

“The Problem of Sin”
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2 Samuel 11

We come to our scripture of David and Bathsheba a little disappointed in David, but maybe not really surprised.

Leaders let us down.

Our politicians, even our religious leaders, all let us down.

Even the greatest King of Israel, a man after God’s own heart, is a sinner.

If you are new to reading the Bible you might be surprised at the candor of the Bible.

Even the great heroes are revealed – warts and all. Chapter 11 of 2 Samuel reveals the plight of people in all our brokenness and it is not a pretty sight.

The passage begins with a King who is not off to war with his troops.

That was something different for David. By this point in history, his kingdom was established.

These were relatively minor battles.

David was established as King over his people, no longer the leader in the midst of them.

There is sense from the text that David is not where he should be.

We wonder why, but whatever the reason, it became the occasion for temptation.

And maybe this is the first thing to note as we think about how David ended up in such a mess.

David was surveying his kingdom from the roof top, away from the battle, away from the discipline of being with his troops, away from the action, bored maybe, or just a man of power surveying all that was his.

He spotted a beautiful woman, Bathsheba – temptation.

Seeing her wasn't a sin, but it was a moment of temptation.

At that moment David had some decisions to make. He could turn away, or indulge his lust.

Temptations are everywhere – sexual temptation and other kinds.

Every home that has a computer has a vast sea of temptations roaring through our living rooms.

Constantly we have choices, to indulge our sinfulness or walk away.

Maybe the next time you are tempted to sin you might consider David.

Notice what happened to David's sin.

It just kept multiplying and getting exponentially worse.

We all know from experience that very often that is exactly what happens.

Sin has a way of multiplying.

There are not many times that we are guilty of just one small sin.

If David had turned away from the sight – if he had walked inside and busied himself with his work or inquired about his soldiers – the moment would have passed and David and the kingdom would have been saved a great deal of pain.

The devil is a liar and the Father of lies.

In that moment of temptation we fear that we will always feel this way, the temptation won't end, but that is a lie.

We feel like there is no escape – but there is.

Most temptations don't last long...

We are easily distracted- and sometimes that's a good thing.

We can put people around us who will keep us on the right track.

As God's people, as people who have the Holy Spirit at work in us, we have God's help to overcome temptation.

There is nothing special about David's sin. Our sins replay an old familiar theme that goes back to the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve, "you can be like God deciding good and evil."

David acted god-like – he decided right from wrong, good from evil, he did what was good in his own eyes.

He took control of things.

He sent for Bathsheba, he took her to his bed, he sent her home, sent for her husband, sent word to Joab, his General to have Uriah moved up to the front lines.

David was controlling his life, and the lives of others, commanding, sending; godlike.

All of us want to be god.

All of us are sinners, all of us fall short of the glory of God.

The story of our sin isn't that interesting.

It is the same old story, variations on a theme.

"You will be like god, you can do what is good and seems right in your own eyes."

The devil's lie has deceived us from the start
We continue to act as if we are god.

David was on a spiral downward, more and more
sin, bad decisions, death was following in his wake,
the death of innocents, the death of his own soul.
He was creating havoc in his own life, his kingdom,
in his household, and in his own heart.

That moment of lust – when David could have
turned away- but didn't led to lies and deception,
to the death of an innocent man Uriah, and to the
deaths of other innocent soldiers with him.

I love the character of Uriah.

He reminds me so much of David, before David was
king, when he was with his men and fighting battles
for or against Saul.

In those days, David knew the right thing to do.

He knew the discipline of being a soldier.

David was the one who did the right thing even
when it was difficult.

Uriah is a man much like David was at his best.

Sin is easy.

Every fool is capable of it.

Every fool, every wise man, the wealthy and
powerful, the poor and the weak, all sin.

But how are set free from our sin?
How do we set down that burden of guilt and
regret?
How do we get turned around and on track again?

How do we become men and women after God's
own heart again or for the first time? Is there any
hope of becoming that again?
How are our hearts cleansed and made new?

Any fool can sin – but it is only God who can forgive
and cleanse our hearts.
We cannot undo our sin.
We cannot turn back the clock.

So first we confess the truth – we are sinners.
We confess our sins as God confronts us with them,
as they are revealed to us, as the burden weighs us
down.
We have sinned.
As we confess our sins, name them before God one
by one, we ask for forgiveness.
We ask God for new hearts, that God would
cleansed us, and make us new.

Are there still consequences of our sin – yes.
But there is hope and new life and a future opens
up and God's strength and peace in the midst to

survive our mistakes and the consequences of them.

There is peace with God.

If you don't know the rest of the story of David you might wonder if kings get away with murder, if the powerful are able to cover up their sin and get away with it.

We wonder who will hold them to account, will justice not be done?

The story of David isn't over yet.
God is going to confront David with his sin.

If you continue reading God does see, God does call us all to account- God is not mocked – and God does see our sin, and calls us to justice.

But mostly what we see is the grace and forgiveness of God when we come to God confessing our sin.

David's story isn't finished yet, and neither is ours.

Thanks be to God.

Both good and evil, when they are full grown, become retrospective...That is what mortals

misunderstand. They say of some temporary suffering, 'No future bliss can make up for it,' not knowing that Heaven, once attained, will work backwards and turn even that agony into a glory. And of some sinful pleasure they say 'Let me but have this and I'll take the consequences': little dreaming how damnation will spread back and back into their past and contaminate the pleasure of the sin.