

A SAD CHAPTER IN A GODLY LIFE
2 Samuel 11

Intro: One of the most wonderful stories in the Bible is the story of David, the king of Israel. No person is saved very long before he finds David and the Psalms, and has his heart blessed over and over again. Today, after 3,000 years, the life and writings of David are a major factor in the lives and spiritual growth of the people of God.

But there is one tragic chapter in the life of David, which led to other difficulties.

It was not during those years when he was being pursued by Saul. Those were hard on David, but they were years in which the Lord was working in his heart to make him the man of God that he was to become.

No, the sad chapter came later in his life, after the seven years when he reigned only in Hebron, after he had become the king over the whole nation. It was the time of his sin with Bathsheba, the wife of one of his most loyal men, Uriah the Hittite.

It is hard to understand how such a thing could happen to a man of God like David, but it did! What we need to be concerned about tonight is, Why did it happen? What had gone wrong in David's life to make such a thing even possible? The Bible makes the answer to these questions very clear.

Do you remember that it was David himself who said about the Word of God,

More to be desired are they than gold,
yea, than much fine gold:
sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
and in keeping of them there is great reward
(Psa. 19:10, 11).

"Moreover by them is thy servant warned."

The Apostle Paul said the same thing in different words. He said,

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,
and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof . . .

What can we learn from the experience of David that will help us to avoid sin? And remember that there are other sins besides those which David committed. But what we can learn about his sin can help to defend us against all sins.

There are seven things that I want to mention--all found in the

Word of God, and all there to help us lest we be tempted by sin of any kind.

Of these seven things, three are to be seen connection with 2 Sam. 11, one will take us to a couple of earlier passages, and three are found in Psa. 51. And I will take them in that order.

You know what his sin was.

And you know, too, how he tried to hide his sin.

He did it in three ways:

- 1) First, after hearing that Bathsheba was pregnant, he tried to get Uriah to go home to her, thinking that Uriah would then think that the baby was his own child.
- 2) When that did not succeed, he made Uriah drunk, thinking then that he could get Uriah to go home. But Uriah was too loyal to David and to the other men of Israel to do any such thing!
- 3) Finally, he had Joab put Uriah in the hottest part of the battle, and then to leave him alone so that he would be killed. This worked.

But the last statement of 2 Sam. 11 tells the whole story. Listen to these words: "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." He not only had committed adultery, but he had become a deceiver, had made Uriah drunk, and then had had him murdered. It was premeditated murder.

How could all of this have happened?

Note first . . .

I. THE TIMING.

When did it happen? It happened after David had been blessed with many, many victories. Read the account in the preceding chapters of the many kings David had defeated and the nations which had become tributary to David and to Israel!

After times of blessing and victory we are inclined to let our guard down. When we are going through trials, we pray and we wait upon the Lord. But we are inclined to let up in our relationship with the Lord when things are going well.

F. B. Meyer pointed this out about Abraham when in Gen. 12 he got into the land and Canaan, and then went down into Egypt. This was the reason also that Melchizedek came to meet Abraham after he conquered the kings in Gen. 14 and delivered Lot.

We pray for blessing, for revival, but if it comes, let us be on our guard. That is when the Devil often strikes. Times of blessing are times of danger.

This second point may be related to the first:

II. A TIME WHEN DAVID EVADED HIS RESPONSIBILITY.

None of us is indispensable, it is true. The work of the Lord survived before we came along, and it will survive after we are gone. But as long as we are here, we need to stay on the job!

This does not mean that we cannot take vacations for the refreshment of body and soul, but it is very clear in our text that David should have been with his men. Uriah apparently knew more about this than David did!

Sin is often the result when we are not doing what we should be doing. Regardless of how David may have reasoned that his men could get along without him, HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN WITH THEM!

The third point is definitely related to the second.

III. THE USE OF HIS LEISURE TIME, AND WHAT HE SAW.

We all need leisure, but not when we have a job to do, and not to do anything that we want to do.

What do you look at? How do you use your eyes? Note what is said in 2 Sam. 11:2. " . . . he saw a woman washing herself; and she was very beautiful to look upon."

You and I have TV. We have books and magazine and newspapers. We live in day when immodesty in dress is commonly accepted. Perhaps our temptations along that line are even greater than in David's day. How careful we need to be!

Get rid of whatever is a temptation to you.

Let me give you two other examples of the tempting power of what we see:

- 1) The first sin: Gen. 3:6.
- 2) Achan in Josh. 7:20, 21.

I mentioned a moment ago that one of the reasons for David's sin obviously went back to something that he had been doing for a long time. It had to do with:

IV. HIS MARITAL DISOBEDIENCE.

Look back to 2 Sam. 3:2-5. Then read 2 Sam. 5:13-16. After

that read the commandments which Moses gave to the kings of Israel in Deut. 17:17a,

Neither shall he multiply wives to himself,
that his heart turn not away . . .

God does not strike us dead when we disobey Him. He is amazingly patient with us, His people. But neither does He always hold back the consequences of our disobedience. David had for many years been displeasing God in this, and it finally caught up with him. After taking so many wives, it did not seem really bad to him to commit adultery with another man's wife.

How careful we need to be that we are living in obedience to the Word of God!

But now let us turn to Psalm 51, and I want to point out three final things.

Could I call these last three reasons, theological reasons? They are reasons which show that David at least momentarily three very important doctrines. Notice what they were:

V. THE DOCTRINE OF THE REAL NATURE OF SIN.

David sinned against Bathsheba. He sinned terribly against Uriah, her husband. He sinned against his own wives. He sinned against his children. He sinned against Joab and the men in his army. He sinned against the whole nation. BUT WHAT HE HAD REALLY DONE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE: HE HAD SINNED AGAINST GOD.

Look at Psa. 51:4. This so overwhelmed David that he did not even mention the others he had sinned against.

Do you remember what Joseph told Potiphar's wife? Oh, that David had remembered those words.

. . . how can I do this great wickedness,
and sin against God? (Gen. 39:9b).

For the time, David forgot the Lord. And so he sinned!

I wonder when he wrote those words,
I have set the Lord always before me:
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved
(Psa. 16:8).

But there is another doctrine which David had forgotten.

VI. THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN.

Perhaps I should say, the doctrine of total depravity.

Do you remember why it is that you sin? It is because you were born a sinner. See Psa. 51:5. And as long as you and I are in our unglorified bodies, we are going to have to face the possibility that we can sin.

We cannot afford to play with sin. The Lord Jesus died to deliver us from sin's power as well as from sin's penalty, but we need to be walking in the light, trusting continually in the Lord, to keep us holy in our lives.

No amount of the knowledge of the truth, and no amount of experience in the work of the Lord, can give us immunity from sin. Let us learn that from David.

My last point:

VII. THE DOCTRINE OF A HOLY LIFE.

What a story Psa. 51:6 tells!

It tells us that David had become careless about the application of the Word of God to his own heart and life. The Lord permitted David to fall into sin in order that he might learn this lesson so that he could never forget it.

Deut. 17:18 tell us that the kings of Israel were to do this (reading vv. 19, 20 with it):

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom,
that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:
And it shall be with him,
and he shall read therein all the days of his life:
that he may learn to fear the Lord his God,
to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:
That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left:
to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

Do you think David did that?

Cf. Psa. 119:11.

Concl: Let me close with David's own words regarding the Word of God:

Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
and in keeping of them there is great reward
(Psa. 19:11).

The Word warns us against sin, and the Word strengthens us to be delivered from temptation.