

2 Samuel 12 — Sin's Consequences And God's Grace

October 1, 2023

Good morning CrossWinds! If you are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. We are thankful to have you. I want to begin with good news. Most of you know we are in a capital campaign to raise \$110,000 to improve the Spirit Lake facilities. We are moving from pews to chairs and adding a garage to the side of the gym. This week, we met the funding goal. God has been good through the generosity of His people. Like all things in our economy, as we move forward, I am sure prices will increase. We will probably need more funds than we raised, as is true for any project. The good news is we are close. We are excited to move forward on the last portions of the project. I hope we can frame in the garage this fall then we can finish the interior in the winter.

That will leave us with one fund to work on, which is the general operating account. As you learned last week, we are a little behind on that as well. We are keeping costs down, and God's people have always been generous in times of need. We thank you for your faithfulness.

This morning, we continue our studies in 2 Samuel. We are in 2 Samuel 12. If you were with us last week, you know we covered one of the most important chapters in 2 Samuel. In 2 Samuel 11, David pursued an affair with a beautiful woman named Bathsheba, then murdered her husband to get him out of the picture. Prior to this, in 2 Samuel, David was a great man of God who, for the most part, had impeccable character. As we saw last week, there was an areas of his life he had not submitted to the Lord. It was the area of his sexual desires. In Deuteronomy, God instructed future kings of his people to not acquire

many wives. In 2 Samuel, David began acquiring many wives. We saw repeated reports of a growing harem in 2 Samuel 3 and 2 Samuel 5. He was not in the habit of restraining his sexual desires but indulging them. When he noticed beautiful Bathsheba, he took her, even though she was another man's wife. That led to her pregnancy, which led to David murdering her husband to get him out of the picture.

2 Samuel 11 finished with these words.

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

That is an understatement. God was not simply displeased; he was angry. God was lit! This is not good. David thought he was like a dog with a bone. He thought he buried the evidence of what he had done. He thought he was able to cover his sin. Not true. As we saw last week, many people knew what happened. The palace servants knew what happened because God used them to get Bathsheba. Joab knew what had happened because he was instructed to assassinate Uriah. At this point, everyone in the kingdom who could count to nine knew what happened when Bathsheba's baby was born prematurely. While many people knew part of what happened, God knew all of it, and He is not happy.

Some time passed, possibly as long as a year after David committed adultery and murder. David and Bathsheba's son was born. Everyone loved the baby. It should have been a joy-filled time in the palace. If David had a smile on his face, it was pasted on. In Psalm 32, he later described how he truly felt.

For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah Psalm 32:3-4 (ESV)

This should have been a happy time in David's life, but inside he was dying. His sin was eating him alive. How will the agony and guilt come to an end? Let's look at chapter 12 to find out.

And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him... 2 Samuel 12:1a (ESV)

In chapter 11, David did all the sending because he was in power and control. He sent and inquired about Bathsheba. He sent messengers to bring Bathsheba to him. He sent for Uriah. He wrote a letter demanding Uriah's assassination and sent it by Uriah's hand. David did a lot of sending because he was the king. He thought he was in control. Now, the one who is truly in control does the sending. God sends Nathan to David.

When we read of God sending the prophet Nathan to David, we think, "Here comes the judge." David is in trouble. Yes, David is in big trouble. Things are about to get ugly. God's purpose in sending Nathan was not to destroy David. It was to save David because he loved him. God wants to bring David to the point of confession, repentance, and calling on God for mercy, which is the only way he can be restored. If God wanted to destroy David, he would have sent an assassin with a knife to slip David's throat, not a prophet to call him to repent. Will admitting his sin, confessing his sin, owning his sin, and repenting of his sin hurt? You bet did, but it was the hurt of healing, not destruction.

This applies to our lives. When we fall into sin, and God sends someone into our lives to point out our sin and to call us to repentance, while it hurts, it should not be something we hate. It ultimately should be something we appreciate. It is always better to have God humble us to lead us to healing than to ignore us and let us continue in sin or to destroy us and take our lives.

Nathan confronting David about his sin would be a difficult task.

Confronting a king about the sin in his life might not go well. David murdered a man to get him out of the way. He was acting like a member of a Mexican Cartel. You didn't want to get him angry.

I imagine Nathan spent a lot of time in prayer, asking God to help him find the right way to talk to David about his adultery and murder in a way that would not get him defensive. I think the Holy Spirit worked in Nathan's heart, prompting him to tell a story that would keep David's defenses down yet allow David to see himself in the story.

Nathan indirectly confronted David about his sin.

...There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought..... 2 Samuel 12:1b-3a (ESV)

It was a story of two neighbors living in very different circumstances. One was very rich, the other very poor. The rich man possessed many flocks and herds. The poor man only had one possession, a little ewe lamb. A ewe lamb is a young, unweaned female sheep. They are extremely cute, cuddly, and trusting.

...And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. 2 Samuel 12:3 (ESV)

The poor man had a happy home life. The little ewe lamb was a loved member of the family. As a former shepherd, David knew about ewe lambs and how shepherds loved and cared for them. He knew how a little lamb trusted and adored its shepherd.

Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took

the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." 2 Samuel 12:4 (ESV)

Before we go further in the story, I want to pause and make a few observations about the story. This story was well-crafted to connect to David's sin with Bathsheba. In the story, when it talks about the little sheep that would lie in the poor man's arms, the Hebrew term for lying in someone's arms was used to describe intimacy between a husband and wife. The ewe lamb was described as a daughter to the poor man. In Hebrew, the word daughter is *Bath*. The name of Uriah's wife was *Bathsheba*. The rich man *took* the little ewe lamb from the poor man. The word *took* in that verse is the same Hebrew word used in the last chapter to speak of David taking Bathsheba for himself. In Hebrew, many subtle connections tie this story to David and Bathsheba's sin. David didn't pick up on any of them. After hearing the story, David assumed it really happened. His blood was boiling. As the king of the nation, his job was to serve as the nation's judge. This wrong must be righted.

Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." 2 Samuel 12:5-6 (ESV)

David begins by saying the rich who did this deserved to die. That is how David felt about what the rich man had done. While David felt the rich man deserved to die because of his despicable conduct, what he did was not a capital offense. In the story, the rich man stole and killed a little lamb. For that, the Old Testament law only required a four-fold restitution to the lamb's owner, not death.

If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. Exodus 22:1 (ESV)

David was hot. He was angry. He felt the man deserved death for his despicable behavior, but under the law, he could only demand a four-fold restitution. Now, it gets fun.

Nathan flipped the tables to expose David's sin.

Nathan said to David, "You are the man!".... 2 Samuel 12:7a (ESV)

Gotcha! The rich man in the story was David. He had many wives. The poor man in the story was Uriah, who only had one wife. Uriah's lovely wife was the delight of his life. David, was a despicable rich man who ruined her marriage!

Now that David's defenses were down, the gloves come off and Nathan's speaks God's words of disapproval.

...Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. 2 Samuel 12:7-8 (ESV)

Notice how God repeats one word. It is the word "I." I made you king. I saved you from the hand of Saul. I gave you Saul's possessions and even King Saul's harem of wives in addition to the wives you took for yourself. If you needed more, I would have given you more. David already had more than enough in life, especially regarding feminine charms. What made David's sin against Uriah and Bathsheba so bad was the staggering amount of goodness God had already given him. He had more than enough. Why did he have to take from someone else the one little bit of goodness God gave Uriah?

Now Nathan gets specific about David's sin.

Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to

be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. 2 Samuel 12:9 (ESV)

Don't try and deny it and claim Uriah died at the hands of the Ammonites in a war. He died because of you. You gave the command for his assassination. Don't try to blame Uriah's death on anyone else. Don't blame shift it away. It was completely your fault. You killed Uriah to steal his wife. When you did it, you despised the word of the Lord. That means you knew it was wrong, but you did it anyway. You knew from the Ten Commandments not to covet your neighbor's wife, not to commit adultery, and not to murder, but you didn't care. After God had been incredibly good to you, you didn't care to stay away from what God said was off-limits. The same God who loved you, protected you, and was so good to you is the God you intentionally chose to disobey. David, what is wrong with you?!

Some of the Hebrew is interesting in this passage. When it talks about David "despising the Word of the Lord", those are the exact same Hebrew words that were used in 1 Samuel to describe Eli's wicked sons when they chose to sleep with the young women who worked at the Tabernacle, even though they were already married. David! You acted just like Eli's wicked sons. They are the sons God struck dead in battle because of what they did. David, you are in their category. What you did was acting just like them.

Having spoken about David's murder of Uriah, God gave David consequences for that sin.

Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house,... 2 Samuel 12:10a (ESV)

Uriah was killed with the sword. As a consequence for David's sin, the sword will never depart from his house. David's family will never be free from violence and death from this point forward in history.

Four of David's sons will die. First will be his son with Bathsheba. Next Ammon, Absalom, and Adonijah will die. Three of them will die from a sword wielded by a member of David's house. In the story of the ewe lamb, David gave a judgment of fourfold restitution for what the rich man had done. That is exactly what happened to David. He took Uriah's life. As a consequence of that sin, four of his sons will lose their life. In the future, when David's sons die imagine knowing it was happening as a consequence of your sin. Their deaths were ultimately your fault. Boy, that had to hurt!

Next, God moved from talking about the murder of Uriah to talking about the adultery David committed with Bathsheba.

...because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 2 Samuel 12:10b (ESV)

You despise me. You knew adultery with Bathsheba was wrong. It is one of the Ten Commandments, David! You wouldn't listen.

Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.' " 2 Samuel 12:11-12 (ESV)

This was literally fulfilled later in David's life. David's son Absalom rose up against him and attempted to overthrow his father from the throne. David was forced to flee Jerusalem. When he did, he left some of his wives behind. When Absalom came to the king's house, he took the wives that remained and publicly

raped them on the roof of the king's palace for everyone in Jerusalem to see. The very same roof that David was on when he lusted over Bathsheba was the roof that many of David's wives were publicly raped by David's own son! Those are painful consequences. When it happened, David knew why it happened.

The rest of 2 Samuel plus 1 and 2 Kings tell the terrible story of these two pronouncements unfolding. David's house will be troubled by violence and sin not just for the rest of his life, but for generations to come.

Let's pause and think about what we can learn. David was God's chosen man to be king. God chose to love David, yet when David sinned, he faced deep and long-lasting consequences for what he had done.

Nothing has changed. Today, Christians take sin in their life too casually. If we sin, it is no big deal. We have a get-out-of-jail-free card called Jesus. Will Jesus forgive our sins when we call on him? Yes, he will. That doesn't mean we will escape all the consequences that flow from sin. We think that if there are consequences for our sins, they will only last 15 minutes. That is not true. The consequences of some choices will last for the rest of our lives, or even for generations. Sin is serious.

The only way for anyone to escape the consequences of our sins is that Jesus. God's own son had to take on flesh to become one of us and then die in our place for our sins. Sin is so bad that God had to die for it. If David was God's chosen man, the man God loved, yet he faced terrible, long-lasting consequences for his sin, what makes us think that when we sin, we will escape suffering?

The Bible says this about God.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Hebrews 10:31 (ESV)

While we are not saved by God's law, it does show us how to live. It shows us what sin looks like and how to avoid it. It is always better to avoid sin rather than needing forgiveness of sin.

David was shattered.

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."... 2 Samuel 12:13a (ESV)

After all this time, after all the damage he had done, for the first time admitted his sin. I am caught. I sinned against the Lord. Even though David only said two words in Hebrew to admit his sin, in Psalm 51, he went into greater detail about his remorse as he repented for what he had done. Psalm 51 is a prayer that all of us should pray when we are shattered by our sin, and we want to run back to God. Let me read a portion of it.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Psalm 51:1–12 (ESV)

Later in Psalm 51, David says these words.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart. O God, you will not despise. Psalm 51:17 (ESV)

God, I don't have a lamb, a cow, or any kind of animal for my sin. All I have is a broken and contrite heart. I trust you will not despise it. You will accept it. A broken and contrite heart is what you want from us. David asks God to wash him clean of his sins and give him a clean heart. That is what God gave David. God ultimately did that by Jesus, because only Jesus can take away sin, but God forgives our sin by Jesus and gives anyone who calls on him a new heart through Jesus. That is the amazing God we have.

These are the most astonishing words in the chapter. As soon as David confesses his sin, look how God responds.

...And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die." 2 Samuel 12:13 (ESV)

I love how this happens. When we confess our sins to God, we often find ourselves pleading with God begging him to forgive us day after day. The good news of the Bible is that as soon as we confess our sins, God immediately forgives us of our sins. He doesn't make us sit for a month or year in limbo!

What consequences was David facing that God forgave?

According to Leviticus 20:10, the penalty for David's adultery was death. According to Exodus 21:12, the penalty for murdering Uriah was also death. David deserved to die. David would not die.

Notice that complete forgiveness of sin did not mean removing all consequences for sin. The consequences God handed out to David in verses ten to twelve would still happen, but David would not die. Even more significantly, David would not be rejected by God as king, like God rejected King Saul after he sinned and didn't repent.

David's son died because of his sin.

“Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child who is born to you shall die.” 2 Samuel 12:14 (ESV)

God forgave David's sin, but he would still face painful consequences.

Those consequences began with the death of the infant son he loved.

David's son will die due to his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah.

We may think that is terrible, but isn't it true that children suffer every day because of their parent's sins? Children die in abortions every day because of the sins of their parents. Parents who fight at home lead to children suffering. Parents who allow filthy entertainment in their homes and neglect the Bible lead to their children suffering. Children suffering for the choices of their parents is nothing new.

Then Nathan went to his house. And the LORD afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick. 2 Samuel 12:15 (ESV)

I cannot imagine how broken David felt as he watched his infant son suffer, especially when he knew all of that suffering was because of what he had done. When my children were young, as a family, we took a trip to Florida with the kids. Daniel, my middle son, became sick on the trip. He was constantly throwing up. It went on for days. We were nowhere near doctors or hospitals. I picked him up, and he was limp in my arms. He was down to skin and bones. I remember the pain in my heart and asking God to spare him. Lord, give me the sickness. Let me suffer. Don't let him suffer. I think every parent worth their salt would feel the same way. When their children suffer, they would gladly trade places with their children if that would alleviate their suffering. I am sure David

felt the same way about his son. I am sure he asked God if he could suffer and die in his son's place.

David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. And the elders of his house stood beside him, to raise him from the ground, but he would not, nor did he eat food with them. 2 Samuel 12:16–17 (ESV)

The man who earlier forgot about God now sought God. The man who only loved himself now desperately cared about someone else. I am sure in those prayer times, David constantly asked God if he could suffer and die in his son's place. Even though God said his son would die, there was nothing wrong with David asking God to change his mind.

David fasted. This means he didn't even stop to eat to be distracted away from his prayer. Praying for his son was more important to him than taking time to eat. The Hebrew suggests David fasted and prayed for the entire time his son was sick, that is all seven days. His servants were concerned because he wouldn't get up from the ground to eat.

By the way, if you are a parent with a sick child or a child who died in infancy, that does not mean God took your child's life because of your sin. That was the case for David. God clarified to David that his child would suffer and die for his sin. There are many other reasons why children die before or after birth that have nothing to do with their parent's sin. Unless God specifically told you that your child would die for your sin, as parents, don't assume that is the reason. There are many other factors.

On the seventh day the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Behold, while the child was yet alive,

we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us. How then can we say to him the child is dead? He may do himself some harm.” 2 Samuel 12:18 (ESV)

The servants knew he was so heartbroken when his child was sick. They couldn't imagine how upset he would be when he found out his child died.

But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David understood that the child was dead. And David said to his servants, “Is the child dead?” They said, “He is dead.” 2 Samuel 12:19 (ESV)

Then David arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his clothes. And he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. He then went to his own house. And when he asked, they set food before him, and he ate. 2 Samuel 12:20 (ESV)

This is not what his servants expected. After his son's death, he resumed the normal activities of life. He began by going to the house of the Lord, where he worshipped. Like Job after he lost his children, David worshipped God instead of running from him. Look what Job did after he lost his children.

Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” Job 1:20–21 (ESV)

Then his servants said to him, “What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive; but when the child died, you arose and ate food.” 2 Samuel 12:21 (ESV)

He said, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, ‘Who knows whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’ But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.” 2 Samuel 12:22–23 (ESV)

David's behavior before the child died was based on the possibility of God's grace. David did not know if God would relent from the consequences of David's sin that he declared, but David knew it was worth asking for in prayer. Once the child died, he knew God's will on the matter. David prayed knowing God might be gracious, but he didn't pretend to know that God would be

gracious. David's quiet acceptance of his son's death reminds us that he was content with God's wisdom and would trust in God's will, even if it was hard.

There are two observations we should make from these verses.

What do these verses teach us about grieving?

Grief shouldn't keep us from God, it should drive us to God. David grieved, and rightfully so. In his grief, he sought the Lord and worshipped the Lord. He didn't run from him. In times of crushing loss, it is easy to run from God in anger. It is easy to want to stay away from church and people. I understand that is where we may emotionally start, but it is not where we should stay. In times of great pain and loss, run hard to God, don't run from him.

God uses His Word, worship, and prayer to carry us through times of loss. When in times of great loss, worship is important. Thanking God for who he is, his goodness, and his kindness to us functions like ballast in a boat that keeps it from capsizing in a storm. Worshipping God for who he is and what has done keeps us from emotionally losing it.

What do these verses teach us about the loss of a child?

David's words give us hope for the salvation of children who die.

Many Christians have grieved the loss of a child, either as a stillborn before birth or as a young infant after birth. David's explanation of what happened to his child after death brings great comfort to grieving parents.

...I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." 2 Samuel 12:23b (ESV)

David's comments give us hope for the salvation of children who die.

While the Bible contains no straightforward declaration about children who die in infancy, David's words in this passage and the rest of biblical evidence urges us

to have confidence in God's eternal care of children who die. David was confident his infant son would be waiting for him in heaven when he arrived there after his death.

Death doesn't sever the relationship with our children. Children who die in the womb or shortly after birth are not truly lost to us. Yes, we won't get to see them grow up and learn to drive, go on a first date, or see them walk down the aisle of marriage. While we are separated from our children by death, because of Jesus, our relationship with our children is not ended. It was just temporarily put on hold. In heaven, we will never be separated from our children, and we will spend an eternity with them, making memories together.

Grieving parents should know their children in heaven are better cared for by God than Mom and Dad could have cared for them on earth. Like David, we should trust God has taken our children to himself. If that is the case, how can we complain? The Bible says that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, which is better by far! With Jesus is no more weeping, crying, or pain. Should we grieve over the loss of a child? Yes, we must grieve. Death is an enemy. We do not grieve for them. They are well taken care of by Jesus. We grieve for ourselves, having to wait until later to be with them.

God blessed David's relationship with Bathsheba.

David repented. God put away his sins, but he would still face the long-lasting consequences of his sins. More astonishing than this was God's grace. This is amazing. However sinful the relationship was between David and Bathsheba when it began, look what God did with it now.

Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba,... 2 Samuel 12:24a (ESV)

I cannot imagine how this went. It would mean David admitting to Bathsheba that he assassinated her husband. It would mean acknowledging the reason her son died was because of his sin. It would be telling her God promised years of suffering and sin in their family due to what he had done. That would be hard to admit! It would also mean focusing on her, loving her, and genuinely caring for her. True repentance involves not just confessing our sin to God but also to who we have hurt, even if it hurts.

...and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the LORD loved him. 2 Samuel 12:24b (ESV)

This is amazing. God was so gracious. God put away his sin. Not only would David not die, but God took the relationship between David and Bathsheba, which began sinfully, and he blessed it. He gave them a second son named Solomon. Solomon's name is a version of Shalom, which means peace and wholeness with the Lord. Finally, things were right between David, Bathsheba, and God. This son was special because the Lord loved him. Earlier in this book, we saw it was David that God chose to love in a special way and to raise him up to be king. Now, it was Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, that God chose set his love upon beyond all his brothers to be the next king.

...And the LORD loved him and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD. 2 Samuel 12:24–25 (ESV)

God sent the same Nathan to David to tell him that his son was not just specially loved by God, but he was also specially named by God. David and Bathsheba may have named him Solomon as a recognition of the peace David now enjoyed with God and his wife, but God named him Jedidiah, which means "Loved by God."

God's amazing grace took a broken David, a scared David, who would watch suffering, death, and sexual sin ravage his house for the rest of his life but still showed incredible mercy and blessing to him when he repented. We will not hear about Solomon again until 1 Kings 1:10 when he assumed the throne after David. He went on to become the wisest and wealthiest king of Israel ever.

Maybe the best epilogue to this chapter is that David will later have another son. He called him Nathan in honor of the prophet who dared to confront him over his sin with Bathsheba and call him to repentance. It was only after David repented that the door for God's grace opened in his life. According to Luke 3:31, David's son Nathan was in the ancestral line of Jesus.

The last part of this chapter is a flashback. The siege of Rabbah, began in the last chapter while David was away from the battlefield eyeing Bathsheba, the bathing beauty, from his palace roof. 2 Samuel 11 was clear that one reason he ended up in trouble is that he was not doing his job of leading the nation's battles. This chapter ends with David getting back to the work he should have done in the first place, leading the army of the nation.

God blessed David as the king.

Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and took the royal city. And Joab sent messengers to David and said, "I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the city of waters. Now then gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called by my name." 2 Samuel 12:26–28 (ESV)

The fight for the city was near its conclusion. The city of waters probably refers to the fortifications protecting the city's water supply. With that under Joab's control, the city could not hold out much longer. Joab was concerned that

the victory brought honor to him instead of David if David did not show up to lead the final assault.

So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah and fought against it and took it. And he took the crown of their king from his head. The weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone, and it was placed on David's head. And he brought out the spoil of the city, a very great amount. And he brought out the people who were in it and set them to labor with saws and iron picks and iron axes and made them toil at the brick kilns. And thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 12:29–31 (ESV)

This was the last great war of David's life. It was an enormous victory. A crown weighing a talent of gold weighed 65 pounds. That was a big crown. I bet the king had a tremendous headache whenever he wore it.

David was back on track. He was back leading the army and not staying at home. After confessing and repenting to God, God took away his sin. He would not die for what he had done.

David still faced the consequence of his infant son dying. In the future, he would face the consequence of 3 more sons dying due to his sin. He would also face the consequences of some of his wives being raped on the very same roof where the affair began when he lusted after Bathsheba.

Yet, in spite of those consequences, God gave him hope and a future. He had another son named Solomon, who was especially loved by God. The next son of David and Bathsheba will be king in David's place.

Applications

1. Hiding sin leads to greater sin and the destruction of our hearts. The only hope for sin is confessing and repenting, then casting ourselves on the mercy of God through Jesus. A broken and contrite heart God will not despise.

2. True believers may pursue sin, but God will not allow them to remain in sin.
God will discipline his children to break their love for sin and bring them home.
3. The pleasure of sin is never worth the long-term pain.
4. God's discipline of his children is hard, but it is always intended for our good.
5. The Lord uses other Christians to confront us when we wander into sin.
6. There are two things we need to take more seriously:
 - A. The consequences of sin are much bigger than we realize.
 - B. The grace of God toward repentant sinners is better than we can imagine.



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