

David and Bathsheba Psalm 51

Good morning,

Even though Rich is gone, we are going to carry on through our survey of the Psalms.

Last week, Rich covered Psalm 40, and this morning, we are going to take a look at Psalm 51 as well as Psalm 32, as the two are related.

Why don't you go ahead and flip to Psalm 51 in your Bibles and put a bookmark there.

Now, I know I said we are going to look at these two Psalms, but first, let's flip to **2 Samuel 11**.

You see, most commentators or theologians agree that Psalms 32 and 51 were both written in response to the events in 2 Samuel 11.

2 Samuel 11 is the account of **David and Bathsheba**; maybe you are familiar with this story.

It is riddled with sin that starts from the beginning of the chapter.

But a study of Scripture reveals that David's sinful spiral began prior to this, as he had taken many wives, which was in direct disobedience to the Lord.

Listen to this passage of Scripture that, in my Bible, is titled *Principles Governing Kings*.

Deuteronomy 17:17

17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

Here is a fun fact for you.

That was written about 400 years before Israel demanded they be ruled by a king.

Again, this is speaking of Israel's kings.

Who was David?

He was the king.

What had David done?

He had taken many wives, even prior to 2 Samuel 11 where we find the account of David and Bathsheba.

Perhaps one of the most well-known stories of a man and his sin, but again, I want you to recognize that David's sin began prior to this.

In fact, David's sin even began prior to him taking many wives. More on that later.

I. Desire, Sin, Death? 2 Samuel 11:1-5

Let's pause there for a second because I want to point out some key pieces.

In these first five verses, David committed multiple sins.

We like to jump immediately to the fact that David committed adultery, but it didn't start there.

You know, this is true in our lives in so many different ways.

Sin starts somewhere.

In fact, listen to what James said in

James 1:14-15:

14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

Sin has the ability to lead to sin, which can lead to more sin and so on and so on.

At times, we even commit sins by doing nothing.

That's what David did here in verse 1.

Perhaps in your Bible, you might want to underline *at the time when kings go out to battle*.

Then underline *David remained*.

King David was called to be out to battle with his men.

Perhaps not on the front lines, but with his officers, leading his men at war.

But he stayed in Jerusalem.

James 4:17

Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

In verse 2, he finds himself in a situation that he would have never been faced with had he done what he was called to do.

He's alone and idle, a deadly combination, as he began to walk on his roof.

If you are idle, be not solitary; if you are solitary, be not idle. – Samuel Johnson

He saw a beautiful woman bathing but let me pause here for some clarification.

This may have been sinful, or it may not have been sinful.

We do not have additional details to elaborate on.

Did he go on the roof with the intention of hoping this would happen?

What were his thoughts once he saw her?

The reason I say this is because temptation itself is not sin, but understand, we walk a fine line of when a temptation becomes sin.

You need not take action on it physically, but simply entertain that thought and you, my friend, have entered sinville.

David continued in his unchecked sin, which again, has the tendency to have the snowball effect.

He sent and inquired about the woman and look again at the response he is given in verse 3.

“Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

This is your way out David.

Take it!

1 Corinthians 10:13

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Is this not Bathsheba?

Oh yeah, that’s right. That’s Uriah’s wife!

My trusted soldier who Scripture tells us was one of the 30 mighty men of David.

What was I thinking?...Never mind

But that’s not what we just read.

David had Bathsheba brought back to him where he acted on the thoughts he had already had.

After some time, Bathsheba, either herself or by way of a servant, makes David aware of the fact that she was now pregnant.

Again, David had an opportunity to hit his knees and repent right there.

Cry out to God and write Psalm 51 based on the sin that had taken place.

But that's not what David did.

You can read the account of it in full later, but for the sake of time, I want to summarize what takes place next.

David continued in his sin.

Remember what we've said in the past.

Sin will take you further than you ever want to go.

Cost you more than you ever wanted to pay.

And keep you longer than you ever wanted to stay.

David devised a plan to try and cover his sinful act.

He had Uriah, remember, that's Bathsheba's husband, brought home from the battle to try and get him to go home and sleep with his wife.

Maybe no one would do the math and hopefully the baby would look more like Bathsheba than David and David would be good to go, right?

Uriah would think the child was his and none would be the wiser.

But Uriah wouldn't go home because he had more honor as a soldier than David did as the king.

He told David that the ark, Israel, Judah, Joab and his servants were at war, so he would not go home to be with his wife.

Not one to give up, David continued with the same plan, but only this time he got Uriah drunk, hoping this would cause him to go lay with his wife.

But Uriah still would not go home.

Even while he was impaired, he had more sense of duty than David who had remained in Jerusalem when he was supposed to be at battle.

David's plan had failed, so he writes a letter to Joab, setting up the murder of Uriah.

David was going to have Uriah killed, and get this, he sent the letter that gave instructions on how to have Uriah killed by way of...none other than Uriah.

Uriah didn't even know he was carrying a letter with his death warrant in it.

Uriah was set up in a battle and killed by the enemy, but by way of David.

Bathsheba mourned the loss of her husband, but when the mourning was over, David had her brought to his house to be his wife and she gave birth to their son.

I think it is safe to say that Uriah never found out how David had betrayed him in multiple ways.

The sins were hidden from Uriah.

So many of our sins are hidden, too.

But what we read in that last verse of Chapter 11 is so true regarding our sin as well.

2 Samuel 11:27 ...*But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.*

Which literally means, "Was evil in the eyes of the Lord".

Sin will always take you further than you wanted to go.

Will always cost you more than you wanted to pay.

And will always keep you longer than you wanted to stay.

David was experiencing this firsthand right here in 2 Samuel 11.

David had been wrestling with his unconfessed sin for nearly a year.

And it is eating him alive.

Psalm 32:3-4 NLT

3 When I refused to confess my sin,

my body wasted away,

and I groaned all day long.

4 Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me.

My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

By the time you get to Chapter 12, here is what you find:

Summarize

And Nathan looked at him and said, ***“You are the man!”***

2 Samuel 12:13

So David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.”

And he penned Psalm 51 right here as a response to being confronted by Nathan.

So, go ahead and flip back to Psalm 51 in your Bible and follow along as we read what David wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

II. A Prayer of Repentance Psalm 51:1-4a

Remember, this sin was eating him alive.

Dr. Jeremiah writes, “*He became physically ill from carrying the guilt of what he had done. His joy in life was gone, replaced with bitterness and anguish.*”

This is why they say there is no one more miserable than a backslidden Christian.

“*God does not permit His children to sin successfully.*” (Spurgeon)

Your sin will catch up with you. One way or another.

Perhaps in this lifetime or perhaps in the next, but sin does not go away by itself.

David knew this, and he was literally sick over it.

Against You, You only, have I sinned and done this evil in Your sight.

And like the old song titled, “Where could I go but to the Lord”, David realized his only hope was in the Lord.

He cried out to God and said, “***Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies.***”

Not according to what I’ve done is what David was saying here.

It’s not because you’ve been coming to church. It’s not because you’ve given to charity. It’s not because you’ve got a good job and you are a good person.

It’s only because of His love, grace and mercy that we can be forgiven.

But David tried to deal with his sin in his own way from the very beginning.

As soon as he was caught or had the potential to be found out (Bathsheba says she’s pregnant), he started trying to cover up his sin.

Let me tell you, you can’t cover your sin.

You can tell a little lie and get away with it by telling another lie to cover the first.

You can delete your search history. You can sin in your mind and no one will ever know.

But remember what David said, ***I have sinned against the Lord.***

And David didn't make any excuses for his sin. He just cried out to God.

Even though I've sinned against you Lord, according to Your lovingkindness cleanse me.

That's crazy if you think about it.

We sin time and time again against God Himself and He forgives us.

Archibald Simson said this:

Men are greatly terrified at the multitude of their sins, but here is a comfort – our God hath multitude of mercies. If our sins be in number as the hairs of our head, God's mercies are as the stars of heaven; and as He is an infinite God, so His mercies are infinite; so far are His mercies above our sins, as He Himself is above us poor sinners.

Man, that's deep...our sins they were many, but His mercies are more.

David knew this firsthand, which he pointed out in Verse 5.

I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

Again, he was not making an excuse, and he was not saying his mother and father committed a sin by having him.

Remember when I said David's sin problem began even prior to taking multiple wives, well here you go.

Because what David was saying here was that not only had he committed the sins in this account with Bathsheba, but he was in his very nature a sinful man.

He was a sinful man from the beginning.

You and I have been sinful from our beginning.

I have fallen short of the glory of God. I am a sinner. I messed things up. I blew it.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:10

But isn't this the same David that God chose when He was seeking a man after His own heart to be a commander over His people?

III. A Man After God's Own Heart.

1 Samuel 13:14

Samuel speaking to Saul

14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."

Acts 13:22

22 And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'

Did God not know that David would commit adultery and murder?

Wait, isn't this the same God that gave the command for kings to not take multiple wives 400 years before Israel even had kings.

In other words, yes God knew.

So, how is David a man after God's own heart?

Listen, David sinned many, many times, but you know what else he did?

David made his way to the place of confession and repentance.

A man after God's own heart.

That's what it's about. God wants your heart, not perfection.

You can never be perfect, but you can give God your heart.

And what does He do?

He gives you a new heart.

David said:

***Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.***

The word used for create here is *bara*. Same word used in Genesis 1.

To create out of nothing.

Don't clean up my old heart Lord; give me a new one.

Ezekiel 36:26

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Psalm 51:11

***Do not cast me away from Your presence,
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.***

In other words, give me a clean heart Lord and stay with me. I can't do this by myself. I need You. I need Your Spirit.

David had to have had King Saul in mind.

If you remember the story, the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul permanently.

In the OT, the Holy Spirit did not indwell believers. The Holy Spirit came upon people for a specific purpose.

This is not true of us.

Since the death and resurrection of Jesus, believers are given the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation, and He never leaves you.

1 Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Does that mean we won't sin? Absolutely not.

But does it mean we should sin because we have His grace and mercy?

Absolutely not.

We need to get serious about sin; any sin, all sin.

In Verse 12-13, David writes:

*12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.*

*13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,
And sinners shall be converted to You.*

Restore to me and then I will.

David is not bargaining with God here.

This isn't me as a kid praying Lord let me make the basketball team and I'll go to church every Wednesday night.

No, what David was saying here is restore me and uphold me then use me.

This should be our prayer as well.

Lord, I confess my sin. Forgive me. Cleanse me. Now use me, Lord.
And that's what David did.

Most commentators agree that Psalm 32 was written after Psalm 51.

Remember, they aren't in chronological order in our Bibles.

Psalm 32 may very well be the practical application of Verse 13, where David said he would teach transgressors God's ways.

So, here we are, as sinners diving into God's Word, let us be taught by these verses as we get **practical this morning**.

IV. Practical Application. Psalm 32

Remember I said the most miserable person in the world is a backslidden Christian.

Well, I think I could argue that the happiest person or the most joy filled person in the world is the person who is forgiven.

That person is found right here in Psalm 32.

Look with me.

Psalm 32:1-2

Blessed is he...oh how happy is he who confesses his sin and is forgiven.

This is the second beatitude in the Psalms.

We actually covered the first one already when we first began the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man

Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,

Nor stands in the path of sinners,

Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

***But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night.***

Oh, how happy that guy is who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on His word day and night.

But what about when we fall short?

What about when we fall into sin?

Oh, how happy will you be when your sins are forgiven.

Here is what David said in Verse 5.

***I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I have not hidden.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"
And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.***

There it is!

Acknowledge your sin to God.

Confess your transgressions to the Lord.

And He will forgive you.

1 John 1:9

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

Confess simply means to agree with God about your sin. You say it's sin Lord; I say it's sin. Forgive me.

Again, this is so crazy.

We sin against the Lord over and over, and He forgives us.

F.B. Meyer states:

"Dare to believe in the instantaneous forgiveness of sins.

Sin is dark, dangerous, damnable: but it cannot staunch the love of God; it cannot change the love that is not of yesterday, but dates from eternity itself.”

You see, sin hurts our relationship with the Lord, and it breaks our fellowship with Him.

It creates a barrier between us and Him.

The biggest issue with sin is this:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death...

The penalty of sin is death...eternal death...separated from God forever based on what you did or didn't do with Him here in this life.

You see, God is perfect, holy, just, righteous.

And without Him, we aren't.

The Bible tells us that we have all sinned and because of that we fall short of the glory of God.

We can't work our way to heaven and being in this building doesn't make you a Christian, just like walking in a garage doesn't make you a car.

But here is the good news. The rest of the verse.

But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

***Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
Whose sin is covered.***

God loved you so much, loved me so much, that He made a way for your sin to be covered forever.

Not covered by our lies. Not covered by deleting our search history. Not covered by getting someone else to cover for us.

No, covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.

God forgave David; a liar, a murderer, an adulterer. There is no sin bigger than God. No sin that cannot be covered by His blood.

God will forgive anyone who confesses and calls on the name of Jesus.

Our sins are many, but His mercies are more.