"RECONNECTING WITH GOD"
2 Samuel 12:1-25

Chapter 11 closes with the sin of David hanging like a dark cloud over the life of the King. You know the story. David lusted after Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. David took her and she conceived as a result. To cover his tracks, the king tried to trick Uriah into sleeping with his wife. However, he was a man of conviction and loyalty. So, David orchestrated a devilish plan to have him killed.

Now we know that God did not punish David immediately for his sin. There was about a year gap between chapters 11 and 12. If only David had repented during this gap, it would have saved him a world of hurt. Tonight I would like to examine how the Lord worked in David's life to deal with this sin he committed

During this gap the king must have wrestled with his own troubled soul. Constant guilt, loss of joy and peace, the sense of God's displeasure are all the regular companions of those who walk away from the Lord and who refuse to deal with their sins. If we could learn to do it God's way—**Pro. 28:13; 1 John 1:9**— it would save us so much sorrow and heartache. He wrote Psalm 32 to express his struggle (Read verses 1-5). According to Gary Hamrick, there's an important truth that flows out of this chapter . . .

CONCEALED SIN HURTS. CONFESSED SIN HEALS.

The Parable of Nathan

Previously the prophet Nathan delivered a message of great blessing to David (2 Samuel 7). David knew that Nathan was not a negative critic but a friend who cared for him. It made David receptive to the message of the story.

2 Samuel 12:1–4… **Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. 2 "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. 3 "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him. 4 "Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."**

With wisdom and courage, Nathan used a story to get God's message across to David. No one should presume that God will speak *forever* to the unrepentant sinner (Genesis 6:3). When we hear or sense the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we must respond to it immediately.

The sin Nathan describes is *theft*. There is a sense in which David *stole* something from Uriah **(1 Corinthians 7:3-5)**. David did not have authority over the body of Bathsheba. Adultery and sexual immorality are taking something that does not belong to us.

The Response of David

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

David naturally assumed the story was true, so he immediately passed sentence on the guilty man in Nathan's story. Like David, we often try to rid our guilty consciences by passing judgment on someone else.

David knew that penalizing the rich man – *even with death* – wasn't enough. He also had to *restore* something to the man he took something from. True repentance involves *restitution* and he was aware of what God's Word said

about the proper *restitution* in the case of a stolen sheep that was slaughtered:

> **Exodus 22:1**… When someone steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, the thief shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. The thief shall make restitution, but if unable to do so, shall be sold for the theft.

Nathan Rebukes The King

2 Samuel 12:7–9… **Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; 8 I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. 9 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.**

"Thus says the Lord"—God confronted David with the reality of His favor on David's life (7-8). The king's ingratitude to the Lord was off the charts!

"Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight (9)?" Nathan explained that by despising God's Word, *David despised God Himself*. We can't despise God's Word without despising Him.

Many who live in sin seem to believe it has no effect or little effect on their relationship with God. But despising God's word and disobeying it means that we are despising God Himself. We can't have fellowship with God and despise Him at the same time.

> **1 John 1:6**… If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true.

GOD NAILED DAVID TO THE WALL AND WOULDN'T TURN HIM LOOSE! DAVID MADE A MOCKERY OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, THE CENTRAL TENETS OF THE LORD'S COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL BY COMMITTING THE SINS OF MURDER AND ADULTERY AND COVETING.

David's sin really was primarily a sin against God for two reasons . . .

1.) <u>David realizes that his sin began as a sin against God</u>.

What was it about Bathsheba that David wanted? Was it the feeling of power? her beauty? a moment of physical pleasure? **David was seduced by Bathsheba's beauty because he was no longer captivated by God's glory.** So much sin occurs because of the sin of ingratitude and a strong sense of entitlement!

All our sin begins as we grow dissatisfied with what God has given us, as we doubt His goodness toward us. We start to feel that God's boundaries are restrictive, not life-giving. This means the way to deal with sin in our lives isn't merely to suppress the sin; it's to increase our delight in God so that we love Him more than we love the sin. [1]

2.) <u>David realizes that offending God was his most significant betrayal</u>.

What he did to Bathsheba was shameful; what he did to Uriah was despicable; but what he did to God was the most heinous of all. God had created David, had raised him up from the position of shepherd to that of a king, had given him every good thing in his life.

God Disciplines David

2 Samuel 12:10–12… **'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 evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 12 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.' "**

[1] J. D. Greear and Heath A. Thomas, *Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016), 220.

"The sword shall never depart from your house"—God promised that from that day forward David would know violence and bloodshed among his own family members. He demanded fourfold restitution from the man in Nathan's parable. God exacted fourfold restitution for Uriah from four of David's sons who died: *Bathsheba's child, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah*.

"The wife of Uriah the Hittite"— God didn't even use Bathsheba's name. He wanted David to consider Bathsheba not only as an individual but also as *the wife of Uriah the Hittite*.

"I will raise up evil against you from your own household"— God warned David that because he troubled another man's family, God would allow trouble to come upon his own family!

"I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and under the sun.'"— As David violated another man's wife, so another will violate his wives. This was fulfilled by Absalom, David's son . . .

> **2 Samuel 16:21–22**… Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, the ones he has left to look after the house; and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." **22** So they pitched a tent for Absalom upon the roof; and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

Here is the perfect example of *"The Law of Sowing and Reaping."*

> **Galatians 6:7–8**… Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. **8** If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

This is a spiritual law that is just as valid and consistent as the law of gravity. When God convicts you of a sin, confess it and repent quickly!

David Repents Of His Sin

2 Samuel 12:13–14… **David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan said to David, "Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die. 14 Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child that is born to you shall die."**

Repentance begins where blame-shifting, bargaining, and rationalization end. Nothing in this prayer suggests that David comes to God looking to make a deal. He's not reminding God of all the great things he did in the past. He's not trying to explain away his sin. He's not even promising to do better in the future. No, David appeals to God on the only ground that won't crumble, the ground of God's grace. This is the heart of the gospel. [2]

"**I have sinned against the LORD"**— David's confession is a good example for us to follow. He placed the blame squarely on his own shoulders. He owned it and did not minimize his offense. David realized that he had especially sinned against God.

In the original Hebrew, David's statement amounts to only two words. These two words, and the heart they reflect, show the fundamental difference between David and Saul. Confession doesn't need to be long to be real and sincere.

I have sinned. It wasn't a *mistake*, an *error*, a *mess-up*, an *indiscretion*, or a *problem*. His sin against Bathsheba, against Uriah, against Ahithophel, against his wives and children, and against the nation were great. But his sin *against the LORD* was greatest of all. There are no small sins against a great God. Look at David's confession in Psalm 51 which he wrote after reflection and meditation. [READ PSALM 51]

[2] J. D. Greear and Heath A. Thomas, *Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016), 219.

"Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die"— God's forgiveness was *immediate*. God did not demand a time of probation. In fact, He would spare David the penalty for adultery and murder as commanded under the Law of Moses.

David believed the word of the prophet, "*You are the man!*" Therefore, he could also believe the word, *"The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die!"*

> **Romans 8:1**… There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

God didn't only want to deliver David from the *guilt* of his sin; He also wanted to give David victory over this sin. We never read of David committing adultery again because God used this spiritual discipline to drive these impure desires far away from David.

God Strikes The Child

2 Samuel 12:15–17… **Then Nathan went to his house. The LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became very ill. 16 David therefore pleaded with God for the child; David fasted, and went in and lay all night on the ground. 17 The elders of his house stood beside him, urging him to rise from the ground; but he would not, nor did he eat food with them.**

"The LORD struck the child"— This is hard for many to accept. Sadly, the innocent often suffer because of the sin of the guilty. This was far more tragic for David and Bathsheba than it was for the child himself. Their young son suffered for several days and we may trust that God's comfort was extended to the child in the midst of that suffering. At the end of his suffering, the child went to eternal glory. The chastisement was really upon David and Bathsheba and not upon the child.

"David therefore inquired of God for the child"— David was right to take the announcement of God's judgment as an invitation to pray and seek His

face. When God's judgment is announced, we shouldn't receive it passively or fatalistically. We should cry out to God in repentance and ask for His grace and mercy.

"David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground"— This shows that extraordinary prayer and fasting does not always alter God's will. These are not tools to get whatever we want from God. They are demonstrations of radical submission and surrender to God's power and will.

David's self-denial should be interpreted as a demonstration of his remorse for the sins he had committed and an effort to demonstrate to God that the child's recovery was more important to him than food, comfort, or pride. David persisted in his actions in spite of the efforts of "the elders of his household" (v. 17).[3]

Our Lord always answers the prayers of a Spirit filled believer. However, the answer is not always "YES." Sometimes it is "NO" or even "WAIT."

> **1 John 5:14–15**… And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. **15** And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him.

David's Reaction To The Child's Death

2 Samuel 12:18-23… 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, "While the child was still alive, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us; how then can we tell him the child is dead? He may do himself some harm." 19 But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, he perceived that the child was dead; and David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They said, "He is dead." 20 Then David rose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went into the house of the LORD, and worshiped; he then went to his own house; and when he

[3] Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, vol. 7, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 374–75.

asked, they set food before him and he ate. 21 Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while it was alive; but when the child died, you rose and ate food." 22 He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me, and 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 will not return to me."

"He went into the house of the LORD and worshiped"— David's extraordinary prayer and fasting resulted in a sense of peace when the child died, knowing he did all he could to seek God's mercy.

Even as David's unnamed son was being prepared for burial, David was grooming himself for a new life. And this new life would begin exactly where the king's earlier life had found its success and strength, in the presence of the Lord.[4] The ability to worship and honor God in a time of personal crisis is a wonderful demonstration of one's faith and fidelity.

"I shall go to him, but he will not return to me"— David was confident that his son would meet him in heaven. What hope and blessing these words have meant to parents whose young children have stepped into eternity prematurely!

David Comforts Bathsheba

2 Samuel 12:24–25… **Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon. Now the LORD loved him 25 and sent *word* through Nathan the prophet, and he named him Jedidiah for the LORD's sake.**

[4] Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, vol. 7, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 375.

David accepted the twin realities of God's grace and judgment and was comforted. Having been comforted by God, he was able to bring comfort to "his wife Bathsheba."

> **2 Corinthians 1:3–4**… Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, **4** who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.

God did not command that David forsake or leave Bathsheba, even though his marriage to her was originally sinful. He was to honor God in the marriage commitment he made, even though it began in sin. We see this same principle expressed in the New Testament . . .

> **1 Corinthians 7:17**… However that may be, let each of you lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God called you. This is my rule in all the churches.

This principle in context warns us against trying to undo the past in regard to relationships. God tells us to repent of whatever sin is there and then to move on. If you are married to your second wife, after wrongfully divorcing your first wife, don't think you must now leave your second wife and go back to your first wife, trying to undo the past.

"He named him Solomon"—Remarkably it is *this son*—the son born out of a marriage that began in adultery—that God chose to be heir to the throne and the ancestor of the Messiah. This demonstrates the truth that *God forgives repentant sinners.*

"Now the Lord loved him and sent word through Nathan the prophet, and he named him Jedidiah for the Lord's sake"— The name *Jedidiah* means, *"loved of the LORD."* It was God's way of saying that He would love and bless this son of David and Bathsheba.