

David And Bath-sheba

1. We begin by reading in 2 Sam. 11:1: “And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go to forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged at Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.” **A.** At the time when kings go forth to battle. This was speaking of the springtime; when the harvest had been completed, and there was usually good weather. This was the most advantageous time to wage war. **B.** Joab was David’s nephew, whom he had made commander-in-chief of his armies. **C.** Ammon was an area at the southern end of the Dead Sea, or the Salt Sea; and Rabbah was it’s capital city. 2. We go further, and read 2 Sam. 11:2-4: “And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king’s house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.” **A.** The oriental houses had enclosed courtyards, which were considered to be part of the house. Therefore, Bath-sheba was considered to be inside the house; rather than just being nude on the outside, as one may tempt to think. **B.** And it came to pass in the eveningtide. This was later in the evening; perhaps after dark; and Bath-sheba was bathing in her house by lamplight. **C.** David could see Bath-sheba from his roof; for it was located on the higher elevations of Mt. Zion. **D.** The woman was very beautiful to look upon. Bath-sheba looked very attractive to David. **E.** David sent and inquired after the woman. David wanted to have Bath-sheba brought to his house; even though he was warned that she was the wife of another man; Uriah the Hittite. There was three steps to David’s sin: (1) He looked when he knew he should of turned away, (2) he went further, and questioned who she was, and (3) he yielded to the temptation. He should of stopped at number one. Once he saw Bath-sheba bathing, he should of turned and walked back into his own house; and ask God to help him to forget the matter. But instead, he chose to go further into sin; and we will see later, of how he had to painfully pay for the sin. **F.** David sent messengers and took her. David probably sent a message that the king needed to talk to her about something important. Perhaps he sent a message concerning her husband Uriah; for he was a very important leader in the armies. **G.** And she came in unto him, and he lay with

her. Evidently, David came on to Bath-sheba in a very tempting manner; and she laid with him and had sexual intercourse with him. Or perhaps Bath-sheba did not offer any resistance at all. For after all, her husband was a leader in the armies; and maybe he had been gone from home for quite some time. H. For she was purified from her uncleanness. A woman who had sexual intercourse with a man, had to be separated, for seven days, in order to be pronounced clean or purified, under Mosiac Law. I. She returned unto her house. Bath-sheba evidently went back home with no conviction whatsoever. But she was just as much to blame as David was. For she yielded to the temptation, just as David had done; rather than resist it, and walk out of the house. But we will see that she regretted it later.³ Now we read further in 2 Sam. 11:5-13: “And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king’s house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? Why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou livest, and as thy soul livest, I will not do this thing. And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at the even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.” **A.** Bath-sheba became pregnant, so David had to try to come up with a plan, that would cover up his sin. So he sent and had Uriah brought from the battlefield to his house. After he had talked with him concerning the war, and fed him, David gave Uriah a mess of meat, as a present, and told him to go to his own house. But Uriah would not do so, but he only slept with the other servants of David. And when David questioned Uriah about the matter, he said that he would not go down to his own house, because his fellowservants had to sleep in open fields, in tents. So he must of been a mighty thoughtful man, and leader. He refused to go down and spend time at his own house with his own wife.

David even tried to get him drunk and then trick him into going to his own house, but he still refused to go. Sin never works, and it is never covered up from God, in any way. B. The whole point in David's plan, was so that Uriah would go home to his own house, and lie down and have sexual intercourse with his own wife; so that it would look like Uriah was the father of the baby which Bath-sheba was pregnant with, instead of David; but David's plan never worked. 4. 2 Sam. 11:14-27 tells us further: "And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also. Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king, And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? Knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? Why went ye nigh the wall? Then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for. And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate. And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him. And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord."A. David most certainly wanted Uriah to be dead, since his first plan had not worked. So he sent a letter to Joab; who evidently was not much of a man, to do what he did. And David wanted Joab to make certain that Uriah got killed in the war; regardless of how many other lives had to be taken in the process. B. Joab assigned Uriah to a place where he knew the most valiant men would be. Hebrew-chayil (khah-yil): strongest, mightiest, most professional or trained,

or most dangerous. **C.** Evidently, many of the servants of David died; not only Uriah. Evidently, they were shot at from the top of the wall of the city and from all around.

Joab evidently, was thinking that David was going to be very upset, because so many were killed. But he was the very reason for the tragic circumstances. D. David was not upset at all, but gladly received the message that Uriah was dead. He simply sent word back to Joab, to make their forces stronger, and to overthrow the city. This does not sound much like a man who is supposed to be a servant of the Lord, and the Lord was very displeased with David. **E.** When Bath-sheba heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband. She probably realized the wrong which she had done, in committing adultery with David. But it was too late to be sorry now. Her husband was dead, and the worst was ahead of her. **5.** We read further in 2 Sam. 12:1-10: "And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite, with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." **A.** Nathan was a mighty prophet of God. And he used a parable to condemn David of his own actions; for the wickedness which he had done. **B.** After David heard the parable; not realizing that it indeed was only a parable; his anger was greatly kindled. Hebrew-charah (khaw-raw): to

be fully angered, mad, displeased, or wroth. David declared that the guilty man shall surely die; and that he should restore the victim's goods fourfold; because he had shown no pity. **C.** And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Can you just imagine what David's eye's looked like, when these words were spoken to him by Nathan. Don't you imagine he felt like a real fool? Or that he was completely terrified? **6.** We now read from 2 Sam. 12:11-12: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." God was telling David that because he has sneaked and committed this awful sin in secret, that He would raise up evil out of his own house; and his wives would be taken before his very eyes, and be given to his neighbors. And He would allow this to be done before all Israel, and before the sun. **7.** David confesses his sin. 2 Sam. 12:13-14 tells us: "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." David confessed his sin before the Lord, and he was forgiven. But this was not the end of the story. Even though David was forgiven for his sin, there were still great consequences to pay. The baby which Bath-sheba would bear as a result of their great act of adultery, would die. Not only this, but if one reads on in 2 Samuel chapter 13, they will see that this was just the beginning of the cost which David would have to pay for his great sin. **8.** In 2 Sam. 12:15-20 we read: "And Nathan departed unto his house. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat." **A.** The baby of Bath-sheba became very sick, shortly after

Nathan was gone. **B.** It done David no good to beg God to let the child live, for he must pay the consequences for the sins that he had committed, just as we all must do. **C.** David fasted and laid before the Lord all night long. He would neither get up from his humble position, nor would he eat. **D.** The child died on the seventh day, and David's servants were afraid to go in and tell David that the child was dead. But when David saw the servants whispering among themselves, he perceived that the child was dead. **E.** When David perceived that the child was dead, he arose up and washed and anointed himself. He changed his garments and went unto the temple and praised and worshipped the Lord. He then came to his own house, and ate bread. **9.** David had hoped that God would change his mind, and allow the baby to live; but such did not happen. We read in 2 Sam. 12:22-23: "And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." David mentioned that God would be gracious unto him; if he had allowed the baby to live. But God was being very merciful and gracious unto him, by allowing he himself even to live. For indeed he and Bath-sheba both certainly deserved to die; even though Bath-sheba had nothing to do with her husband's death. Both her and David had committed great sins before God. Let us always remember, that we can not bring back our loved ones, but we can always go to them. **10.** We read in 2 Sam. 12:24: "And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the Lord loved him." David and Bath-sheba had another child, whose name was Solomon. God loved Solomon very much. As we recall, Solomon was the one whom God allowed to build the great temple for Him in Jerusalem. **11.** Verses 25-31 of 2 Samuel 12, tell us of how they recaptured Jerusalem; and all the people returned to the city. And the king's crown was taken from off his head, and placed upon the head of David. We read: "And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord. And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city. And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters. Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it: lest I take the city, and it be called after my name. And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. And he brought forth the people that were therein,

and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.” It sounds as though David put all the people whom he captured through real hard labor.

Conclusion:

It was certainly a horrible sin which David committed with Bath-sheba; in committing adultery with her, and then having her husband killed. But he paid for it in a very hard way. Yet we can also see the forgiving hand of God in it all. David and Bath-sheba later lived a long life together; and they had a son, who was called Solomon.

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