

Come Follow Me
Elo Viz foundation production
Week 26
2 Samuel 5-12 1 Kings 3-11

There are a lot of great stories and lessons to cover this week. Too much to fit into this Podcast. So I'd like to look at one part of David's story and the lessons that we can learn from it to change and improve our lives.

So far David has been an amazing King. Leading his armies into many nations and conquering with the strength of the Lord. Until he makes a grave mistake. Starting in 2 Samuel chapter 11:

“And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that David sent **Joab**, and his servants with him, and all Israel. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.”

Now, Why would he stay home from the battle? Perhaps he was tired. Maybe feeling the effects of many years of war. Or perhaps the adversary tempted him to stay, just this one time. He has lots to do in the palace, projects to complete, children to spend time with, 8 wives to care for. Plus, the palace would be much more comfortable than sleeping in a tent in the battle fields. But maybe, just maybe he had a thought, a small impression that he ignored that said “David, you should be with your men, Go and be where you need to be”. But his mind rationalized that prompting away. I'll just stay here, he determined.

So, he did. And because he did, he couldn't sleep. It was bothering him that he didn't listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. So one night he goes onto the roof and sees a woman washing herself. Then his one mis-step of ignoring the Holy Spirit starts the slippery slope to massive sin. As we look at what happens next, look for the progression, look at how he doesn't stop and recognize what is going on, repent and return to what he knows to be right. One little snare from the adversary he could have easily recovered from, but he doesn't turn, he doesn't repent and it sends him spiraling into despair.

He sees this woman, and decides to invite her to the palace. One more step. They have an affair. She gets pregnant. Now, I know, I know we got to bad mistakes fast and you might be saying “David is a bad guy, We don't like him” Well, Why? This is the same guy that killed Goliath. The scriptures tell us he was a man after God's own heart. This is a good man, he just slipped up. But instead of recognizing his mistake he keeps trying to cover them up, or ignore that they happened. Next he brings Bath-shebas husband Uriah back from the battle to be with his wife, he refuses twice so David has no choice but to send him back to war and put him on the front lines knowing he will be killed. Now, I say he had no choice, but he did. He could have confessed what he did and repent. But he was too deep now. I'm sure he felt there was no turning back. And he would have been wrong. There is always a way back. We can stop at any time and change courses. It is the adversary that tells us we can't, It's too late, there is no hope now. All lies.

Now, as you know the rest of the story, Uriah dies and Bath-shiba mourns him for a bit then David sends for her and takes her to wife. (2 Samuel 11:27)

“But the thing that David had done **displeased** the Lord.”

Now, take a second and ponder that phrase. This is why sin is so expensive. If anyone finds out or not. Sin is expensive because it will offend a Holy God. This what sin is after all, God is God and he is the one that calls it sin. And because it offends God, It will have other ramifications as well. But this is primarily why it is so damaging. When David gets caught he will write 2 psalms the first is Psalm 51:4 David says:

“Against thee, thee only, have I **sinned**, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be **justified** when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.”

Skip Heitzig tells a story of a Man that was at the Mall with his wife. And while she was shopping looking at things, he was tooling around trying not to get too bored as most men do when their wives drag them to the Mall. Not really concentrating, not really enjoying the experience. And a shapely young woman walked by both of them. And that man's eyes followed her across the store. And when she exited the store the wife that did not look up from the merchandise she was examining could see in the periphery said to her husband “Well, was it worth the trouble you're now in?” Is sin ever worth the trouble you get in with God? The feeling of emptiness, distance from God, the misery.

Chapter 12 continues that saga. What you may not know is that between chapter 11 and chapter 12 is a period of about 1 year. And David is miserable. The weight of his sin is bearing down on him. But he doesn't do anything about it. He doesn't confess, or repent, he just goes on as if nothing happened. We know this because in Psalm 32:3 he says this:

“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.”

This is how sin makes us feel; weak, tired, growing. And David is no different. The Lord is waiting for David to repent, return. But he doesn't, so God sends that prophet Nathan to confront him. And he tells him a parable. He says:

“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 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. [He loved this little lamb]

And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he [did not] take of his own flock and of his own herd, to [to feed] the traveling man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and [stoughtered] it for the man that was come to him.”

David hears this story and he is furious. It says his anger was greatly kindled against this man. And, “As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. And restore to the poor man 4 fold”

Knowing that this story really got David worked up and struck right at his heart because he was at one time a poor shepherd. Nathan gets right in his face, and I can just picture the old Prophet pocking David right in his chest while he says these 4 words that reveal David's sin,

“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; 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 [much more].”

David is finally willing to confess his sin. And he does to the prophet Nathan. Verse 13: “And David said unto Nathan, I have **sinned** against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also **hath put away** thy sin”

God forgives you, however: “The child that is born unto thee shall surely die.” This brings up an important point. Forgiveness is one thing. Consequences are another. God is a just God but also a merciful God. We can be forgiven, however, (that's an important word), However. The effects of our sin will not always be taken away. But it is still worth it! No matter what we have done, no matter how bad the sin. God is still ready and able to forgive our sin. Here David Does the 2 worst thing any human could possibly do; adultery and murder. And God quickly forgave him.

Brad Wilcox in October 2021 General Conference gave a talk called “Worthiness is not flawlessness” and he tells a story of a young man he says:

“One young man I’ll call Damon wrote: “Growing up, I struggled with pornography. I always felt so ashamed that I could not get things right.” Each time Damon slipped, the pain of regret became so intense, he harshly judged himself to be unworthy of any kind of grace, forgiveness, or additional chances from God. He said: “I decided I just deserved to feel terrible all the time. I figured God probably hated me because I wasn’t willing to work harder and get on top of this once and for all. I would go a week and sometimes even a month, but then I would relapse and think, ‘I’ll never be good enough, so what’s the use of even trying?’”

At one such low moment, Damon said to his priesthood leader: “Maybe I should just stop coming to church. I’m sick of being a hypocrite.”

His leader responded: “You’re not a hypocrite because you have a bad habit you are trying to break. You are a hypocrite if you hide it, lie about it, or try to convince yourself the Church has the problem for maintaining such high standards. Being honest about your actions and taking steps to move forward is not being a hypocrite. It is being a disciple.” This leader quoted Elder Richard G. Scott, who taught: “The Lord sees weaknesses differently than He does rebellion. ... When the Lord speaks of weaknesses, it is always with mercy.”

That perspective gave Damon hope. He realized God was not up there saying, “Damon blew it again.” Instead, He was probably saying, “Look how far Damon has come.” This young man finally stopped looking down in shame or looking sideways for excuses and rationalizations. He looked up for divine help, and he found it.

Damon said: “The only time I had turned to God in the past was to ask for forgiveness, but now I also asked for grace—His ‘enabling power’ I had never done that before. These days I spend a lot less time hating myself for what I have done and a lot more time loving Jesus for what He has done.”

I know that David's pain did not have to be so long, and so deep. I know that wherever you are on your path you have the choice to forsake whatever it is that is holding you back and God is waiting with open arms to welcome you into his love and safety. I know that however far you feel you have fallen you are not too far for God to snatch you from the depths of despair and misery. I know that He is the true source of real Joy, and real peace. I know that any bonds that the Adversary currently has you snared with that those bonds can be broken and that you can be free from all the pain that he wants for you. Pray to your merciful God, plead with him, Run to him. For his love is like nothing that you have ever experienced. Of this great truth I testify

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.