “It” happens during times of stress, but we often overlook the times of blessing. The danger of blessing is that we might forget just how dependent we are upon God.

It’s spring, and its time for kings to go out to battle. And David sends Joab and his servants to battle against Rabbah. And at the end of verse 1 we find this sentence: But David remained at

Jerusalem. If its time for kings to go out to battle, then where should David, King of Israel be? He should be with his troops. David is in the wrong place at the wrong time. He is alone. And he puts himself in a place where he would be tempted.

What is he doing. Verse 2 says “It happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the kings house.” What? Your men are in battle and you are in bed, taking an afternoon nap? What’s up with that? The warrior is on vacation. Here’s the problem: David has become disengaged from the work of God, the word of God, and the people of God.

You sin when you disengage from the presence of God, the Word of God and the people of God. How do I know David was disengaged from passionate pursuit of God? The Lord is not mentioned anytime in this chapter until the very last verse. David is acting like a functional atheist.

“In our members there is a slumbering inclination toward desire, which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power, desire seizes mastery of the flesh. All at once a secret, smoldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames. It makes no difference whether it is a sexual desire, or ambition, or vanity, or desire for revenge, our love of fame and power, or greed for money. At this moment God is quite unreal to us. He loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real. The only reality is the devil. Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God.”—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Temptation is the strongest when you throttle back and disengage from the pursuit of God’s glory in your life and in your world. Are you engaged in church? Are you enthralled with the presence of God through His Word and Prayer? Are you practicing the presence of God? Are you engaged with God’s mission for your life? David disengaged and demonstrated his slavery to sin.

So David is walking around on his rooftop, overlooking all of Jerusalem. His eyes roam from house to house. Its kind of like an ancient form of surfing the web. Site after site, page after page, yard after yard, and then his eyes catch her. She’s very beautiful to behold. The Bible wasn’t exaggerating here. And she’s taking a bath, completely naked. Temptation taking advantage of disengagement from the mission of God and its resulting boredom.

Avert your eyes. Don’t gaze. Get out of there, David. Don’t linger. Don’t ponder. Run! Flee! But verse 3 shows us what David has intended in his heart: he sends to find out who this girl is. And His servant’s reply shows us an opportunity for David to get out of this. She’s Bathsheba. She’s the daughter of Eliam. David—she’s the daughter of one of your mighty men, fighting on the battlefield right now for you. She’s also the granddaughter of Ahithophel, one of your most trusted counselors. She’s Uriah’s wife. Uriah is a God-fearing man, his name means, “The Lord is My Light.” He is also one of David’s mighty men.

This person you are lusting after is someone’s daughter. She’s someone’s granddaughter. She’s someone’s wife. Sin always seeks to depersonalize. She’s not an object. She’s not an image. She’s someone’s beloved daughter. Sin always hurts real people. Whether it’s a pornographic

image on a screen or it's a coworker at the office. Sin hurts real people, and it enslaves and destroys.

Verse 4 is breathtaking in its terseness: David sent he took, she came, he lay with her. And then he sent her home. Some like to critique Bathsheba here, but that's nowhere in the text. This is all about David. David has an adulterous affair with Bathsheba. He sends her home. And she gets pregnant.

Principle 1: Flee from temptation through a passionate persevering pursuit of God.

A – Avoid as much as is possible and reasonable the sights and situations that arouse unfitting desire.

N – Say “No” to every lustful thought within five seconds.

T – Turn the mind forcefully toward Christ as a superior satisfaction.

H – Hold the promise and the pleasure of Christ firmly in your mind until it pushes the other images out.

E – Enjoy a superior satisfaction.

M – Move into a useful activity away from idleness and other vulnerable behaviors.¹

Scene 2: The King Attempts a Cover-Up Amidst a Deepening Death Spiral

So what happens next? David attempts a cover-up, and just ends up committing more sin as the chains of enslavement to sin wrap tighter and tighter around his soul. Plan A. David decides to bring Uriah home from the battle so that he can enjoy sexual relations with his wife, Bathsheba. Then everyone will think the child is Uriah's and all will be well. So he brings Uriah home, sends a nice candlelight dinner over to Uriah's house, but what happens? Look at verse 9–11. Uriah knows he's on mission for God. And won't be distracted from that mission. Should have reminded David of himself in a former time.

So David's gets caught in the web ever further. Plan B. David has a feast and invites Uriah, and he gets Uriah drunk. Maybe this will overcome his inhibitions. But Uriah still stays with the king's servants, and will not go home to have sex with his wife Bathsheba.

Plan C. David writes a letter to General Joab, and seals it with wax. He writes, “attack the city of Rabbah head on. Put Uriah in the fiercest fighting. And then tell all of the other men to pull back so Uriah is killed.” And he gives the letter to Uriah to deliver to Joab. Uriah will deliver his own death sentence. Think of how much trust David had in Uriah to know there was no risk that Uriah would ever open that letter.

That's exactly what happens. Read verses 22–25. Think of how callous David has become to just quote some proverb after not just Uriah, but several of his most loyal warriors have been killed: the sword devours one, then another.

¹ John Piper, *Anthem: Strategies for Fighting Lust*. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/anthem-strategies-for-fighting-lust>. Accessed September 4, 2018.

Bathsheba goes into mourning for a week. And then David marries her, he pretends to be her Kinsman Redeemer! This man who already has several wives and whole harem. And Bathsheba gives birth to a son. Situation seems solved, right?

Wrong. I want you to see a phrase in verse 25. David says to Joab: Do not let this thing displease you. Hey, man, nobody should take this thing too hard. David was trying hard to convince himself that it was over. Everything was alright. Nobody was ever going to know. But the chapter has one last sentence that rings over the whole chapter. Finally, after 27.5 verses, the Lord is mentioned. Look at the end of verse 27. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

Principle 2: Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.²

I hesitate to hammer this principle too heavily, because I don't people in sin to feel condemned without the grace of God. But some of you are on the brink of making an enormously foolish decision. It may be an affair. It might be pornography. It might be cheating in school or dishonest business practices. It might be a grudge. It might be unforgiveness. But whatever it is, sin whispers and promises joy but its calling you down the road of disaster.

Sin will take you further than you want to go. David didn't set out that day to become a murderer. He didn't wake up thinking that he would break at least half of the ten commandments: coveting, adultery, lying, murder, no other gods before me.

Sin will keep you longer than you wanted to stay. David ended up concocting plan A, B, C to try to cover up his sin. And as we will find out, David would reap the consequences of this sin for the rest of his life. And sin always costs you more than you intended to pay.

Scene 3: The King Confesses His Sin

Thankfully, the Lord doesn't check out on David, but pursues David. And when we run headlong into sin, the Lord doesn't check out on us, but pursues us. The Lord sends the prophet Nathan to David. And Nathan is so wise with how he confronts the king. He tells the king a parable. Read 12:1-4, emphasizing "daughter" = Bath in Hebrew.

David doesn't realize that Nathan already has the sword of conviction drawn and pointed at David's heart.

How does David respond? Read verse 5-6. David is angry. He demands more than the law demands. This guy must die. And he must pay ten-fold! That's retribution. That's condemnation. That's self-righteousness.

And then in verse 7, Nathan points his finger directly at the king's heart and says, "David, you are the man." **When God confronts and convicts us of our sin, that's not the condemnation**

² I first heard this saying from Max Barnett, Baptist Student Union director at the University of Oklahoma. The origin of this quote is unknown.

of God, that's the beginning of the grace of God. He doesn't leave us to wallow in our sin, he comes us to redeem us from our sin and transform our hearts and lives to once again passionately pursue Him.

And then God announces to David the consequences for his actions:

Grace: vv. 7–8

Accusation: v. 9

Consequences: vv. 10–12 (child, Amnon, Absalom, Adonijah)

Sin has irreversible temporal consequences. While there is no ultimate condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, consequences often remain. These consequences can be emotional, financial, relational, physical, psychological. These consequences often extend to those we love the most. People around us are affected by our sin.

How does David respond to this? In humility, confession, and repentance. Read verse 13.

Principle 3: Confess your sins and experience the grace of God in Christ.

How should you respond when God confronts you with your sin?

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, ESV)

Invitation

Provide a time for some private confession with heads bowed and eyes closed. Gospel is received by repentance (confessing and turning away from sin) and faith (trusting in Jesus that He has Paid it All).