

Bad Choices – 2 Samuel 11:1-12:15

Introduction:

“It takes a lifetime to build a reputation, and a moment to ruin it.” How true this is. David would find this out the hard way. David soon gets very comfortable in the position of king, sending people here and there to do his bidding. He even stays home and enjoys the comforts of his palace while the men go out to battle in his name.

The incident of David’s affair with Bathsheba raises almost more questions than it raises. Why does David stay home? What was Bathsheba’s motive? Why would God let a good man like Uriah die? So many questions coming from the actions of king David that day.

More important than answering all the questions is to learn the lessons that are wrapped up in this story for the reader. God has so much he wants to teach us about Himself and what it means to be His children. May we learn the lessons found in these chapters.

Time for War – 2 Samuel 11:1-5

1. According to verse 1, what happened in the Spring of the year in the ancient near Middle east? What did David do in the Spring of the year (v. 1)?
2. Verse 2 intentionally describes the life of luxury the king was enjoying. Describe the king’s life as outlined here.
3. What caught the king’s attention as he was lounging on the roof of his palace (v. 2)?
4. David inquires who this person is. What does he learn about her (v. 3)? Why are these details important?
5. In verse 4 who is initiating the action? Do you think Bathsheba carries any blame for what happened? Explain.
6. Why might we have the note in verse 4 about Bathsheba’s purification?

7. David receives three simple words (English translation) that would change his life. What were they (v. 5)?

Looking for an Escape – 2 Samuel 11:6-13

8. David tries to cover up his sin. Whom does he involve in the cover-up (v. 6)? What is he to do?

9. Read again verse 7. What might be going through the mind of Uriah at this point?

10. What does David suggest Uriah do (v. 8)? What added incentive does David provide?

11. What does Uriah do (v. 9)? Does he do as the king suggested?

12. What message does David get from his informants (v. 10)? How will he feel about this news?

13. When asked why he would not sleep in his own home, what response does Uriah give (v. 11)?

14. In verse 12 we see that David detains Uriah longer, as he has not found a solution to his baby problem. According to verse 13 what did David try next to get Uriah to sleep with his own wife? Does it work?

Planning Murder – 2 Samuel 11:14-25

15. David's next plan involves Joab once again. David writes a note of instructions to Joab. Who carries the instructions to the general (v. 14)?

16. Verse 15 outlines David's plan. What is the plan?

17. Verses 16-17 tell us about the battle. What happens?

18. In verses 18-21 Joab prepares a message to be taken to David. He prepares the messenger for an outburst by David, anticipating a scolding of his general

for bad judgment in the battle. What would be the message that would calm the king down (v. 21)?

19. The messenger gives to King David a brief account of the battle and ends with the message that Uriah the Hittite died in the battle (vss. 22-24). What message does David send back to Joab (v. 25)? Do you think Joab might suspect something is up?

Bathsheba Learns of Uriah's Death – 2 Samuel 11:26-27

20. How did Bathsheba ("the wife of Uriah") respond when she heard her husband was dead (v. 26)?

21. The accepted time of mourning the loss of a loved one was seven days. After the mourning period was completed what does David do (v. 27)?

22. Finally we hear from God. What is God's perspective on what has just transpired (v. 27)?

A Message from God – 2 Samuel 12:1-14

23. Who comes to see King David? Why did he come (v. 1)?

24. In verses 1-4 Nathan the prophet tells a story to the King. Summarize the story. What emotion does this story evoke? Why?

25. What is the response of King David to this story? What does he feel should be done to the rich man?

26. Nathan now reveals the true purpose of his visit. It was not to tell the story of injustice in the kingdom. What is the message, and how is it introduced (v. 7)?

27. What has the Lord done for David according to verses 7-8?

28. The LORD identifies the two sins of David in verse 9. What are they?

29. What consequence will come to the house of David according to verse 10?

30. In verses 11-12 there is a terrible prophesy of what will happen to David and his family. What is it? Was it fulfilled (cf. 2 Samuel 16:20-22)?
31. In verse 13 we find hope. What is the response of David in this verse? Because of his attitude to God, what does God promise him?
32. David's sin will also have far-reaching consequences. What consequence will he face according to verse 14? What happens in verse 15?

Conclusion

This chapter is the dividing line in David's story. Up to this point David has received blessing and success from God. The journey has not always been easy, but God's hand has been upon this shepherd boy called to be King. It seemed as if David could do no wrong.

Then this chapter comes. David has become comfortable in the luxuries the monarchy provided him. It was great to be king, having people do your bidding, enjoying the fruits of the land others provided you, and deciding what you would and would not participate in. Our story begins in the Spring when kings go to war, but David stays home to enjoy the comforts wealth brings.

Sadly, this opens the door to temptation. Like Eve so many years earlier, David looked at the object of his desire and it was lovely! So instead of saying "No" to temptation, he gives in to his desires. He commits adultery, and when that union produces a child, he continues his downward spiral by committing murder.

Galatians 6:7 says, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." God saw it all, and confronts David through the prophet Nathan. David repents, but the damage is done. He cannot take back the act of adultery, nor the murder he has committed. There will be consequences for his actions. Violence, and sexual impropriety will plague David's family from this point on. And the immediate price he will pay is the loss of the child conceived in sin.

God has not given up on David, but things will get much more difficult now that David strayed from God's path. He is back on track, but the consequences of his sin will haunt him to the day he dies. May we take sin serious, but remember that God does not give up on us. "Where sin abounds his grace is greater" (Romans 5:20)