



A BETTER KING

A SERIES IN 2 SAMUEL



2 Samuel 11 – David and Bathsheba

September 24, 2023

*And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away...
Deuteronomy 17:17a (ESV)*

- 2 Samuel 3:1 — David grew stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker.
- 2 Samuel 3:2-5 — Harem report. David begins taking multiple wives
- 2 Samuel 5:10-12 — David's power grows. God strengthens him.
- 2 Samuel 5:13-16 — Harem report. David takes more wives.
- 2 Samuel 8 to 10 — David's empire expands.
- 2 Samuel 11 — Harem report. David takes another man's wife!
- When it comes to significant failures in the middle of life, they usually grow out of smaller sins we nurtured earlier in life.

1. The Affair

In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 11:1 (ESV)

It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house,... 2 Samuel 11:2a (ESV)

*...he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful.
2 Samuel 11:2b (ESV)*

*"I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?"
Job 31:1 (ESV)*

So flee youthful passions... 2 Timothy 2:22a (ESV)

And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" 2 Samuel 11:3 (ESV)

1. Her name was Bathsheba.
2. She was the daughter of Eliam, one of David's mighty men, the top 37 in the army. (She was also the granddaughter of Ahithophel, his trusted counselor.)
3. She was the wife of Uriah, one of David's mighty men, the top 37 in the army.

"...you shall not covet your neighbor's wife..." Exodus 20:17 (ESV)

"You shall not commit adultery." Exodus 20:14 (ESV)

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her... Then she returned to her house. 2 Samuel 11:4 (ESV)

"If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel." Deuteronomy 22:22 (ESV)

...(Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.)... 2 Samuel 11:4 (ESV)

And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant." 2 Samuel 11:5 (ESV)

- If a godly man like David can pursue an affair, don't let me deceive myself by thinking, "It can never happen to me."

Flee from sexual immorality... 1 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV)

2. The Cover-Up

Plan A — Get Uriah to sleep with his wife.

So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. 2 Samuel 11:6 (ESV)

When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. 2 Samuel 11:7 (ESV)

Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." 2 Samuel 11:8a (ESV)

...And Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. 2 Samuel 11:8b (ESV)

But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. 2 Samuel 11:9 (ESV)

When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" 2 Samuel 11:10 (ESV)

Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." 2 Samuel 11:11 (ESV)

Plan B — Get Uriah drunk.

Then David said to Uriah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. 2 Samuel 11:12 (ESV)

And David invited him, and he ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk. And in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. 2 Samuel 11:13 (ESV)

3. The Murder

Plan C — Kill Uriah.

In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 2 Samuel 11:14 (ESV)

In the letter he wrote, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and die." 2 Samuel 11:15 (ESV)

And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. And the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite also died. 2 Samuel 11:16–17 (ESV)

Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting. And he instructed the messenger, "When you have finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, then, if the king's anger rises, and if he says to you, 'Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? Who killed Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'" 2 Samuel 11:18–21 (ESV)

So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell. The messenger said to David, "The men gained an advantage over us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall. Some of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also." 2 Samuel 11:22–24 (ESV)

David said to the messenger, "Thus shall you say to Joab, 'Do not let this matter displease you, for the sword devours now one and now another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.' And encourage him." 2 Samuel 11:25 (ESV)

When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. 2 Samuel 11:26 (ESV)

And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son... 2 Samuel 11:27a (ESV)

...But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD. 2 Samuel 11:27b (ESV)

Applications

1. David's downfall reminds us nobody is immune from temptation, especially sexual temptation.
2. The little sins we nurture today become the big sins of tomorrow.
3. Idleness leaves us vulnerable to temptation. It is always better to avoid temptation than needing to resist it.
4. Flee sexual immorality. Savoring temptation leads to giving in.
5. Sin is never private. Our sins may be partially known by people, but they are fully known by God.
6. Unless we repent and confess our sins, it always leads to more sin.
7. Sin leads to suffering.
8. This is not just a story of great sinfulness. It is a story of God's fantastic grace.

Life Group Questions

1. **Read 2 Samuel 11.** How did this chapter impact you? What did you learn about this familiar story you didn't know before?
2. What made David so vulnerable to temptation at this time in his life? What can we learn from this?
3. **Read James 1:14-15.** How does David's fall into sin follow the progression James describes?
4. Does Bathsheba have some guilt to bear, or was she merely a victim? Explain your answer.
5. David's attempt to cover his sin led to innocent people suffering. Who were (and who will be) the innocent people who suffer for David's sin? What does this teach us about who suffers when we sin?
6. When a person of authority puts sexual pressure on a subordinate, is it abuse? What blame does a subordinate bear when he or she gives in?
7. How would you answer someone who says sex is a private matter involving only two people?
8. Is there a sin in your life that, like David, you are trying to cover up? If so, take the time to confess and repent.