

LESSONS FROM DAVID ... PART 3

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We have been looking at the lives of King David and King Saul ... to see what lessons we can learn.

We saw Saul to be a man who started well ... but unfortunately became self-important ... only partially obedient to God (which means he was disobedient) ... made excuses ... blamed others ... spent his latter years trying to kill the man he knew God had anointed as king.

David was called when he was very young — the runt of the family. Background — a young shepherd boy. Brought to the Royal Court due to his musical abilities. Became most famous for one particular event — killing Goliath — showing his trust in God ... running at Goliath with only a slingshot.

Saul added jealousy to his other weaknesses and spent years trying to kill David. David had to flee into the wilderness for quite a number of years. Even though Saul “fell” into David’s hands on occasion — David refused to stretch out his hand in vengeance.

On those occasions ... Saul seemed to have some remorse. But it wasn’t repentance — no lasting change. We saw briefly in 2 Corinthians 7 not to confuse remorse for repentance.

Eventually Saul died in battle (a day after consulting a witch!). David became king and ruled Israel for about 40 years.

Even today ... David is Israel’s most famous king. He will be in God’s Kingdom in the World Tomorrow.

A great example of courage ... of trust in God ... of patience and long-suffering — but well-known ... even to Bible scoffers ... because of one very infamous episode in his life — his adultery with Bathsheba.

One of the “proofs” of scripture may be that it doesn’t gloss over the lives of its heroes (Noah being drunk — Peter denying Jesus three times)!

All of us are human ☺ We've all got flaws and weaknesses. There is a saying "God has never had anybody who was actually qualified to represent Him" ... He's had to use us with all of our flaws.

2 Samuel 11:1-5

1 It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2 Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.

3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

4 Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.

5 And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I am with child."

A major and public sin.

Verse 1 ... It was a time "when kings go to battle"? But not David? What's he doing not going to battle? Had he lost his hunger ... taking his ease?

Israel was now successful. Powerful. Time for David to relax ... and enjoy the good life? That was a problem to King David.

Quote from Abraham Lincoln: "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power".

David doesn't handle his new circumstances well. (Think of it in your own life — when do you pray more? Fast more? In adversity ... or when things are nice and comfortable?)

Verse 2 ... Implies David getting up in the evening? Bored? Goofing off?

A reminder of a couple of secular proverbs:

- “The devil makes work for idle hands”
- “Idle hands are the devil’s tools”

Bathsheba was fairly “well-connected”. Her husband Uriah was one of David’s 37 “mighty men” — his most famous and feared warriors. Her father was Eliab — another of the 37 personal bodyguard. Her grandfather seems to have been Ahithophel — one of David’s royal counsellors.

David’s sin is major. He already has 7 wives (plus 10 concubines) ... why commit adultery? This is the wife and daughter of 2 of his personal army of bodyguards and warriors.

Now she’s pregnant.

What to do? He tries to implicate Uriah ... called him back from battle ... but Uriah nobly declines to sleep with his wife.

So David took it one step further ... he has him exposed to certain death ... and he’s killed in battle. This is the man who earlier refused to lift his hand against Saul.

You certainly get the impressions that David is not the man he was? He has changed — and not for the better.

It’s doubtful it happened overnight. A gradual decline. ***That’s what you and I have to watch out for.*** Don’t casually drift away.

Hebrews 2:1-3

1 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. (KJV:slip) *(The first major warning in the Book of Hebrews)*

2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

It takes time. As years pass ... zeal reduces ... distractions and pulls in our lives tend to grow ... eventually we grow “cold”.

Remember the Laodiceans — lukewarm!

If we drift away from a close walk with God ... we're a target for satan ... going about like a roaring lion.

It happened to David! It was written for our admonition!

May not always be obvious that you and I are drifting away? Like the frog in the water?

Back to David. With Uriah gone because of David's scheming ... he marries Bathsheba (it may appear "noble" to the public?)

2 Samuel 12:1-6

1 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him:

"There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor.

2 "The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds.

3 "But the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him.

4 "And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

5 So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to

Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die!

6 "And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

Nathan has a "story" for David. That story showed an unpleasant person — but notice that David was quick to judge — and he's going to sentence the man to death!

David's judgment is too severe — not Biblical.

As a passing thought ... we need to be careful in judging others — we don't always have all of the facts ... we can't read the intents of the heart. And ... people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Also James 2:13: "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy".

2 Samuel 12:7-12

7 **Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.'**

8 **'I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!'**

9 ***'Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.'***

10 ***'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me,*** and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

11 **"Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from 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.'**

12 **'For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'** "

David had forgotten God's goodness. Forgotten that God was a witness to his behaviour. Ungrateful perhaps?

2 Samuel 12:13-14

13 **So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."** And Nathan said to David, **"The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.** (*I have sinned! Chatta al-Jehovah ... I have sinned against the Lord.*)

14 **"However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."**

David's repentance appears immediate. No excuses (woman's fault ... bathing naked ... Uriah would likely have died anyway). Very different from Saul.

God accepted David's repentance ... so clearly it was authentic ... fully repentant.

Later ... David had time to put his thoughts together more fully as we can see in the following Psalm.

Psalms 51:1-4

1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

**Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.**

**2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.**

**3 For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin is always before me.**

**4 Against You, You only, have I sinned,
And done this evil in Your sight--**

That You may be found just when You speak,
And blameless when You judge.

Psalms 51:7-11

**7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

8 Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken may rejoice.

**9 Hide Your face from my sins,
And blot out all my iniquities.**

**10 Create in me a clean heart, 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.**

Psalms 51:14-17

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,

The God of my salvation,

And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.

15 ***O Lord, open my lips,***

And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

16 ***For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it;***

You do not delight in burnt offering.

17 ***The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,***

A broken and a contrite heart--

These, O God, You will not despise.

We can surmise that David came to his senses ... finally. He was broken hearted.

God forgave these major sins. God forgives ours too — no matter how many sins or how serious they are.

1 John 1:7-9

7 But ***if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.***

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 ***If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***

If we confess our sins — “keep short accounts with God” — “run to God when you sin ... not from Him”.

It may be easy for us to judge David. He had such great opportunities — called by God ... and anointed as King ... became very wealthy.

But — like all of us — he fouled up! Big time! But he REPENTED — quickly and completely.

We can all do this!

One very important lesson we can learn from David’s experience here.

Just because God forgives our sins ... doesn't mean that all of the consequences disappear.

Let's finish off this part of the story of David.

2 Samuel 12:13-25

13 So **David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."** And **Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die."**

14 **"However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."**

15 Then Nathan departed to his house. **And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill.**

16 **David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.**

17 So the elders of his house arose and went to him, to raise him up from the ground. But he would not, nor did he eat food with them.

18 **Then on the seventh day it came to pass that the child died.** And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, "Indeed, while the child was alive, we spoke to him, and he would not heed our voice. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He may do some harm!"

19 When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead."

20 **So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped.** Then he went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate.

21 Then his servants said to him, "What is this 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."

22 And **he said, "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?'**

23 **"But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."**

24 **Then David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in to her and lay with her. So she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. Now the LORD loved him,**

25 **and He sent word by the hand of Nathan the prophet: So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.**

The consequences start:

- The child conceived in adultery dies ... though God fully accepts their next son ... Solomon — even renames him (Jedidah = Beloved of God)

So God blesses David and Bathsheba with a son — a very special one.

And in Matthew 1 ... the genealogy of Jesus Christ ... the Son of David ... is via Solomon.

However ... the consequences of David's sin continue (like a rock tossed into a pond).

- Amnon ... King David's firstborn — rapes his half-sister Tamar ("My dad's an adulterer? No position to criticise?")
- Absalom ... Tamar's brother — eventually murders Amnon.

Absalom flees into exile ... he's a murderer. David mourns for him ... and so neglects to rule the kingdom properly.

Eventually Absalom is allowed back ... manoeuvres himself into being the people's favourite — which leads to civil war ... and David ends up fleeing Jerusalem. David's concubines are raped. Thousands die.

Fast forward. Absalom then gets slain. David's rule is restored ... but David is heartbroken.

Fast forward. When Solomon is older ... David identifies him to be king. Yet another son ... Adonijah ... tries to get himself crowned king first before Solomon. Some time later ... Solomon executes him.

God has forgiven David ... they were reconciled. But ... the consequences of David's poor choices — sin — continued. David's latter years — were very troubled.

Yet there was a time he probably thought he'd "got away" with it.

Proverbs 28:13

13 **He who covers his sins will not prosper,
But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.**

Some good lessons for us.

- Don't treat sin lightly ("God will forgive me anyway ..."). Some sins have permanent consequences.
- Deal with sin quickly! No cover-ups with God!

Finally.

Proverbs 17:13

13 **Whoever rewards evil for good,
Evil will not depart from his house.**

Uriah was a good man — brave ... noble ... loyal.

David repaid him with evil ... so sets up a curse ... as we saw.

Many other lessons no doubt from the lives of Saul and David. I'll leave you to pursue it if you're interested!