

The Fall Of David

Introduction. There is one peculiarity about the history of prominent Bible characters. As we follow their upward progress, they seem at times almost to pass beyond our reach, as if they had not been tempted with the same infirmities as we, and their life of faith was so far removed that they can hardly serve as our example. Nevertheless, these thoughts are tempered by the history of their sudden falls, their sins spread out before us, which shed light on their inward struggles and how divine grace has supported them (Romans 15:4).

All of us who have the arrogant assumption that we are immune to sin should remember David (1 Corinthians 10:12). We will examine the prominent sin of David with Bathsheba and see how this hero of faith fell from God's grace, and how he returned back into God's favor.

I. *The Description Of His Sin*

- A. David was guilty of adultery and murder (11:4, 14-17). This was not some youth without self-control or who stumbled into this sin, but a mature, middle-aged man of God who gazed intently at her. Although David tried to cover his sin with Bathsheba, God could see the heart (Numbers 32:23; 1 Chronicles 29:17; Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 29:15; 30:1; cf. Luke 12:2; 1 Corinthians 4:5)!
- B. Because the Bible is faithful in exposing the sins of its heroes, we know that David was not the only holy person that has been dragged into the depths of sin because of what he saw (James 1:14-15; 1 John 2:16; cf. Matthew 26:41).
 1. Eve looked upon the forbidden fruit before she partook of it (Genesis 3:6).
 2. Lot's trouble began when he looked toward Sodom (Genesis 13:10).
 3. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt when she looked back (Genesis 19:26).
- C. We have no business looking upon anyone with a lustful look (Matthew 5:27-28). David could have overcome this temptation by going back to the word of God (Exodus 20:14). It is sad that David's record was marred forever by the "matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15:5).
- D. Had David have been engaged in some other activity, he might have not had the opportunity to sin (Philippians 4:8). This was more than just a "mistake" or "inappropriate behavior." This was sin which condemned him in the sight of God (1 John 3:4; 5:17; cf. 2 Timothy 2:22)!

II. ***The Fruit Of His Sin***

- A. Nathan told David in 2 Samuel 12:14, "However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." Their marriage before the child was born did not cover the guilt of David's sin in the sight of God (2 Samuel 11:27).
- B. How sad when the behavior of a professed Christian fills the mouths of enemies with arguments against God's holy name and gives the enemy occasion to blaspheme (Romans 2:24; 1 Timothy 5:11-14; 2 Peter 2:1-2). Is it not sad that a drunk man who was a Hittite was a better man than sober David, a "man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14; 16:7; Acts 13:22).
- C. The Lord proved Himself holy and just by taking the life of the child born to David and Bathsheba (cf. Ezekiel 36:23).
 - 1. Because of His nature (Leviticus 19:2) and His purpose (2 Samuel 7:12-17), God was bound to show the world that while He loved David, He hated his sin.
 - 2. It was only right that David feel the sufferings of the helpless, innocent child; it was only right that he fast and pray for it without ceasing; it was only right that he hope against hope that this heaviest punishment for his sin would be remitted.
- D. F. B. Meyer said, "This is the bitterest of all -- to know that suffering need not have been." The laws of God cannot be violated with impunity (Hebrews 2:2-3). An anonymous proverb says, "If you do not want the fruits of sin, stay out of sin's orchard."

III. ***The Conviction Of His Sin***

- A. Although David remained unrepentant for many months, there is no reason for us to think that his conscience was quiet (Job 15:20-21). Here was a man whom God had exalted and had fellowship with now sinking into the mire of sin (Psalm 32:3-4).
- B. Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man" (2 Samuel 12:7). This arrow was not shot at random.
 - 1. Stroke by stroke Nathan pounded the hammer -- each blow harder and more crushing than the previous (12:7-12; 1 Peter 4:11).
 - 2. Sinners will not be convicted with a little hint, they have to be "pierced in the heart" (Acts 2:37). As Christ was pierced for our sins, so must we be "pierced."
 - 3. Our ignoring and softening of sin does no one any good. Like the sin of Cain (Genesis 4:8) and Achan (Joshua 7:21), David's secret sin was now laid bare before God (Hebrews 4:12-13).

IV. ***The Confession Of His Sin***

- A. David said, "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Samuel 12:13).
 - 1. He must be commended for bowing to the word of God. He made no excuse, he stated no extenuating circumstances, he blamed no one. He was not angry at anyone for "ratting him out." He "took it like a man."
 - 2. When a man discovers that he has "sinned against heaven" (Luke 15:18), he will cease justifying himself.
- B. Up to this time he had shut God out of his heart, and there was no remedy for his diseased soul (cf. Isaiah 1:5-6). The wound was finally disclosed, and healing could begin (Psalm 51:3-4). Thankfully, he could still be reached with God's word.
- C. A dead conscience makes a man as arrogant as the devil himself (1 Timothy 4:2). The phrase, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is the incense that rises from the coals of a burning conviction (Luke 18:13; cf. Job 40:4).

V. ***The Forgiveness Of His Sin***

- A. Nathan said, "The Lord has taken away your sin; you shall not die" (2 Samuel 12:13). Under the Law of Moses, David was condemned to death (Leviticus 20:10). However, since this was God's law, God had the right to transfer the punishment to the child.
 - 1. This horrible tragedy only reinforces the idea that sin demands a terrible price.
 - 2. God spared the life of David, but someone had to pay the penalty of sin.
- B. It is still true that God will forgive us (Romans 6:23). How sweetly David sang of the abounding mercy of God in Psalm 32:1.
 - 1. His forgiveness was complete.
 - a) Nathan said, "The Lord has taken away your sin." Who will ever find what God has put away (Hebrews 8:12; Micah 7:18-19)?
 - b) By the power of His grace, He gives you the chance to have your sins washed away from before Him (John 1:29; Ephesians 2:8).
 - 2. His forgiveness was accompanied with promise.
 - a) Nathan said, "Thou shalt not die." The forgiveness of God is associated with the promise and assurance of eternal life (Acts 13:47-48; Ephesians 1:7, 11).
 - b) We are not justified until we obey the gospel of Christ (Romans 6:17-18) or repent and confess our sins (Acts 8:22-24; 1 John 1:9).

Conclusion. Adam Clarke said, "David sowed one grain of a sweet moment, and reaped a long harvest of calamity and woe." So many times,

despite ardent admonitions and fervent prayer, we fall to sin. When we do, listen to the words of David: "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him" (Psalm 32:6). Use this opportunity to obey while we stand and sing.