

Bible Stories

DAVID and BATHSHEBA

2 Samuel 11:1

December 10, 2022

David was 30 years old and finally king – but only of Judah. His first capital was at Hebron, where he would reside for 7 ½ years.

During those years, 6 sons by 6 women would be born to David:

Amnon
Kileab
Absalom
Adonijah
Shephatiah
Ithream

The war between the house of Saul and the house of David would conclude with the murders of both Ish-bosheth (Saul's surviving son) and Abner (General of Saul's army).

After this, the Elders of Israel went to David and anointed him king over Israel. David was now king of both Judah and Israel.

- **2 Samuel 5:6-7** - The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, "You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off." They thought, "David cannot get in here." Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.

David reigned at Jerusalem for 33 years.

Sometime passed and the Ammonite king, Nahash died. David sent envoys to console the new king, but he was suspicious of David's motives, so took the men, shaved ½ their beards and cut off their robes to their hips – exposing them – then sent them home in humiliation.

This can only mean one thing - WAR!

- **2 Samuel 11:1** - In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.

For a man who had spent a great deal of his life fighting, remaining at home must have been torture. One night, David was restless – bored out of his mind, I'd say – so he went for a walk on the palace roof top. There he saw a beautiful woman taking a bath. Instead of turning around, as he should have done, he lingered and that's when the trouble started:

David: WHO IS THAT?

Servant: *Bathsheba, the wife of one of your valiant warriors and good friend, Uriah.*

David sent for Bathsheba and slept with her – time goes by....

Dear King, I'm pregnant! Sincerely, Bathsheba.

Uh, Oh!

Under the guise of wanting to reward Uriah for his service, David brought him in from the war and told him to go home to his wife. Uriah refused to go home, not while his men "**slept in tents.**" David tried everything, including getting Uriah stumble-down drunk – but to no avail. Finally, David had no choice but to send Uriah back to the war. He gave him a note to take to Joab:

- **2 Samuel 11:15** - Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die.

Uriah, the Hittite, one of David's most loyal and valiant warriors died – more specifically, was murdered by order of the king. David was relieved. Bathsheba was devastated, but when an appropriate amount of time went by, she moved into the palace, married David and a son was born.

- **Ellen White {PP 720.4}** - As time passed on, David's sin toward Bathsheba became known, and suspicion was excited that he had planned the death of Uriah. The Lord was dishonored. He had favored and exalted David, and David's sin misrepresented the character of God and cast reproach upon His name. It tended to lower the standard of godliness in Israel, to lessen in many minds the abhorrence of sin; while those who did not love and fear God were by it emboldened in transgression.

The Lord sent Nathan, the prophet, to tell David a story:

Nathan: *There were 2 men – one rich the other poor. The rich man has many flocks and herds. The poor man has 1 little ewe lamb, which he loved like one of his children. A friend of the rich man came to town for a visit. Not wanting to kill one of his lambs, the rich man took the poor man's precious ewe lamb instead.*

David: *As the Lord lives, that guy deserves to die!*

Nathan: *That guy is you! This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. If all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. Why did you despise My word by doing what is evil in My eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Therefore, the sword will never depart from your house and out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. What you did in secret I will cause to be done for all Israel to see.'*

David: *I have sinned against the Lord!*

- **Ellen White {PP 722.2}**: Though there would be found none in Israel to execute the sentence of death upon the anointed of the Lord, David trembled, lest, guilty and unforgiven, he should be cut down by the swift judgment of God. But the message was sent him by the prophet, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." Yet justice must be maintained. The sentence of death was transferred from David to the child of his sin. Thus, the king was given opportunity for repentance; while to him the suffering and death of the child, as a part of his punishment, was far more bitter than his own death could have been.
- **Ellen White {PP 723}**: It was when David was walking in the counsel of God that he was called a man after God's own heart. When he sinned, this ceased to be true of him until by repentance he had returned to the Lord. The word of God plainly declares, "The thing that David had done was evil in the eyes of the Lord.".... Though David repented of his sin and was forgiven and accepted by the Lord, he reaped the baleful harvest of the seed he himself had sown. The judgments upon him and upon his house testify to God's abhorrence of the sin.

What do we do with this story?

David saw the enormity of his crime and made no effort to excuse what he had done. Out of his desire for pardon and restoration one of the most beautiful prayers of repentance was prayed:

- ¹ **Be gracious to me, O God, according to your loyal love. According to your abundant mercies, blot out my transgressions.**
- ² **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and from my sin cleanse me.**
- ³ **For I myself know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.**
- ⁴ **Against you, only you, I have sinned and have done this evil in your eyes, so that you are correct when you speak, you are blameless when you judge.**
- ⁵ **Behold, in iniquity I was born, and in sin my mother conceived me.**
- ⁶ **Behold, you delight in truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts you make me to know wisdom.**
- ⁷ **Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**
- ⁸ **Make me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.**
- ⁹ **Hide your face from my sins, and all my iniquities blot out.**
- ¹⁰ **Create a clean heart for me, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**
- ¹¹ **Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.**
- ¹² **Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and with a willing spirit sustain me.**
- ¹³ **Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.**
- ¹⁴ **Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation; then my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.**
- ¹⁵ **O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will proclaim your praise.**
- ¹⁶ **For you do not delight in sacrifice or I would give it. With a burnt offering you are not pleased.**
- ¹⁷ **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.... – Psalm 51:1-17 LEB**

Finally, many compare the lives of David and Saul and wonder how it is that God forgave David his horrible sins of adultery and murder and yet rejected Saul for his relatively minor sins of offering a sacrifice and failing to obey over the Amalekites.

It all comes down to response:

- David was broken. He humbled himself before God, confessed his sins and accept the consequences.
- Saul was defiant. He despised the rebukes he received, hardened his heart and refused genuine repentance. He was sorry he got caught, not that he had sinned against God.