

## Trials, Triumphs, Troubles

David was a skilled psalmist, a brave warrior, a faithful friend, a man of vision and faith, a merciful ruler. King David of Israel was a man after God's own heart. But David, like all men, stood on clay feet. He was weak, and prone to mistakes.

The life of David can be divided into 3 sections: 1 Samuel 16-31 recounts his rise to prominence, and his flight from Saul. 2 Samuel 1-10 records his return to Israel after the death of

Saul – the consolidation and expansion of his kingdom. And 2 Samuel 11-24 describes how David's sin and failure almost bring down his government.

Sum it up: *David is a fugitive - a fighter - but he is in some ways a failure.* 1 Samuel 16-31 records *the trials of David.* 2 Samuel 1-10 *the triumphs of David.* And tonight's chapters, 2 Samuel 11-24, *the troubles of David.*

## Betrayed by Your Own Boy

After Amnon violated his sister, Tamar, anger filled Absalom's heart, and worse... a simmering, seething bitterness toward his father began to develop. Why David didn't step in and punish Amnon? Did he know of Amnon's crime? If not, why not? Was he so removed from his family such an enormous incident went unnoticed?

I believe David knew what happened, but he was so riddled with personal guilt over his own sexual failure he had a hard time punishing the same sin in his son.

Notice in 13:23, "And it came to pass, after two full years...". David had two years to deal with Amnon, but nothing happened. Absalom had a right to be mad, but he had no right to do what he does next. He hosts a party, and orchestrates the murder of his brother. Absalom flees to Geshur, southeast of the Sea of Galilee, and remains in exile 3 years.

In 13:39 we're told, "King David longed to go to Absalom"... but he didn't.

And again we wonder why? David seems *too weak to discipline his kids*, but once they fail he's *too proud to forgive them*. He doesn't want to take responsibility for his parenting on either end. Parents need to be strong enough to discipline and lead, then humble enough to forgive if their kids stray from the path.

Absalom's action had brought shame to David, and publicly David is spouting a hard line toward Absalom. The woman of Tekoa exposes David's stubbornness. He's willing to

extend forgiveness to the son of a stranger, but not his own? He treated Absalom like a political football, rather than a son.

David allows Absalom to return home, but for two years a stubborn David refuses to see his son, face to face. Absalom doesn't understand why David has allowed him to return if he's unwilling to reestablish a relationship. He'd be better off back in Geshur.

Finally, David calls for Absalom, and the father and son are united. But chapter 15 reveals it's too little too late. David's harsh treatment of Absalom has already sown the seeds of rebellion in his son's heart.

2 Samuel 15:6 tells us, "So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." Absalom stood in the city gate, and handled the lawsuits before they came to the king. When people approached him, Absalom would tell them, "*Oh, the king is too busy to help, but I'll help you. I still care about your problems. I'm not too big and important to be concerned about you.*" Slowly, Absalom turned the hearts of the people from David to himself.

Absalom's subtle betrayal culminates in Hebron, the site where his father was first crowned as king. There Absalom reveals his intentions to take over the throne from his father. All over Israel shouts go up, "Absalom reigns in Hebron".

David sowed seeds of rebellion in the heart of his child. Be careful you don't do the same.

## BEWARE OF BITTERNESS

In 2 Samuel 15:12 we're told David's most trusted counselor, Ahithophel, joins Absalom's coup d'état. David refers to Ahithophel in Psalm 41:9, and 55:12-14, "Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me... For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has magnified himself against me; then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng..."

Ahithophel was wise, and skillful... and like Absalom... *bitter*. His family tree reveals why he betrayed David. Put together 2 Samuel 23:34 and 2 Samuel 11:3, and we learn Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandpa. And apparently he never got over what David did to break up Bathsheba's family.

We're told in 17:14, God caused Absalom to reject Ahithophel's counsel. In verse 23 we see his reaction, "Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to his house, to his city. Then he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died..."

Ahithophel's bitterness was so all-consuming, he would rather die than see his desire for revenge go unfulfilled. Guys, we learn from Ahithophel that unresolved bitterness can take a destructive hold on our lives. We need to deal with our bitterness before it eats us up.

## OUT BY A HAIR

David sends out his men to put down the revolt. They have but one order. Verse 5, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." Here's the heart of a true father. Despite how his child's rebellion has broken his heart, and hurt him. The father still loves his son.

Guys, this is not only David's heart, it's also God's heart toward you!

David's men trounce the rebel army, and Absalom's death is recorded in 18:9-18. He was riding a mule through a heavily wooded area with low-hanging limbs. That's when his long hair got caught in the limbs, and threw him off his mule. Absalom was left hanging by his hair from the branches. It was a *hairy* ordeal - a *hair-raising* situation. His destiny was *up-in-the-hair*. He was really *up a tree*. A brutal Joab violates the king's orders, and thrusts 3 spears through Absalom's heart.

## PROBLEMS IN THE PALACE

When David was a boy he faced a giant named Goliath. As a young man he dealt with Saul. As a new king he fights the nations around him. But as he reaches mid-life he fights a different foe. He battles with his own grown kids.

David's one-night stand with Bathsheba was witnessed by his older kids, and apparently they lost respect for their dad, that David was never able to restore. David's sin destroyed the moral underpinnings in his own family. You begin to see a family gutted of virtue and morality in the sordid story recorded in 2 Samuel 13.

David won victories all over the Middle East. He built the greatest empire of his day, but he failed in his own family. Let's be careful not to repeat David's mistakes.

## THE DEATH OF A CHILD

After the death of his son, David says in 2 Samuel 12:23, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

David believes a young child who dies before he has the opportunity to express his faith is destined for heaven. If you've lost a child, as much as you want them back, realize they're with Jesus. They're in a better place. If you're a believer in Jesus, one day a sweet reunion will occur.

### Devotion Box - The Root of Sin

The Lord speaks to David through Nathan, "Look at all I've given you..." In 2 Samuel 12:8 God says to David, "And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!" He's accusing David of thanklessness. Behind every sin is a spirit of ingratitude. God has been so good to us. We don't thank Him by disobeying His will.

The best deterrent to sin is a heart overflowing with gratitude and thanksgiving. The more grateful you are to God the more you'll want to live pleasing to Him.

### Devotion Box - The Proof of Repentance

2 Samuel 12:13-14, "Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."

God will always forgive our sin if we come to him with a repentant heart, but forgiveness of sin doesn't guarantee the removal of all sin's consequences.

I've seen people come to God hoping to walk away scot-free. Their desire is to shirk responsibility for what they've done. But proof of genuine repentance is a willingness to own my sin - and take responsibility for it's aftermath. A repentant attitude says, "Lord, forgive me, and help me repair the damage I've caused."

## IDLENESS

2 Samuel 11:1 tells us, "It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle..." David though, decides to sit this campaign out. He goes on *spring break*. But it's during his down time that an event takes place that almost brings down his kingdom.

He spots a beautiful babe bathing in the buff. Bathsheba, obviously shares some culpability – why is she naked in full view of the king's palace? But if David had been doing what God called him to do this incident would've never happened.

It's been said, "The devil tempts all men, but idle men tempt the devil." We all need down time, but only to refresh our upward look. It's one thing to take a break. It's another thing to take a break from God, which is what David did. This is why author FB Meyer writes, "Let us beware of our light, unguarded hours. Moments of leisure are more to be dreaded than those of strenuous toil."

Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom. We might take a vacation, but Satan never does. We need to keep our guard up at all times, and in all situations.

## RATIONALIZATION

I'm sure David rationalized, "*She's so beautiful, I just want to see her up-close. We'll just talk. We can even pray. I can lead her to the Lord. Hey, it's probably God's will we get together.*" It's not the *look* that brought David down, it's what *took* place afterwards. The look was innocent. The recognition he'd seen a beautiful body normal. David's surge of manly feelings were even healthy. But David failed to take control of his thoughts, and harness his desires.

Controlling one's thoughts is getting to be a lost art. We're still a moral enough people to frown on certain actions, but we think it's okay to indulge in any fantasy we choose. Guys, God is just as concerned about what we think, as how we act. In fact, more so - He knows our thoughts ultimately determine our actions. Proverbs 23:7 says of all men, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." Promiscuity begins in the head long before it ends in the bed.

I heard of a man who worked in an office full of gorgeous women, and kept a nail in his pocket. Someone asked him why he carried the nail. He answered, "I've learned a lot from the nail – its head keeps it from going too far."

It might've helped David if he'd reached in his pocket and grabbed a nail. Instead we're told in verse 4 "David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her..." David has committed adultery with another man's wife. It's a deed he can't undo. Its consequences will remain.

FB Meyer writes of David, "One brief spell of passionate indulgence, and then... his character blasted irretrievably; his peace vanished; the foundations of his kingdom imperiled; the Lord displeased; and great occasion given to his enemies to blaspheme!" So much is lost in one, solitary slip-up. Mom always told us, "It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation, but only one moment to tear it all down." David pays for his one night fling the rest of his life.

# The Sin of David and Bathsheba

David assumes come morning light all will be forgotten. But the news in verse 5 proves otherwise, "the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I am with child." Now David has a real problem on his hands, and he has a choice to make. He can *confess or conceal*.

I read recently about a new product on the market called "*Audio Ally*". For \$9 you can buy a cassette tape with various background noises – a dentist office, a auto garage, an airport – nine noises in all. You play the tape when you call your employer to tell them you can't come to work. The noise substantiates the lie you tell him. "*Well, boss I'm fogged in at the San Francisco airport. I should be back tomorrow...*" as airport and airplane noises are playing in the background.

It's amazing the extremes to which a prideful person will go to cover up their sin – and nowhere, is this better illustrated than in the example of David. He commits adultery, then adds to it deception, betrayal, and eventually murder.

But there's a major problem with David's cover-up. The last line in chapter 11 tells us, "But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD."

You can pull the wool over the eyes of a pastor, friends, spouse - but you can't fool the Lord. Luke 12:2 tells us, "there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known."

There's a lesson for us... before a sin can be forgiven it has to be confessed!

There's one other problem.

You can't fool the Lord, and you can't fool yourself. On the outside the months following the cover-up were business as usual. Let the good times roll. Outwardly, David was fine, but inwardly he was a miserable man.

The Psalms record his journaled reflections, "When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer." (Read Psalm 32, 38, 51)

Guilt grinds a man down. David wore a happy façade, but inside he was dying. In chapter 12 the Lord sends the prophet Nathan to King David with a parable that brings about a confession.

## COVER-UP

## GUILT

If you have questions on tonight's study email Pastor Sandy - [sandyadams@calvarychapel.org](mailto:sandyadams@calvarychapel.org)

Calvary Chapel Announcements - March 12, 2000

→Next Bible Scan- March 19 - 1 Kings 1-11

**Tuesday, March 14th:** Ladies Morning Bible Study 10:00 AM Ladies Evening Bible Study 7:00 PM

**Wednesday, March 15th:** High School Youth (Acts 4) 7:00 PM Café: Bible Study by Pastor James Special Music by Pastor Randy McCracken

**Friday, March 17th through Saturday, March 18th:** Calvary Chapel Seminar for New & Beginning Churches

**Sunday, March 19th:** Worship & Bible Study/BIBLE BLAST! 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM (Communion during both services) Middle School Youth Bible Study 6:30 PM Bible Scan 6:30 PM

**Saturday, March 25th - Friday, March 31st:** Adult Mission Trip- Reynosa, Mexico Please be in prayer for our brothers and sisters as they prepare for their trip to Mexico to serve the Lord.

**Sunday, March 26th:** Calvary Chapel Christian School Open House 3:00 PM

**Tuesday, March 28th:** Women's Prayer, Praise and Potluck 10:00 AM

## Devotion Box - Out of sight. Out of mind

"Yet God does not take away a life; but He devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled from Him." - 2 Samuel 14:14

## Bible Scan Memory Verse

Joab's stabbing of Amasa was a cold-blooded, unwarranted murder. An injustice - and the people halted when they saw it. But verse 13 says, "When he was removed from the highway, all the people went on after Joab..."

In other words, "out of sight, out of mind." This is why abortion is still legal in this country. It's an invisible crime. No one sees the victims, and their torture. If an injustice doesn't make the nightly news, people forget it ever occurred. When an issue gets swept out of sight, people forget about it, and go on their merry way.

## Devotion Box - five little pebbles

## The Extremes of Love

A poem by Samuel Carter...

*"Five little pebbles lay in a brook, five little pebbles hid in a nook. 'What are we good for?' one said to another. 'Little or nothing, I'm thinking, my brother.' Wearing away day after day - it seemed that for ever these pebbles must stay.*

*If they were flowers ever so gay, surely someone would take them away; or if they were big stones that builders could use, then some builder those big stones would choose. Wait, little pebbles, rounded and clean, long in your loneliness lying unseen, God has a future waiting for you five little pebbles, sturdy and true.*

*Five little pebbles hid in a brook. David came down and gave them a look, picked them up carefully out of the sand: five little pebbles lay in his hand. Hark! There is shouting and fighting today, and boldly these pebbles are borne to the fray: one of them chosen. Put in a sling. Would we have thought that a stone could thus wing?*

*Onward it sped with a might not its own: onward it sped, by a shepherd boy thrown; swift as an arrow, straight as a dart! For the whole nation that stone did its part, striking the giant's great, terrible head, laying him low - a mighty man dead.*

*Five little pebbles found in a brook. Mentioned with honor in God's holy Book. You be a pebble contented and low, ever kept clean by His Spirit's pure flow, hidden and ready til Jesus shall look - and choose you, and use you, a stone from the brook."*

If God can use a pebble to win a victory He can use you and me.

A lovely story of loyalty and devotion is told in 2 Samuel 23:13-17. David is a fugitive. He's held up at the cave of Adullam. He's reminiscing about better times, and remembers the sweet water drawn from the well of Bethlehem. At the time Bethlehem was occupied by Philistines - off limits to Hebrews.

But three of David's men go to Bethlehem - behind enemy lines - and retrieved a canteen of water from the sweet-sipping well. David is stunned - that such a lavish display of love and loyalty would be shown him. He's not worthy to gulp water won by such sacrifice. Thus, David pours the water out as a libation to the Lord (a liquid sacrifice). Only the Lord deserves that kind of unflinching loyalty and sacrificial love.

Real love is lavish. It goes to extravagant lengths to express itself. When was the last time you did a crazy thing for God just to show Him you love Him? Give an offering you can't afford. Spend an afternoon accomplishing nothing... just praise the Lord. Take a risk to share your faith. Go out of your way to help a person who'll never be able to pay you back. Real love always goes to extremes.