

# 2 Samuel 12:1-14 Commentary

## PLEASE NOTE:

AS OF 3/3/2023 this COMMENTARY HAS BEEN REVISED  
CLICK FOR VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTS ON 2 SAMUEL 12:1-30

## 2 Samuel 12:1-4 Commentary

2 Samuel 12:1 Then the [LORD sent Nathan](#) to [David](#). And he [came](#) to him and [said](#), "There were [two men](#) in [one city](#), the [one rich](#) and the [other poor](#).

2 "The [rich man had](#) a [great many flocks](#) and [herds](#).

3 "But the [poor man had](#) [nothing \\* except \\* one little ewe lamb Which](#) he [bought](#) and [nourished](#); And it [grew](#) up [together](#) with him and his [children](#). It would [eat](#) of his [bread](#) and [drink](#) of his [cup](#) and [lie](#) in his [bosom](#), And was like a [daughter](#) to him.

4 "Now a [traveler came](#) to the [rich man](#), And he was [unwilling to take](#) from his own [flock](#) or his own [herd](#), To [prepare](#) for the [wayfarer](#) who had [come](#) to him; Rather he [took](#) the [poor man's ewe lamb](#) and [prepared](#) it for the [man](#) who had [come](#) to him."

5 Then [David's anger burned greatly](#) against the [man](#), and he [said](#) to [Nathan](#), "As the [LORD lives, surely](#) the [man](#) who has [done this deserves](#) to [die](#).

6 "He must [make restitution](#) for the [lamb fourfold, because \\*](#) he [did this thing](#) and [had no compassion](#)."

7 [Nathan](#) then [said](#) to [David](#), "You are the [man](#)! [Thus says](#) the [LORD God](#) of [Israel](#), 'It is I who [anointed](#) you [king over Israel](#) and it is I who [delivered](#) you from the [hand](#) of [Saul](#).

8 'I also [gave](#) you your [master's house](#) and your [master's wives](#) into your [care](#), and I [gave](#) you the [house](#) of [Israel](#) and [Judah](#); and [if](#) that had been too [little](#), I would have [added](#) to you many more things like [these](#)!

9 '[Why](#) have you [despised](#) the [word](#) of the [LORD](#) by [doing evil](#) in His [sight](#)? You have [struck down Uriah](#) the [Hittite](#) with the [sword](#), have [taken](#) his [wife](#) to be your [wife](#), and have [killed](#) him with the [sword](#) of the [sons](#) of [Ammon](#).

10 '[Now](#) therefore, the [sword](#) shall [never \\* \\* depart](#) from your [house, because \\*](#) you have [despised](#) Me and have [taken](#) the [wife](#) of [Uriah](#) the [Hittite](#) to be your [wife](#).'

11 '[Thus says](#) the [LORD](#), '[Behold](#), I will [raise up evil against](#) you from your own [household](#); I will even [take](#) your [wives](#) before your [eyes](#) and [give](#) them to your [companion](#), and he will [lie](#) with your [wives](#) in [broad daylight \\*](#).

12 '[Indeed](#) you [did](#) it [secretly](#), but I will [do this thing before all Israel](#), and [under](#) the [sun](#).' "

13 Then [David said](#) to [Nathan](#), "I have [sinned](#) against the [LORD](#)." And [Nathan said](#) to [David](#), "The [LORD also](#) has [taken away](#) your [sin](#); you shall not [die](#).

14 "[However, because](#) by [this deed](#) you have [given](#) occasion to the [enemies](#) of the [LORD](#) to [blaspheme](#), the [child also](#) that is [born](#) to you shall [surely die](#)." (NASB: Lockman)

2Samuel 12:1 THEN THE LORD SENT NATHAN TO DAVID. AND HE CAME TO HIM AND SAID "THERE WERE TWO MEN IN ONE CITY THE ONE RICH AND THE OTHER POOR:

- **LORD:** 2Sa 7:1, 2, 3, 4, 5 24:11, 12, 13 1Ki 13:1 18:1 2Ki 1:3
- 2Sa 14:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Jdg 9:7-15 1Ki 20:35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 Isa 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Mt 21:33-45 Lk 15:11-32, 16:19-31
- **To David:** 2Sa 11:10-17, 25 14:14 Isa 57:17, 18
- **He came:** Ps 51:1

- R A Torrey dates the events of this chapter as occurring in about 1034BC

## THE WAGES OF SIN: PAYDAY SOMEDAY!

**R A Torrey** (Treasury of Scripture Knowledge) has this interesting note on Nathan's "parable"...

There is nothing in this parable which requires illustration. Its bent is evident; and it was wisely constructed, by not having too near a resemblance, to make David unwittingly pass sentence on himself. The parable was in David's hand what his own letter was in the hands of the brave Uriah (2Sa 11:14).

From David's actions in 2Samuel 11 we learn that one sin (coveting, adultery in the case of David) usually leads to another (murder of Uriah), that attempts to cover our sins are futile and fraught with even greater cost. It is best to keep short accounts, confessing immediately rather than attempting to cover it up. If we do not master our desires (Ge 4:6,7), they will inevitably master us!

**R G Lee** in his famous sermon [Payday Someday](#) spoke of the consequences of sin...

"Payday Someday!" God said it -- and it was done! Yes, and from this we learn the power and certainty of God in carrying out His own retributive providence, that men might know that His justice slumbereth not. Even though the mill of God grinds slowly, it grinds to powder. Yes, the judgments of God often have leaden heels and travel slowly. But they always have iron hands and crush completely.

And yet the **retributive** side of God is more than balanced by the **restorative** side of our Great and Merciful Lord. As verification of this hope filled truth, we do well to remember that the events of this chapter inspired **David** to pen one of his most famous songs, **Psalms 51...**

(For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him,) (after he had gone in to Bathsheba.) Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Thy compassion blot out my transgressions. (Psalm 51:1-[note](#))

**Comment: Beloved of the Lord, do you feel like you have sinned so greatly against God that He could never use you in His kingdom work?** This beautiful psalm in itself provides encouraging proof that God can restore and revive and use a repentant sinner. He will not despise your broken spirit, your broken and contrite heart (Ps 51:17-[note](#)), but will renew a steadfast spirit in you, will not cast you away from His presence, will restore the joy of your salvation and will sustain you with a steadfast spirit, (Ps 51:10-[note](#), Ps 51:11-[note](#), Ps 51:12-[note](#)). Hallelujah. Thank you Jesus! Amen

**Then-** Remember that "**then**" is often (as in this **context**) an "**expression of time**" and as such begs the question (cp interrogate with **5W/H'S**) "**When is then?**" (What happened **then?**, Who acts **then?** Why does this happen **then?**, etc). Sometimes the chapter breaks cause us to lose a sense of the "flow" of the story. In this case, the first verse of 2Samuel 12 should be read should be read and interpreted in the context of the last verse of 2Samuel 11...

**But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.**

**Then the LORD sent Nathan to David.**

(2Sa 11:27b, 2Sa 12:1a)

**Then the LORD** - Jehovah was mentioned in 2Samuel 11 only in the very last verse of that chapter (2Sa 11:27), but here in 2Samuel 12 God actively intervenes in David's dark digression into sin. David thought he had disproved the old adage that "sin doesn't pay" but he forgot Moses' warning to "*be sure that your sin will find you out!*" (Nu 32:23). **Beloved, do you believe Moses? If not you are in for a "shocking surprise"! May Moses' sure word of prophecy serve as a significant stimulant to each of us to continually choose to pursue holiness and to abstain from every form of evil!**

We know that between the end of chapter 11 and the beginning of chapter 12 there was a period of months, most authorities putting it somewhere between 6 and 12 months (based primarily on the information that the child was not born - 2Sa 12:14). The main point is not the specific time but the fact that time did elapse in which there was no apparent repercussions for David's sin. And so between 2Sa 11:27 and 2Sa 12:1 there is a gap of around twelve months, during which there is no mention of David's sin by himself, by God or by anyone else. During this time of cover-up David's conscience was dulled by his disobedience. God's Words were most likely not sweet to his taste. His joy is gone. His song is gone (no record of any psalms penned). His harp is out of tune. His soul is dry (Psalm 32:3, 4). Beloved, if any of these symptoms describe you, then perhaps you have an unconfessed sin or sins you are futilely seeking to cover over. If so, this proverb is written especially for you...

He who conceals (covers over so as to keep secret) his transgressions will not prosper (Be profitable, succeed - The one who is concealing his sin shall not experience victory from the Lord, experience spiritual prosperity, thrive spiritually, accomplish satisfactorily what God intended.), But he who confesses and forsakes (abandons, departs from, leaves behind) them will find compassion. (Pr 28:13)

**Illustration:** In a conservative southern church, the pastor's wife found pornography on her husband's computer. After confronting him with the evidence, he admitted downloading the images off the internet, even using the computer in his study which was located in the church itself. Somehow he had separated his ongoing sexual sin from his responsibilities and duties as a man of God.

**Illustration:** In an August 2000 poll conducted by Christianity Today on internet pornography, 33% of active ministers admitted having visited porn sites. Over half of those ministers said that they had visited those sites more than once. A total of 18 percent of clergy said they visit sexually explicit Web sites between a couple of times a month and more than once a week. This poll includes many liberal and 'mainstream' ministers, but it would be very naive to think that porn was not a problem for some bible-believing ministers.

**Illustration:** In another Bible-believing church not far from my home, a Christian businessman sought investment capital from other Christian individuals and businesses. He promised to invest the money in new Christian enterprises and promised a high rate of return on their money. Alas, however, there was no new enterprise, and there was no return on their money. He had embezzled hundreds of thousands of dollars from his fellow Christians. He was charged by civil authorities and jailed. The unbelieving world had another excuse to demean biblical Christianity.

**Illustration:** A nice Christian family joined the church by letter from another city. Brad and Susan had four wonderful little boys ranging in age from two years up to ten years. Susan had a beautiful voice and sang specials in the church. Brad was a bible teacher and had taught Sunday school at their former church. But Brad and Susan had a terrible secret. He had a terrible temper that caused him to abuse Susan both physically and emotionally. No one in the church had any idea until she took her boys and left to return to her hometown. Brad followed her back and tried to reconcile with her. But his secret was now public and there was no turning back.

**Spurgeon** "You say that you can handle your secret sins, that there is no one hurt by them. But you may as well ask the lion to let you put your head into his mouth. You cannot regulate his jaws: neither can you regulate sin. Once done, you cannot tell when you will be destroyed. You may put your head in and out a great many times; but one of these days it will be a costly venture. "

Christian friend, go not continue to hide your sin. Don't harbor that sin, buried deep in the tent floor of your heart (cp Achan's attempt Joshua 7:21 22 23 24 25 26). The danger is that like [Achan](#), your hidden sin will affect your family, your home, your spiritual inheritance, and your purpose in life. There is no sin worthy of separating us from our Father. It is not necessary to confess your secret sins to everyone, for it is none of their business. Do business with God. Repent and let God restore you to fellowship. Don't sweep sin under the rug, but place it under the blood!

**Matthew Henry:** "Though God may suffer His people to fall into sin, He will not suffer His people to lie still in it."

## **DON'T COVER SIN CONFESS SIN!**

**The sins that would entangle us  
Must never be ignored;  
For if we try to cover them  
They'll pierce us like a sword.**

As the months passed, David would have become convinced that he had "gotten away with the it". His unrepentant heart would have

become more and more hardened. His depth of self-deception would have increased.

**No action, whether foul or fair,  
Is ever done, but it leaves somewhere  
A record written by fingers ghostly,  
As a blessing or a curse, and mostly  
In the greater weakness or greater strength  
Of the acts which follow it.**

-Longfellow

**The Pulpit Commentary** exposition remarks that...

A man could scarcely pass from utter callousness to a state of mind so tender as that depicted in Ps. 51. without some preparation. Assuredly David had suffered much mental distress, but he had given no outward sign of contrition, and possibly, but for Nathan's message, he might have overpowered his conscience, and his self-reproaches have become less frequent and agitating.

**Alan Carr** offers us an automotive illustration of David's heart condition...

The "check engine light" in your car. When it comes on, you can ignore it, you can break the light, or you can get the problem fixed. If you ignore it or break the light, eventually, you will harm the engine. If you fix it, everything goes back to normal. The same is true with guilt. It is the check engine light of the soul. When it comes on, do not ignore it, but take the problem to Jesus and get it fixed. ([THOU ART THE MAN](#))

**Henri Rossier** explains the time lapse this way...

A certain period of time passed after David committed this sin. The war against Ammon (begun in the preceding chapter, which covers nearly one year) still continued. The siege of Rabbah had not been brought to its conclusion, and we know that at this time a city could be besieged for years. During this entire period David's conscience was silent (Ed: Or was being pricked!) although his sin weighed upon him and the fruit of his transgression was evident before his eyes (**Ed**: What was that fruit? Bathsheba, his stolen wife, the wife of Uriah - Imagine her emotions toward David each their eyes met. What guilt must have flashed across his mind! This indeed was the rotten fruit of his sin - Gal 6:8a). ([2 Samuel](#))

**A W Pink**

An interval of some months elapsed between what is recorded in 2 Samuel 11 and that which is found at the beginning of chapter 12. During this interval David was free to enjoy to the full that which he had acquired through his wrongdoing. The one obstacle which lay in the way of the free indulgence of his passion was removed; Bathsheba was now his. Apparently, the king, in his palace, was secure and immune. So far there had been no intervention of God in judgment, and throughout those months David had remained impenitent for the fearful crimes he had committed. Alas, how dull the conscience of a saint may become. But if David was pleased with the consummation of his vile plans, there was One who was displeased. The eyes of God had marked his evil conduct, and the divine righteousness would not pass it by. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence," yet He adds "but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes" (Ps 50:21). God may suffer His people to indulge the lusts of the flesh and fall into grievous sin, but He will not allow them to remain content and happy in such a case; rather are they made to prove that "the way of transgressors is hard."

The coarse pleasures of sin cannot long content a child of God. It has been truly said that "Nobody buys a little passing pleasure in evil at so dear a rate, or keeps it so short a time, as a good man." The conscience of the righteous soon reasserts itself, and makes its disconcerting voice heard. He may yet be far from true repentance, but he will soon experience keen remorse. Months may pass before he again enjoys communion with God, but self-disgust will quickly fill his soul. The saint has to pay a fearfully high price for enjoying "the pleasures of sin for a season." Stolen waters may be sweet for a moment, but how quickly his "mouth is filled with gravel" (Pr 20:17) ([2 Samuel 12 His Conviction](#))

From Psalm 32 (written after David had confessed and repented of his sin) we read of the incredible inner turmoil that he experienced during this time of covering his sins...

When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my **groaning** (Hebrew verb describing the **roaring** of a lion in Job 4:10, Ps 22:13!) all day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; My

vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin to Thee, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin. Selah. (Ps 32:3, 4, 5)

**Sent** (shalach) is a Hebrew verb used over 800 times in the OT, but in this context means to dispatch a man on a mission with a specific purpose. Notice that it was not David who summoned the prophet but God Who took the initiative. David was in sin and hardly in a position to desire or to seek a rebuking word from a prophet. The truth is that sinners never seek God, **until** He seeks us. The fact that God loved David enough to send Nathan should encourage all of us. We have all committed willful sins (not referring to sins of ignorance) and been ensnared by the "cords of deception" of those sins (cp Pr 5:22-note, Pr 1:31, Isa 3:11-note, Jn 8:34; Ro 6:16-note, 2Pe 2:19-note). But we can be sure that God is the same today as He was in David's life (Mal 3:6, Heb 13:8-note) and He will not leave us in our sin but will send a "Nathan" to call us to confession and repentance and to restoration of our spiritual senses that had been dulled by the lies of the sin and Satan (2Ti 2:24, 25, 26-note) that so easily entangled us (Heb 12:1-note). God will not allow us to remain in our sin!

### ESV Study Bible

The "parable" (2Sa 12:1-4) is similar to the plea of the wise woman of Tekoa in 2Sa 14:1-33 and that of the prophet in 1Ki 20:35-43. In all these cases, it is pointed out to the king that his own actions do not match his judgments.

## WHO IS YOUR NATHAN?

**Nathan** - His task was far from enviable one in having to confront and rebuke the guilty king alone, face to face. Few things are more difficult and trying than to be called upon to reprove an erring brother, but it is every believer's mandate (see Gal 6:1, 2, Pr 25:11, 12). Add to this case the fact that it was the King who had absolute authority of life and death who needed reproof for his sins of adultery and murder (cp Pr 16:14). We do well to not underestimate the courage and boldness of the prophet Nathan. J Vernon McGee said that "In my judgment he is the bravest man in the Bible. I know of no one who can be compared to him."

**Nathan** clearly was a loyal friend to David, one who was willing to speak the truth in love...

**Faithful are the wounds of a friend,  
But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.**  
(Pr 27:6)

We need to recall that Nathan is the same prophet God sent to promise David a descendant (a prophecy fulfilled in the Messiah) and a kingdom that would endure forever (prophecy of the Messiah's coming kingdom - 2Sa 7:12, 13, 14, 15, 16). David surely remembered this great blessing Nathan had prophesied regarding the Davidic lineage and this would have given the prophet even greater credibility with David. If we are constantly criticizing others or expressing a judgmental spirit, we are hardly opening a door of opportunity to speak the truth to them in the future should that need arise. **Let's practice the "Nathan approach" and we are much more likely to be received by those we feel led to reproof for their sinful behavior!**

**Matthew Henry** says

One would think it should have followed that the Lord sent enemies to invade him, terrors to take hold on, and the messengers of death to arrest him. No, He sent a prophet to him.

Nathan was God's bondservant in this great tragedy. Perhaps God has called you to be His bondservant in the life of **another person. You have a choice to make.** Do you love them enough to confront them (cp Pr 27:6, 17, Pr 6:23)? There is no guarantee as to how they will respond.

**Rossier** remarks...

Nathan the prophet, bearer of His word, comes on the Lord's behalf to stir up the king's soul. How this chapter differs from 2 Samuel 7! Then, in a time of prosperity and joy, David served the Lord wholeheartedly and had but one thought: to build a house for his God. That first time the Lord had sent Nathan to him to tell him that the time had not yet come for this, but also to open up to him the treasures of His grace, for His object was to bring joy to David's soul. Now the scene has changed. The prophet is sent to him to set him in the light of a holy and righteous God whose eyes are too pure to behold evil and who must judge it. ([2 Samuel](#))

**Phil Newton** asked **What had changed with David?**

**1. David had not acknowledged the seriousness of sin**

Here was a man whose conscience was sensitive to snipping off the corner of Saul's robe and getting water at the risk of his men's lives at Bethlehem.

## **2. David was dulled to his own spiritual condition**

His sin had seared his conscience. Rough calluses developed over his heart. He was deceiving himself.

## **3. David seemingly thought that lack of discovery meant that no harm would be done**

## **4. David took for granted the tender fellowship and joy he had known before the Lord**

## **5. David ignored the reality that we do not sin in isolation; others are affected**

## **6. David played loosely with the honor and glory of God (2Sa 12:14)**

Sometimes a story can harass our thoughts and emotions and imaginations. [2 Samuel 12 You Are the Man!](#)

**One rich and the other poor** - David was in charge of dispensing justice and God was especially protective of the poor (Ex 23:6; Lev 19:15; Pr. 31:9; Is 3:14; et al).. So he easily gives himself over fully to Nathan's story, undoubtedly thinking that this will be a situation that calls for kingly intervention! Yes, he was correct, the the intervention would be in the life of the king himself!

Nathan was not the only prophet to be sent by God to David to proclaim the consequences of sin. In 2 Samuel 24 David numbers Israel and Judah committing a sin against God...

Now David's heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of Thy servant, for I have acted very foolishly." When David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, "Go and speak to David, 'Thus the LORD says, "I am offering you three things; choose for yourself one of them, which I may do to you." So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider and see what answer I shall return to Him who sent me." (2Sa 24:10, 11, 12, 13)

**Comment:** Again we see that while there is abundant forgiveness with God, He may still allow untoward, unexpected consequences for our sins. **God's law of sowing and reaping has not been repealed and may this truth motivate us to flee the next time we are tempted to sin against Him!**

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**Redirected Paths** - As part of a gospel outreach to the community, a group of Christians brought in a popular professional athlete to give his testimony. When he arrived, one of the organizers noticed he was acting arrogant. He pulled the guest aside and said, "We've been praying for this event for a long time. People out there need to see Jesus in you. You are being cocky, and that's not going to do anyone any good."

Standing up to a famous athlete is one thing, but can you imagine standing up to a king? That's what Nathan the prophet did when he found out about David's sin with Bathsheba. He stood before the monarch, told a story about a rich man who had stolen from a poor man, then said to David, "You are the man!" (2Samuel 12:7). Instead of being irate with Nathan, David confessed his sin and sought restoration.

It's never easy to confront, and for some it's extremely frightening. Yet bad behavior that will hinder God's work must be rebuked.

The athlete recognized his problem, had a fruitful ministry that day, and later thanked the man who confronted him. David was restored to God's favor. Someone you know may be headed down the wrong path. Ask the Lord for the courage and wisdom to redirect him. —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Dear Lord, I would be bold and do my part  
To turn a friend from self-destructive ways;  
Grant me the grace to counsel heart to heart,  
And help him follow You through all his days. —Hess

**Overlooking sin allows it to grow.**

><>><><>



**Burying Our Heads** -Contrary to common belief, the ostrich does not bury its head in the sand to ignore danger. An ostrich can run at a speed of 45 miles per hour, kick powerfully, and peck aggressively with its beak. As the largest and fastest bird in the world, it doesn't need to bury its head.

"Burying your head in the sand" is a saying that describes someone who wants to ignore his shortcomings or those of others. The prophet Nathan did not allow King David to forget his sins of adultery and murder (2Sa 12:1-14). It took a brave man to confront a king about his errors. Yet Nathan was obedient to God and wise in his approach.

The apostle Paul urged the early church to confront sin. He said, "If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). We are to confront our brothers and sisters in Christ about their sin with the view of restoring them to fellowship with God. We must also recognize that we are not immune to the same temptations.

We shouldn't go looking for sin in the lives of other believers, of course. But neither should we bury our head in the sand when it needs to be confronted. —Albert Lee ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Father, help me live today  
With thoughtfulness in what I say,  
Confronting wrong with truth and fact,  
Expressing gentleness and tact.  
-Hess

**Slander seeks to destroy**  
**Rebuke seeks to restore**

**2Samuel 12:2 THE RICH MAN HAD A GREAT MANY FLOCKS AND HERDS:**

- **Great many:** 2Sa 12:8; 3:2, 4, 5; 5:13, 14, 15, 16; 15:16; Job 1:3

| NATHAN'S "PARABLE" OF<br>A RICH MAN & POOR MAN |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| CHARACTER<br>DEPICTED                          | CHARACTER<br>DEPICTS         |
| Rich Man                                       | King David                   |
| Poor Man                                       | Uriah the Hittite            |
| Flocks and herds                               | Many concubines and<br>wives |
| Little Ewe Lamb                                | Uriah's wife Bathsheba       |
| Traveler                                       | Lust                         |

In this parable, the **rich man** represents David. The **poor man** represents Uriah. The **ewe lamb** represents Bathsheba. **Great many flocks** reminds us of David's many "concubines and wives" (2Sa 5:13)! **Lust is insatiable! Lust is never satisfied! Lust always desires one more of whatever the lust is directed toward! And each time lust is "accommodated" it only increases its appetite! Do not be deceived!**

As you read Nathan's parable and see David's blindness to the fact that this parable is a divine finger pointed straight at him, realize that such is the power of sin in our lives. Sin is not to be underestimated or trifled with but instead is a horrible, powerful force to be continually fought against do only with the Spirit of God's enablement!

But I say, **walk** (present imperative - Keep on doing this) by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the **flesh**. For the **flesh** sets its desire (present tense = continually) against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the **flesh**; for these are in opposition to (antikeimai in the present tense = continually) one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (Gal 5:16-note, 17-note)

**Sin** blinds by **deceiving** the **sinner** as explained by the writer of Hebrews...

**Take care** (present imperative - Keep on doing this), brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. But **encourage** (present imperative - Keep on doing this) one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," lest any one of you be (passive voice = Action occurs on subject from "outside source") hardened (skleruno) by the deceitfulness (apate) of **Sin**. (Hebrews 3:12, 13-note)

**2Samuel 12:3 BUT THE POOR MAN HAD NOTHING EXCEPT ONE LITTLE EWE LAMB WHICH HE BOUGHT AND NOURISHED. AND IT GREW UP TOGETHER WITH HIM AND HIS CHILDREN. IT WOULD EAT OF HIS BREAD AND DRINK OF HIS CUP AND LIE IN HIS BOSOM, AND WAS LIKE A DAUGHTER TO HIM:**

- **One little:** 2Sa 11:3 Pr 5:18,19
- **Lie in his bosom:** Dt 13:6 Mic 7:5

**But** - Nathan draws a strong contrast between the **rich man (great many flocks)** and the **poor man (one little ewe lamb)** to heighten David's interest, his sense of justice and ultimately his sense of conviction of sin once Nathan clarified that David was the rich man in verse 7!

**Thomas Stone** writes glowingly of Nathan's modus operandi of indirectly drawing out David's conscience and sense of right and wrong...

There scarcely ever was any thing more calculated, on the one hand, to awaken emotions of sympathy, and, on the other, those of indignation, than the case here supposed; and the several circumstances by which the heart must be interested in the poor man's case, and by which the unfeeling oppression of his rich neighbour was aggravated.

Nathan masterfully draws out in story form a picture which when seen by David in retrospect ("You are the man.") is clearly representative of David's evil acts against both Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite and as stated served to intensify his conviction of transgression against God and His Word.

### **Pulpit Commentary**

The Orientals are excessively fond of pet animals, and, as the dog is with them unclean, its place is taken by fawns, kids, or lambs. The description, therefore, is not overcharged, for in many an English home the dog or cat takes its place as one of the family. The Revised Version preserves the tenderness of the original in translating "it did eat of his own morsel."

### **Pink remarks...**

The prophet began, then, by giving an oblique representation of the vileness of David's offence, which was conveyed in such a way that the king's judgment was obliged to assent to the gross injustice of which he was guilty. The excuselessness, the heartlessness, and the abominable selfishness of his conduct was depicted, though Uriah's loyal service and the king's ingratitude and treachery, and the murder of him and his fellow-soldiers, was not alluded to— is there not a hint here that, when reproving an erring brother we should gradually lead up to the worst elements in his offense? Yet obvious as was the allusion in Nathan's parable. David perceived not its application unto himself—how this shows that when one is out of touch with God, he is devoid of spiritual discernment: it is only in God's light that we can see light! ([2 Samuel 12 His Conviction](#))

**One little ewe lamb** - Clearly this is meant to parallel Bathsheba, Uriah's one wife.

So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" (2 Sa 11:3)

**Like a daughter to him** - Even as Bathsheba was someone's precious daughter. As David sowed evil by taking someone's daughter, so too he would reap in kind as his own precious daughter Tamar was coveted and her virginity stolen David's son Amnon. David had sown the seed of lust in the form of adultery but would reap the bitter harvest of incestuous rape! Beloved, let us not read over this too quickly. May God the Holy Spirit penetrate our head and heart with the truths of the rotten fruit of forsaking God's way for our wants, lest we too might come to crave evil things as David craved (cp 1Co 10:6, 11).



2Samuel 12:4 Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him:

- **A traveler:** Ge 18:2-7 Jas 1:14
- **Took the:** 2Sa 11:3,4

**Now a traveler came to the rich man** - While one must be careful going beyond the limits of Scripture, in the context of David's sin, this **traveler** would correlate well with the lust that visited David the night he first spied Bathsheba.

**He took the poor man's ewe lamb** - This amounts to stealing which is exactly what David had done to Uriah - he **took** the wife of Uriah (David "sent messengers and took her" 2Sa 11:4)!

**Guzik** adds that...

The sin Nathan describes is theft. There is a sense in which David stole something from Uriah. The Bible says that in marriage a husband has authority over the body of his wife (and vice-versa). Obviously David did not have this authority over the body of Bathsheba and he stole from Uriah. Adultery and sexual immorality are theft - taking something that does not belong to us. This principle is also true regarding pornography and lust. Leviticus 18 describes the sin of uncovering the nakedness of those other than our spouse. The idea is that the nakedness of other doesn't belong to us and it is theft if we take it.

Who would the **"traveler"** be equated with in this story portraying David's horrible sin? I think **Henri Rossier** offers a reasonable suggestion when he names this traveler **"Lust"** writing...

Let us watch out for this sort of **traveler**, for we are all prone to be visited by him. Certainly when he appears it is better to close the door against him. This wayfarer is **lust**, a passing desire, and not one that we habitually entertain and feed. This wayfarer had entered the king's house, knowing he would find something to feed on there. Our hearts too ever contain that which it takes to succumb to Satan's temptations (Jer 17:9, 10). David forgot to depend on God and thought he could relax instead of serving and fighting. This was enough to allow the traveler to open the door and let himself in and to mark his visit with disorder and ruin. ([2 Samuel](#))

**Wiersbe** agrees with Rossier writing...

David didn't seem to realize that he was the **rich man**, Uriah was the **poor man**, and Bathsheba was the **ewe lamb** he had stolen. The **"traveler"** whom the rich man fed represents the temptation and lust that visited David on the roof and then controlled him. If we open the door, sin comes in as a guest but soon becomes the master. (See Ge 4:6, 7)

**Pink** adds

That **"traveler"** which came to him pictures the restless flesh, the active lusts, the wandering thoughts, the roving eyes of David in connection with Bathsheba.

Ah, my reader, it is at this point we most need to be upon our guard. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Part of that task lies in regulating our thoughts and repelling unlawful imaginations. True it is that we cannot prevent wandering thoughts from entering our minds nor evil imaginations from surging up within us, but we are responsible to resist and reject them. But this is what David failed to do: he welcomed this "traveller," he entertained him, he feasted him, and feasted him upon that which was not lawful—with that which belonged to another: pictured in the parable by the lamb belonging to his neighbor. And, my reader, it is when we give place to our sinful lusts, indulge our evil imaginations, feed our wandering thoughts upon that which is unlawful, that we pave the way for a sad fall. "Travellers" will come to us—the mind will be active—and our responsibility is to see that they are fed with that which is lawful: ponder Philipians 4:8 in this connection. ([2 Samuel 12 His Conviction](#))

**Pulpit Commentary**

Nathan probably used these three terms chiefly to diversify his language, but it has served as a handle for much allegorizing. Thus Rashi explains it of covetousness, which comes at first as a mere "passer-by," the

literal meaning of the word rendered "traveler." But, if admitted, it grows into "a wayfaring man," who comes and goes on business, and stays a longer time. Finally it changes into "one who has come to him," and remains permanently.

**2Samuel 12:5 Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die:**

- **David's anger:** Ge 38:24 1Sa 25:21,22 Lk 6:41,42 9:55 Ro 2:1
- **As the Lord lives:** 1Sa 14:39
- **Surely the man:** 1Sa 20:31 26:16

**Anger burned** - See 1Sa 25:13, 22, 33 for another example of David's anger.

**Anger** (0639) (**ap'aph**) refers strictly to the nose, nostril (snout of pigs Pr 11:22) face or countenance (cf. an opening of the body, possibly the body itself, e.g., nose, nipple) considered a vital part of the body. God made man a living being by breathing into his nose/nostrils (Ge2:7) The main use of Ap'aph is to describe the anger of men and of God. Ap'aph gives emphasis to the emotional aspect of anger/wrath from the rapid breathing in passion or anger (picture the flaring of nostrils when one is incensed with anger!)

**Burned** (02734) (**charah**) means to burn, be kindled and figuratively to glow with anger, be incensed, grow indignant. For example, God's anger was kindled against Israel for engaging in immoral pagan rites (Nu 25:3). God instructed Moses to execute all the leaders involved so that His fierce anger might be turned away from the people.

**Greatly** (03966) (**me'od**) means exceedingly; exceeding, much, abundance, very greatly; greatly. This same word was used to describe how exceedingly great was the beauty of Bathsheba (2Sa 11:2).

**Against the man** - Notice that the rich man who had mistreated the poor man, did so because of his own desire, which is exactly why David did what he did to Uriah! What goes around, comes around!

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. (James 1:13, 14, 15-note, Jas 1:16-note)

**As the LORD lives** - David underscores the depth of his emotional reaction to the evil actions of the rich man by invoking an oath to God.

**As the LORD lives** - 35x in NAS - Jdg 8:19; Ru 3:13; 1Sa 14:39, 45; 19:6; 20:3, 21; 25:26; 26:10, 16; 28:10; 29:6; 2Sa 4:9; 12:5; 14:11; 15:21; 1Kgs 1:29; 2:24; 22:14; 2Ki 2:2, 4, 6; 4:30; 5:16, 20; 2Chr 18:13; Jer 4:2; 5:2; 12:16; 16:14 15; 23:7 8; 38:16; Hos 4:15

**The man...deserves to die** - In the literal Hebrew David refers to this man as "a son of death", and thus a wretch who deserves to die! David is being harsh, overly harsh. Stealing and killing a sheep is a sin (Ex 22:1) but it does not call for capital punishment. David is going way beyond what the Law requires. He is out of fellowship with God and it shows by his emotional, "over the top" response. In pronouncing this judgment on the rich man (who represented David himself) in the story, David unknowingly condemned himself! As someone has written the chickens have come home to roost (so to speak)! **How easy it is for us to excuse sin in our own life but be overly harsh and critical when dealing with sin in the lives of others! We humans have a keen sense of judgment - as long as it is on someone else!**

**David's** reaction to the rich man's coveting and stealing what belonged to another man reminds us of Paul's accusation in Romans...

Therefore you are without excuse, every man of you who passes judgment, for in that you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 3 And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? (Ro 2:1, 2-note, Ro 2:3-note)

**Comment:** Be careful in condemning the flaws of others, for sometimes what we condemn in others reflects our own character flaws!

**Alan Redpath** asks...

Have you observed that when you excuse sin in your own life, you become very critical of it in other people (cp Jesus warning in Mt 7:1, 2-note, Mt 7:3, 4, 5-note). The person who hides an uneasy conscience and a sense of guilt may flash out in anger against the sin of another. Is that why some of us are so merciless with the Christian who has tripped up? Is that why we have no gospel for the believer who falls? It may be not because we are very holy but because we are unholy that we condemn the thing in another as we refuse to judge in our own lives. Let us not forget the words of our Master, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone.

**Alan Carr** wisely warns us

Never think for a minute that sin can be successfully hidden away forever. God knows exactly where it is buried, Heb 4:13-note, and when the time is right, he will place His finger right on the sore spot and He will press. He will confront that hidden sin and expose it for what it is! That will be a shocking day in the life of the guilty party. That is why it is so important for us to keep short accounts with God!

**Chuck Smith**

It's amazing how awful our sins look to us when someone else is committing them.. We seek to justify our own actions. We so graciously excuse in ourselves the things we condemn in others.. This should teach us to be careful how we judge others. "Thou art inexcusable O man."

**Stevenson**

What really annoys you about others? What is it about someone that really gets under your skin? Chances are that it is something of which you yourself are guilty. There is a lesson here. It is that we normally find it easier to see the faults in others than we can see them in ourselves. I don't see the main faults in my own life. That goes for you, too. Whatever you think are your primary faults are not. ([2 Samuel 11-12 David's Sin](#))

**2Samuel 12:6 He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.:**

- **Restitution:** Ex 22:1 Pr 6:31 Lk 19:8
- **Because:** Jas 2:13

**Make restitution** (07999) (**shalam** from root **s-l-m** = denotes perfection in the sense that a condition or action is complete and thus a sense of completion and fulfillment, of entering into a state of wholeness and unity, a restored relationship) means to be completed, to be finished and in the present context means to restore or bring to a previous, preferable state (cp Job 8:6) and to repay or give recompense (Ex 21:34, of God repaying - 1Sa 24:20, Jer 32:18). Restitution means a making good of or giving an equivalent for some injury or something taken. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates shalam in this verse with the verb **apotino** meaning to pay back, to pay damages, to compensate.

**No compassion** - In the Greek the "no" is absolute signifying total absent of this attribute.

**Compassion** (02550) (**chamal**) describes the emotional response which results (or may result) in action to remove its object (and/or its subject) from impending difficulty. This is the exact antithesis of what David did to Uriah, assuring that he would be placed in life threatening difficulty!

**Fourfold** - David had apparently obeyed God's charge to write a copy of the Law and so he knew what the Law stated about stealing someone's **sheep**. Moses' recorded that

If a man steals an ox or a **sheep**, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for the ox and **four sheep** for the **sheep**. (Exodus 22:1)

**John MacArthur** comments that...

Exodus 22:1 demanded a 4-fold restitution for the stealing of sheep. There is an allusion here to the subsequent death of 4 of David's sons: Bathsheba's first son (2Sa 12:18), Amnon (2Sa 13:28, 29), Absalom (2Sa 16:14, 15), and Adonijah (1Ki 2:25).

**Henry Morris** comments that...

David's pronouncement of a "**fourfold**" restoration against Nathan's hypothetical sinner came back on his own

house. **(1) First** there was the death of his child (2Sa 12:18); **(2) then** came the rape of his virgin daughter Tamar by her half-brother Amnon (2Sa 13:1,14). **(3)** This led to Amnon's vengeful murder by Tamar's brother Absalom (2Sa 13:28, 29). **(4) Fourth** was the treason and death of Absalom (2Sa 18:9,14).

David was greatly blessed by God, but even the most godly of men, particularly if they are in positions of influence, cannot enter into such flagrant willful sin as David did without also receiving divine chastening (discipline).

**Comment:** Read those two descriptions of David's sin again >>> **Flagrant** = conspicuously offensive and so obviously inconsistent with what is right or proper as to appear to be a flouting of law or morality. **Willful** = obstinately and often perversely self-willed; done deliberately. Listen to David's own prayer in Psalm 19:13...

Also **keep back** Thy servant from presumptuous sins; Let them not rule over (Lxx uses a "strong" verb to describe the power of presumptuous sin >>> **katakuriueuo** [from kurios ~ idea of lordship combining elements of power and authority = that's what presumptuous sin can do] = gain power over, exercise complete dominion over, overpower, subdue - Acts 19:16) me; Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

**Comment:** **Keep back** in Hebrew is **chasak** which means to withhold, restrain, check, hold back. The Septuagint translates this Hebrew verb in the **aorist imperative** (command that conveys a sense of urgency) using **pheidomai** which means spare or me from loss or discomfort or a great deal of trouble (used this way in 1Co 7:28). To restrain or keep one from doing something.

Experienced Christian, do not boast in your experience or you will trip if you look away from Him Who alone is able to keep you from falling. (Jude 1:23,24, cp 1Co 10:12)

"Ye whose love is fervent, whose faith is constant, whose hopes are bright, say not, "We shall never sin," but rather cry, "Lead us not into temptation." There is enough tinder in the heart of the best of men to light a fire that shall burn to the lowest hell, unless God shall quench the sparks as they fall. Who would have dreamed that righteous Lot could be found drunken, and committing uncleanness? Hazael said, "Is Thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" and we are very apt to use the same self-righteous question. May infinite wisdom cure us of the madness of self-confidence."

**Spurgeon comments:** This earnest and humble prayer teaches us that saints may fall into the worst of sins unless restrained by grace, and that therefore they must watch (keep on watching) and pray (keep on praying) lest they enter into temptation (Mt 26:41-note). There is a natural proneness to sin in the best of men (**Ed:** It's called the **flesh**; James warns us against its deceptive snares - Jas 1:14, 15-note), and they must be held back as a horse is held back by the bit or they will run into it. **Presumptuous sins** are peculiarly dangerous (**Ed:** See Heb 10:26, 27, 28, 28, 30, 31). All sins are great sins, but yet some sins are greater than others. Every sin has in it the very **venom of rebellion**, and is full of the essential marrow of **traitorous rejection of God**; but there be some sins which have in them a greater development of the essential mischief of rebellion, and which wear upon their faces more of the brazen pride which defies the Most High. It is wrong to suppose that because all sins will condemn us, that therefore one sin is not greater than another. The fact is, that while all transgression is a greatly grievous sinful thing, yet **there are some transgressions which have a deeper shade of blackness** and a more double scarlet-dyed hue of criminality than others. The **presumptuous sins** of our text are the chief and worst of all sins; they rank head and foremost in the list of iniquities. It is remarkable that though an "out" was provided under the Jewish law for every kind of sin, there was this one exception: "But the soul that sins presumptuously shall have no atonement; he shall be cut off from the midst of the people." (Nu 15:30KJV) And now under the Christian dispensation, although in the sacrifice of our blessed Lord there is a great precious atonement for **presumptuous sins**, whereby sinners who have erred in this manner are made clean, yet without doubt, presumptuous sinners, dying without pardon, must expect to receive a double portion of the wrath of God, and a more terrible portion of eternal punishment in the pit that is dug for the wicked. For this reason is David so anxious that he may never come under the **reigning power** of these giant evils (**Ed: That such a godly man was at risk of falling under the sway of such a sin ought**

to make every one of us tremble!).

"Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." He shudders at the thought of the unpardonable sin. Secret sin is a stepping-stone to presumptuous sin, and that is the vestibule of "the sin which is unto death." He who is not willful in his sin, will be in a fair way to be innocent so far as poor sinful man can be; but he who tempts the devil to tempt him is in a path which will lead him from bad to worse, and from the worse to the worst. (!!!)

**2Samuel 12:7 Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul:**

- **You are:** 1Sa 13:13 1Ki 18:18 21:19,20 Mt 14:14
- **It is I who anointed you king:** 2Sa 7:8 1Sa 15:17 16:13
- **Delivered you:** 2Sa 22:1,49 1Sa 18:11,21 19:10-15 23:7,14,26-28 Ps 18:1

John Stevenson has an interesting chart comparing David and Jesus...

| David   | Jesus  |
|---|--|
| Figuratively took another man's lamb and killed it.   | He was the figure of the Lamb who was put to death.                  |
| He sinned against God.                                | He was obedient to the point of death.                               |
| Anointed to be king of Israel                         | Anointed by the Holy Spirit.<br>Coming King of kings                 |
| Murdered a man in order to take his wife.             | Gave up his own life to purchase a bride.                            |
| He sinned resulting in death to a number of his sons. | He took our sins upon Himself, resulting in life to all who believe. |

**IT'S NOT *WHO* BUT *YOU!*  
YOU ARE THE MAN!**

**Nathan then said** - Timing is important in life (cp Pr 25:11, 12). Nathan (surely led by the Spirit) sensed the moment to speak forth had arrived. Nathan's tact is reminiscent of Paul's charge to the saints in Galatia...

Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore** (katartizo [word study]; present imperative = command to keep on - this may not be a one time intervention) such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. (Gal 6:1)

**Blaikie** comments that...

The flash of indignation is yet in his eye, the flush of resentment is still on his brow, when the prophet with calm voice and piercing eye utters the solemn words, "Thou art the man!" ([An Exposition of 2Samuel](#))

**SIN BLINDS US TO  
OUR OWN SINFULNESS**

**You are the man** - Nathan takes the searchlight David had directed at the rich man's heart and points it at David! The King James Version sounds even more condemning "Thou art the man!" This interjection is abrupt and must have caught David a bit unaware. Nathan had used the truth as an emotional form of "shock therapy", with the goal being to shock his backslidden, deceived condition and bring him back to his senses. (**See discussion and quotes on Backsliding or Drifting**)

**Pulpit Homiletic...**

The fitness of the parable is revealed in its sequel. Nathan, laying aside the character of a friendly visitor relating a story of wrong, now assumes the functions of the prophet of God, and turns the whole light and force

of David's just indignation in upon himself, and, with an incisiveness most irresistible, brings an accusation of guilt without naming the actual deed done... When, then, the friendly visitor said, with an unrecordable tone and gesture, "Thou art the man!" it was evident to David (1) that his deed, long kept secret, was known to his most influential and incorruptible subject and friend; and (2) that God was speaking straight to his conscience....In true conviction the man "comes to himself." The deed of evil is brought home. In a light not of earth, self is seen to be undone, because the sin, hitherto professedly not a reality, is now forced on self as its own offspring.

**Paul** instructed **Timothy** in how to deal with those who are spiritually "out of their senses" writing that...

the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance (Observe: Repentance is not something we conger up from within but a gracious gift from a merciful God Who sees our need to have a change of heart and mind) leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses (Observe: Sin is blinding. Sin is deceiving. Sin is always first and foremost against God and to put it bluntly that is "crazy" for He has every right to kill us on the spot! David was "out of his mind" in the darkness, despair and deception of his horrible sins) and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. (2Ti 2:24, 25, 26-note)

### **Pulpit Commentary**

So skillfully had the parable been contrived, that up to this point David had had no suspicion that he was the rich man who had acted so meanly by his poorer neighbour Uriah. And now he stood self-condemned. Yet even so self-love might have made his indignation break forth against Nathan; but probably the reproof only completed a work that had long been secretly in progress, and brushed away the last obstacles to repentance

**J Vernon McGee** rehearses the scene with Nathan's declaration...

"David, you are the guilty one." What is David going to do? He is going to do something unusual, I can assure you of that. Dr. Margoliouth has said this: "When has this been done—before or since? Mary, Queen of Scots, would declare that she was above the law; Charles I would have thrown over Bathsheba; James II would have hired witnesses to swear away her character; Mohammed would have produced a revelation authorizing both crimes; Charles II would have publicly abrogated the seventh commandment; Queen Elizabeth would have suspended Nathan." Years ago, the Duke of Windsor would have given up his throne for her. We have had some presidents who would have repealed the Ten Commandments and appointed Nathan to the Supreme Court. David did not do any of these things. His actions will reveal his greatness.

**Newton...**

There was no getting around the guilt. David has admitted his crime through the story. His defenses and excuses were laid waste by his own response to the parable. David had described himself and didn't even realize (like Peter with the crowing rooster).

**Zeisler...**

there was no sense of hesitation in Nathan. He would say some painful and penetrating things to David. Nathan had no idea whether he would live through this day or not, whether the king would respond to the Lord or not.

The speech of Nathan showed no effort to soften the blow or spare David's feelings. It was devastating, hard-hitting. It was a clear and thoughtful destruction of all victimhood arguments that David might have raised. There were no extenuating circumstances, no set of rationalizations that was going to be accepted. Nathan gave most of this speech before David was able to utter one word, and everything that might have occurred to David to say in his own defense was disallowed before he could say it. When the person we really are is displayed in our own sight before God and perhaps before others, we often retreat to explanations of extenuating circumstances and rationalizations. ([2 Samuel 12:1-15 You Have Despised The Word Of The Lord](#))

**Pink...**

David's slumbering conscience was now awakened, and he was made to realize the greatness of his guilt. The piercing arrow from God's quiver, which Nathan had driven into his diseased heart, opened to David's view the awfulness of his present case.



## REMEMBER THE GOODNESS OF GOD

**Pulpit Homiletic** comments on the effect of recalling God's goodness...

But be the privileges many or few, when God brings home the guilt to the conscience, the sin is revealed in the light of past mercies. The swift review of David's advantages by Nathan finds its analogue in the swift floating before the mind of the circumstances of one's position which render the sin so utterly inexcusable. Men see in a few moments the reasons for their utter shame and self-abasement. This is a feature in all true conviction, and tends to the proper prostration of the soul before God. Saul of Tarsus knew this. It is an unspeakable mercy that God does set our sins in the light of his great goodness.

**I (Jehovah) Who anointed...delivered** - Beloved, we ought to frequently recite the blessings of the Lord in our life, lest we grow spiritually "fat" and complacent and prideful and set ourselves up for a sure fall!

**It is I Who delivered you** - In context the deliverance Jehovah wants David to recall is from Saul who pursued him for many years with the intention of killing him. And there was another great deliverance from the power of the giant Goliath. But in 2Samuel 11 God does not deliver David from the "giant" named "Lust". Why not? David had become proud and God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. He would have given David grace to make it if he had been humble. For example, if David had been humble, he would have been doing what all kings did in the Spring. He would have gone to war.

><>><>><>

**Who's In the Picture?** - My daughter came home from school one day with a brain teaser. See if you can figure it out.

Imagine that you are a school bus driver. A red-haired student gets on the bus and begins combing her hair with a green brush. At the next stop two more students get on and say in passing that they like the color of the driver's new blue cap. As they walk to the rear of the bus, the shorter of the two shouts back, "I wouldn't let that red-head stay on the bus if I were you. Her brush clashes with your hair!" What color is the bus driver's hair? Think about it. Remember, you are the bus driver. (Answer: your hair color.)

If you didn't see yourself in that story until I told you, you're not alone. King David made a similar mistake with another story. He became furious when a prophet of God told about a rich man who stole a poor man's pet for his dinner. Yet it became very clear as Nathan bluntly said to David, "You are the man!" (2 Samuel 12:7).

We can read the Bible but fail to see ourselves in the picture. We tend to forget that the Bible was "written for our admonition" (1 Corinthians 10:11). Do you see yourself in the pages of Scripture? How long since you've realized how personal these letters from God are to you? —Mart De Haan

Your heart and conscience cannot safely guide,  
For they are darkened by the sin inside;  
But if you want to have a picture true,  
The Word of God will mirror what is you. —Hess

**The Bible gives us a picture of who we really are.**

**2Samuel 12:8 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these!'**

- **Your master's wives:** 2Sa 12:11 1Ki 2:22
- **Gave you:** 2Sa 2:4 5:5 1Sa 15:19
- **I would:** 2Sa 7:19 Ps 84:11 86:15 Ro 8:32

**I also gave** - David sinned not only against a flood of light but a flood of God's love and grace! Do we do less, when we consciously, willfully choose to sin against Him and His Word of truth?

**Pulpit Commentary**

These words probably mean that, as the whole possessions of his predecessor belonged, by Oriental custom,

to the next occupant of the throne, David might have claimed the entire household and the wives both of Saul and Ishbosheth as his own, though apparently he had not done so.

It is worth noting that God reminds David of Who He is before He confronts him with the piercing description of his sin **-you have despised the Word...Me** (2Sa 12:9, 10). The abundant kindnesses of which David had been the benefactor served to make this accusation even more stinging. David forgot (or chose to forget) that Jehovah was the source of **"every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift"**, that Jehovah was **"the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation or shifting shadow."** (Jas 1:17-note) A good "preventative" in our lives is to choose to make praise for God's goodness a daily part of our prayers, lest we too forget that His lovingkindnesses are new every morning!

## ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

VS

## ATTITUDE OF GREED

The juxtaposition of the reminders of God's great goodness to David (anointing, protecting, providing, even greater blessings if he would ask) with David's craving for even more (especially that which was forbidden), was surely not lost on David's conscience and heart. This story emphasizes the importance of arising each morning and thanking God for His goodness that overflows in our life. An attitude of gratitude can serve as a great impediment to developing an attitude of greed. When was the last time you thanked God for His manifold goodness in your life? (**See God's attribute - Goodness**)

**I would have added** - God tells David He would have given him anything (not forbidden by His Law) his heart wanted, and yet David selfishly sought the forbidden fruit, which has whispers of Adam who had a perfect environment and yet took the one thing God had forbidden. Such is the power of the fallen nature of our flesh. Such power reminds us of our great and continuing need for God's sufficient grace to fight the war against such a powerful foe.

## CONTENTMENT

or

## COVETOUSNESS

This last divine declaration serves to accentuate David's sin of covetousness. He had everything a man could want or need. And it that was not enough, God would have added to what he had. And yet it was not enough. Coveting says "More. Give me more. I want more." Now why is covetousness so wrong? Bill Hybels comments that when we covet someone else's job, spouse, income, house, or car, we are saying, "You've not been fair with me God, I deserve a nicer job, or a more lucrative income, or a bigger house, or a prettier wife. You've short-changed me. You owe me something better, God!" You may not say those things directly. But a covetous heart is filled with such thoughts. David coveted what was not his - the wife of Uriah. He was not content with what God had given him. Covetousness is never content. David (and all of us) should have remembered that God had given him not only everything that he needed, but that He had given him far more than he deserved. **We are all a bit like David. Instead of coveting, we need to blunt that temptation with praise and thanksgiving for what we have already been given. David forgot to praise God for His bountiful blessings and ended up with the cursed consequences of coveting! Do not be deceived dear brother or sister in Christ. Coveting is the root of many other maladies of the soul. Confess. Return. Return. Be restored. Keep short accounts.**

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Mark Twain encountered a businessman from Boston who said to him, "Before I die, I will go to the Holy Land, climb Mt. Sinai, and from its summit shout the Ten Commandments at the top of my voice!" Unimpressed, Twain responded, "I've got a better idea. Stay in Boston and keep 'em."

**2Samuel 12:9 'Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon:**

- **Despised** : 2Sa 12:10 11:4,14, 15, 16, 17 Ge 9:5,6 Ex 20:13,14 Nu 15:30,31 1Sa 15:19,23 Isa 5:24 Am 2:4 Heb 10:28,29
- **Doing evil**: 2Chr 33:6 Ps 51:4 90:8 139:1,2 Jer 18:10
- **Have taken**: 2Sa 11:15-27

**You have despised the Word of the LORD** - Think about who this accusation is against! The sweet psalmist of Israel. The one who had recorded so many beautiful songs of praise and adoration! This is the very one who now is accused of despising the Word of Jehovah. Beloved, if David can fall to this level, so too can we. We must never, ever trust our flesh. We must never feel "comfortable" in our spiritual state. We must never think that we have "arrived" in our Christian walk! All of those feelings are simply

subtle forms of pride, the sin God hates and ever opposes (Jas 4:6)

**Despised the Word of the LORD by doing evil** -Observe that despising God's Word is associated with not doing (obeying) God's Word. In short, whenever we sin we are in essence **despising the Word of the LORD**. We are choosing our way, rather than His way. David choose His way and broke at least 3 of the "Ten Commandments" (coveting, stealing, adultery), if not more. He had written a copy of the Law in the presence of the Levitical priests and thus he surely knew the Laws regarding coveting, stealing and adultery (as well as the penalties) and yet he basically looked at God's righteous commandments with contempt and sought to please his flesh rather than God. **Isn't that what we all do when we willfully sin, thinking, saying or doing something we know is directly counter to the Word of God?**

**Despised** (0959) (**baza/bazah** is from a root meaning to accord little worth to something) means to disdain or to hold in contempt. Bazah is used in a number of places to mean "despise" in the sense of treating someone or something as totally insignificant or worthless. Bazah means to raise the head loftily and disdainfully, to look down one's nose at something (so to speak)! The idea is that one undervalues something or someone which implies contempt for that thing or person (in this case God's Name in Mal 1:6 and here His table/altar, the place He is to be worshipped, revered, and adored! Woe!) **Lest we be too hard on these ancient Israelites, let us "moderns" consider what we do EVERY TIME we willfully sin against God!** Are you as convicted as I am! In fact **Larry Richards** writes that "Disobedience and other sins are portrayed in the OT as nothing less than evidences that we despise God. When we disobey, we show that we place little value on the Lord."

**Bazah** means to treat things of value with contempt, as if they were worthless, the classic example being the very first use in Scripture in which Esau "**despised** his birthright" and sold it for lentil stew! (Ge 25:34, cp Heb 12:15-16-note)

**Bruce K Waltke** writes - The use of **baza** shows that disobedience to the Lord is based on "contempt, despising" of him. Thus David's adultery with Bathsheba is equated with contempt for the Lord (2 Sa12:10) and his word (v. 19). Likewise to "despise an oath" is equated with breaking the Lord's covenant (Ezek 16:59; Ezek 17:16, 18). A person who despises the Lord is devious in his ways (Prov 14:2). **The opposite of baza is kabad "to honor" (1Sa 2:30), yare' "to fear" (Pr 14:2), and shamar "to keep" commandments (Pr 19:16).** The person who acts contrary to the community founded on the "fear of the Lord" must be cut off from it (Num 15:31); those who treat the Lord with contempt will themselves be held contemptible by him (Mal 1:6-7, 12; Mal 2:9) and will die (Prov 19:16). Those who treated his messengers with disrespect experienced his wrath (2Chr 36:16). The Lord also condemns to insignificance those who despise what he chose: Esau for despising the birthright (Ge25:34), worthless fellows for despising Saul's election (1Sa10:27), Goliath for despising David's youth (1S 17:42), and Michal for despising David's religious enthusiasm (2Sa6:16). ([Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament- R Laird Harris, Gleason L Archer Jr., Bruce K. Waltke](#))

In the **Septuagint (Lxx)** Greek verbs used to translate baza/bazah are **phaulizo** (to hold cheap, to depreciate, disparage, to despise, to consider worthless = translates **baza** in Ge 25:34, Nu 15:31 2Sa 12:9 Isa 37:22 Mal 1:6) and **exoutheneo** (as treating someone or something as of no account despise, disdain, make light of Ro 14:3. As making something or someone as of no account disregard, reject, despise- 1Th 5:20 = exoutheneo translates baza in 2Sa 6:16, , 12:10, , 1Chr 15:29, , Ps 15:4, 22:24, 69:33, 73:20, 102:17, 119:141, Eccl 9:16, Da 11:21, Mal 1:7, 1:12; 2:9)

**Bazah** - 42x in the OT - Ge 25:34; Nu 15:31 (**despised** the Word of the LORD); 1Sa 2:30 (despise Me = God); 1Sa 10:27; 1Sa 15:9; 17:42 (Philistine looked and saw David, he **disdained** him); 2Sa 6:16; 12:9, 10; 2Kgs 19:21; 1Chr 15:29; 2Chr 36:16; Neh 2:19; Esther 1:17; 3:6; Ps 15:4; 22:6, 24; Ps 51:17-note; Ps 69:33; Ps 73:20;Ps 102:17; Ps 119:141; Pr 14:2; 15:20; Pr 19:16; Ec 9:16; Isa 37:22; Isa 53:3; Jer 22:28; Jer 49:15; Ezek 16:59; 17:16, 18, 19; 22:8; Da 11:21; Obadiah 1:2 (Though Edom loftily lifts his head in pride against God and against the surrounding nations [cf. Obadiah 1:3], the fact is that God and the nations loftily lift their heads in disdain against Edom); Mal 1:6, 7, 12; Mal 2:9.

**NAS renders it** - careless(1), contempt(1), despicable(1), despise(5), despised(32), despises(2), disdained(1), disdained\*(1).

**Let us take a moment and read and ponder the English definitions of the word despise especially thinking about how God associates this word with our sin** - The English definition of **despise** means to look down on with contempt, repugnance or aversion. **Despise** suggests an emotional response which ranges from strong dislike to loathing! To have the lowest opinion of something! To abhor! To scorn! To disdain! To regard as negligible, worthless, or distasteful. To regard as unworthy of one's notice or consideration. **Antonyms of despise** include - to adore, to admire, to cherish, to esteem, to love. The related verb to disdain means to feel a contempt for what is beneath one, to look upon with scorn, to abstain from because of disdain, to treat as beneath one's notice or dignity, to regard as unworthy of one's notice or consideration. Webster's 1828 dictionary says disdain is "To think unworthy; to deem worthless; to consider to be unworthy of notice, care. regard, esteem, or unworthy of one's character; to scorn; to condemn (view with contempt)."

**Bazah** describes Judah's response to the words of warning God sent them through His prophets...

but (see 2Chr 36:15) they continually mocked the messengers of God, **despised** (Hebrew = bazah; Lxx = exoudeneo = to hold or treat as of no account - present tense describes this as their continual response to God's attempts to speak to their heart!) His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. (2Chronicles 36:16)

Speaking to **Judah** in exile through His prophet Ezekiel...

For thus says the Lord GOD, "I will also do with you as you have done, you who have **despised** (bazah) the oath by breaking the covenant. (Ezekiel 16:59)

**Bazah** is used in a clearly Messianic psalm (prophecy of words that Jesus spoke)...

But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and **despised** (bazah) by the people. (Ps 22:6)

**Bazah** is used by Isaiah in the famous description of the "**Suffering Messiah**"...

He was **despised** (Hebrew = bazah) and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. (Isaiah 53:3)

**Bazah** is used by David of God in his famous psalm 51...

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not **despise** (bazah). (Ps 51:17-note)

**Zeisler** - Twice Nathan said to David, "You despised," a very strong word. He despised the word of the Lord and in fact he despised the Lord himself. He trampled on four of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) in this affair. Everyone in Israel, if they knew anything, knew the Ten Commandments. The sixth commandment is unambiguous: "You shall not murder." The seventh: "You shall not commit adultery." The ninth: "You shall not give false testimony [lie]..." The tenth: "You shall not covet...." Nathan was saying, "You despised the word of the Lord. There was no ignorance. You did mean to do what you were doing. You decided to be God yourself and to affront the God of heaven." ([2 Samuel 12:1-15 You Have Despised The Word Of The Lord](#))

**Pink** comments on David's despising the Word of the LORD...

Ah, it is contempt of the divine authority which is the occasion of all sin—making light of the Law and its Giver, acting as though its precepts were mere trifles, and its threats meaningless.

**So why did David commit adultery with Bathsheba and murder her husband, one of his own "mighty men"** (2Sa 23:1, 8, 39)? Simply put - He **despised** the Word of God. He despised the commandment that said "Do not covet." He **despised** the commandment that said "Do not steal (your neighbor's wife)." He **despised** the commandment that said "Do not commit adultery." He **despised** the commandment that said "Do not commit murder."

The Word of God is given to us to keep us from walking in darkness (and from despising the God of the Word!)...

Ps 119:105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.

Assuming that David obeyed the instructions in Deuteronomy, he would have surely known God's law (and light) regarding another's man's wife (adultery) and life (murder)...

**16** "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.'

**17** "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself (David began to drift from the protecting power of the Word of God in 2Sa 5:12, 13, 1Chr 14:2, 3 - **Beloved of the LORD, are you beginning to slowly, imperceptibly drift away from the protective mooring of His Word of Truth and Life? Are you beginning to believe a lie which leads to death? Then choose to repent and return so that the times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord! Acts 3:19**), lest his heart (the "control center") turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

**18** "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law (the Pentateuch, the first 5 books of Moses) on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

**19** "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life (**How often does he need the Word? Will he ever outgrow his need for the Word? What is the best way to keep the Word with us daily, even moment by moment, that we might be able to take up the shield of faith and deflect the fiery missiles of the evil one?** [Eph 6:16-note, cp relationship between Word and Faith in Ro 10:17-note] See **Memorizing His Word, Memory Verses by Topic**, cp Ps 119:9, 11), that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by

carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,

**20** that his heart (Notice the repetition of the "heart") may not be lifted up above his countrymen (A good "definition" of pride = a heart lifted up above others!) and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel (**Notice that one's lineage is impacted by the decisions of the father!**). (Deut 17:16-20)

**R A Torrey** (Treasury of Scripture Knowledge)...

Those who despise the Word and law of God, despise God Himself, and will assuredly suffer for such contempt.

**Rossier...**

David had preferred his sin to God. What a terrible thing! Do our consciences have nothing to say to us? Every natural heart has lusts that attract it. By "lusts" we mean not only the defiling things of the world but also "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" — pleasures, vanity, and ambition. These things find easy access into a Christian's heart. How many days and years often pass without our shutting the door to them! Every time we open the door to this visitor we are despising the Lord Himself. This is the reason for God's judgment on His servant here. The graces granted to David were earthly; ours are "spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ." (Ep 1:3) Do our hearts value these things so much that they offer no asylum to this "traveler"? The Lord's discipline and judgment will fall on us in the measure that we receive or reject this visitor.

**Have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon** - This fact (inspired by God in David's mouth) would serve to rebut any defense by David that it was not he but the enemy who had killed Uriah. If Nathan had stopped at "**you have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword**", David might have responded with the rationalization that "I wasn't even present when Uriah was killed. How could I possibly be guilty of his death by sword?"

### **APPLICATION:** **ARE YOU DESPISING THE WORD OF THE LORD?**

**Let's apply this passage to our lives. The question is do you despise (or have little regard for) the Word of God in your life? You may be thinking "Of course not. I would never despise His holy Word!" If you are unsure, ask yourself how much time do you spend reading and studying it in a given week. The truth is that if you say almost no time at all, you are in effect despising the Word of the Lord!**

**2Samuel 12:10** Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.':

- **The sword:** 2Sa 13:28,29 18:14,15,33 1Ki 2:23, 24, 25 Am 7:9 Mt 26:52
- **Because:** Nu 11:20 1Sa 2:30 Mal 1:6,7 Mt 6:24 Ro 2:4 1Th 4:8
- **Have taken:** Ge 20:3 Pr 6:32,33

### **THE CONSEQUENCES OF BAD CHOICES**

Beloved it behooves us all to keep in mind that while we are free to choose the sin, cannot choose the consequences!

**F B Meyer**

Sin may be forgiven (2Sa 12:13), as David's was, and yet a long train of sad consequences ensue. The law of cause and effect will follow on, with its linked chain of disaster: though God's mercy to his erring and repentant children will be shown, in converting the results of their sin into the fires of their purification; in setting alleviation of the tenderest sort against their afflictions; and in finally staying the further outworking of evil. O soul of man, this is solemn reading for us; it is the inner story of God's dealing with his own. As He dealt with David, He will deal with us. He will forgive, but He may have to use the rod; He may restore to his favour, and yet permit us to drink the bitter waters which our sin has tapped. Be meek, patient, and submissive; thou wilt come forth out of the ordeal a white soul, and men shall learn through thy experiences the goodness and

severity of God. Forgiven men may have to reap as they have sown. ([The Stripes of the Children of Men](#))

**Blaikie** comments that...

Here we find a great principle in the moral government of God, —

**correspondence between  
an offence and its retribution.**

Of this many instances occur in the Old Testament. **Jacob** deceived his father; he was deceived by his own sons. **Lot** made a worldly choice; in the world's ruin he was overwhelmed. So **David** having slain Uriah with the sword, the sword was never to depart from him. He had robbed Uriah of his wife; his neighbours would in like manner rob and dishonour him. He had disturbed the purity of the family relation; his own house was to become a den of pollution. He had mingled deceit and treachery with his actions; deceit and treachery would be practised towards him. What a sad and ominous prospect!

Men naturally look for peace in old age; the evening of life is expected to be calm. But for him there was to be no calm; and his trial was to fall on the tenderest part of his nature. He had a strong affection for his children; in that very feeling he was to be wounded, and that, too, all his life long.

**Oh let not any suppose that because God's children are saved by His mercy from eternal punishment, it is a light thing for them to despise the commandments of the Lord!**

"Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that thy fear is not in Me, saith the Lord of hosts." (Jer 2:19KJV) ([An Exposition of 2Samuel](#))

**The sword shall never depart** - Observe that David's sowing of sin by the sword (**struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword...have killed him with the sword**.... 2Sa 12:9) would reap a similar harvest. And just as Nathan had prophesied (and David also may have "foretold" when he called for fourfold restitution [2Sa 12:6] - David's son by Bathsheba was the first of the four to die [2Sa 12:14, 15]) we see [Absalom](#) avenge [Amnon's](#) rape of his sister [Tamar](#) (Observe Amnon taking a woman that was forbidden, just as his father had done!) by striking Amnon and putting him to death (see 2Sa 13:28, 29). We see [Joab](#) and his armor bearers strike Absalom and kill him (2Sa 18:14,15), which prompted a painful mourning from King David (he would have surely given anything to go back and reverse that night he looked at Bathsheba but it was too little, too late as they say)...

The king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And thus he said as he walked, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2Sa 18:33)

And finally we see King Solomon order the death of David's other son [Adonijah](#) (2Ki 2:23, 24, 25). While David did not live to see Adonijah's death, he must surely have been aware that his passing of the reign to his son Solomon was tantamount to passing a death sentence on his eldest son Adonijah.

**Solomon** penned words that ironically were an apt description of the harvest from David's sins...

The one who commits adultery with a woman is **lacking sense**; He who would destroy himself does it. Wounds and disgrace he will find, and his reproach will not be blotted out. (Pr 6:32, 33-note)

Had David only known that one glance allowed to turn into a lingering, lustful (lust filled) gaze on a spring evening would set in motion a lifelong avalanche of death, suffering and pain! How vital is it that we read and heed David's tragic story of the lifelong cost for just a moment of pleasure! This is why Paul writes the warning in first Corinthians...

**Now these things happened** as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved....**Now these things happened** to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1Cor 10:6, 11)

**Comment:** What "things"? In context Paul is referring to the sequelae of sin in the life of rebellious Israel, but by way of application, he is referring to the instructive lessons in the lives of the Old Testament saints. We do well to study them often, so that we might be motivated to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age (Titus 2:12-note).

**Zeisler** comments...

Some people think of the consequences from God as random punishments from an angry deity. "I did something that made God mad, and that's why I got hit by lightning," or, "That's why I contracted this disease."



It's rare that God directs specific negative events at a person as consequences for sin. In Romans 1, when we read of the descent of a culture into wickedness, it says God "gave them over" and let rebels have what they wanted. We create consequences for ourselves. We set in motion terrible things that have their own life, that bring their own hurt.

That's exactly what Nathan was predicting here. Three of David's sons would end up dying untimely deaths. Two of those were acting just like their father. They learned of his lust, lies, and violence, and they acted similarly. [\(YOU HAVE DESPISED THE WORD OF THE LORD\)](#)

**Never** - This word "**never**" must have been painful to David. Beloved, we need to heed this warning. While every bad choice has the potential for negative consequences, some bad choices may bring about consequences that never go away (until glory)! **That truth should cause each of us to "think twice" before we make the foolish choice to willfully, wantonly leap into the next sin!**

**MacArthur** comments that...

David's tragic punishment was a lingering one. Since Uriah was killed by violence, the house of David would be continually plagued by violence. These words anticipated the violent deaths of **Amnon** (2Sa 13:28, 29), **Absalom** (18:14, 15), and **Adonijah** (1Ki 2:24, 25).

## **PRESUMPTUOUS SIN SHOWS WE DESPISE GOD!**

**Because** - Explains why the sword would never depart from David.

**You have despised Me** - In the previous verse God declared David had despised His Word and here it is His Person, showing the close linkage between the Word of God and God of the Word (cp the Incarnate Word, John 1:1, 2). When we sin (especially when like David we know better), we sin against His Word and His Person! This truth should cause us all to pause and reflect on the insanity and insolence of that sin we are presently being tempted to presumptuously commit! We need to recall that the payment for this sin is death and it cost God His Son's death to redeem us of our debt. **Next time you are being tempted to commit a willful sin, think about the cost to God, the Cross of Christ and the potential "reverberations" (consequences) of that sin in the lives of those we love. You might even take time to write these thoughts down in the midst of the battle with lust which is tempting you to gratify your flesh. This simple pause, might serve to deflate the power of that strong enticement of temptation to sin!**

**Solomon** describes one who **despises** God as **devious**...

He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD (Clearly David was not walking in the fear of the LORD during these dark days before he confessed), but he who is devious (perverse) (**Lxx** = skoliazō = to be crooked, to be perverse) in his ways **despises** (**Hebrew** = bazah; **Lxx** = atimazō = to dishonor) Him. (Proverbs 14:2)

**Comment:** Solomon's proverb is an apt description of his father David devious ways (sinned in secret and then covered it) before he confessed and repented of his sins.

**2Samuel 12:11** "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight:

- **I will raise up evil:** 2Sa 13:1-14,28,29 15:6,10
- **I will even take:** 2Sa 16:21,22 Dt 28:30 Ezek 14:9 20:25,26 Hos 4:13,14

## **PLEASURES OF SIN FOR A SEASON... PAIN OF CONSEQUENCES FOR A LIFETIME!**

**Behold** - This interjection always serves to heighten the reader's attention. It says "*Pay close attention to what you are getting ready to read!*" Why? In this case, if God is bringing evil against the man after His own heart, we had all better realize that God NEVER plays favorites! Because He is holy, He has to repay the wages of sin. The NT Scriptures clearly teach that this "repayment" for sin must be with one's life (one's life blood) and it will be either the unrepentant sinner's life or the death of the sinless Lamb of God Who died in place of (substitutionary atonement) all who place their faith in Him so that they do not have die for their own sins. And so fittingly John the Baptizer begins his proclamation with that same word, behold - "**Behold**, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world." (Jn 1:29)

**I will raise up evil** - While God is not the Author of evil, He will allow evil to have its sway in David's life as subsequent chapters prove.

## LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

Three of David's sons will repeat the sins of their father. **Amnon** will rape Tamar (2Sa 13:8-14). **Absalom** will take the royal harem (2Sa 16:22). **Adonijah** will seek to take his deceased father's concubine (1Ki 2:13, 14, 15, 16, 17).

**I will even take your wives...and give them** - Is God the Author evil? Clearly He is not. He is the essence of light and in Him there is absolutely no darkness. But He does allow evil to take its course.

God says in essence "You have sowed to the flesh and shall reap the corruption of that sowing." (Gal 6:8). As Paul said almost one thousand years later (underscoring the timeless principle!)...

Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. (1Co 10:6)

**Comment:** Paul is saying that the OT examples of Israel's sin (and David would be included) should serve as strong impediments against making their mistake of setting our hearts on things that God calls evil. Remember that the rebellious nation of Israel is a "type" of our flesh, that anti-God tendency that is still resident in every redeemed man. And thus a blood bought, heaven bound, saint can foolishly turn his freedom into licentiousness and begin to seek self-gratification instead of Spirit-empowered self-denial, with the result that he becomes self-deceived and in bondage to presumptuous sins (see Ps 19:13). Observe how deceived Israel became when they grumbled about God's provision of manna (Nu11:4,5,6), thinking that had been "free" in Egypt! How quickly we forget! We must be very careful and realize that when we test God's goodness and say His provision is not enough and/or our lot which He has allowed is not fair, we act just like faithless Israel. And if we continue to rebel the time will come when He will give us over to a depraved mind to do those things which are not proper and we won't even know it because we have become so thoroughly deceived. Beloved, it is a frightening thought that our old flesh nature could be that corrupt.

**R A Torrey** explains what God is saying in essence is that...

"In the course of My providence ([See providence of God](#)) I will permit this to be done." Such phrases in Scripture do not mean that God either does or can do evil Himself, but only that He permits such evil to be done as He foresaw would be done, and which, had He pleased, He might have prevented. (**Treasury of Scripture Knowledge**)

**He will lie with your wives in broad daylight** - We see this fulfilled during the rebellion of David's son Absalom...

So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. (2Sa 16:22)

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## AN AFFAIR OR ADULTERY?

**David's "AFFAIR" was ADULTERY!**

When I was growing up, "**adultery**" was a word one whispered. Today the word is "**affair**," and it's a subtle change. **Affair** has an air of mystery about it, and romance, and excitement. Radio, television, movies, books—all of the media—assume or encourage the affair. It's easy to fall into the trap: everyone is doing it, so it must be OK. Unless, of course, you believe in keeping the laws of God.

For whatever reason, keeping the seventh commandment is becoming more difficult for more and more Christians. In fact, Allan Petersen begins his new book, [The Myth of Greener Grass](#), with a question: "*Is Anyone Faithful Anymore*" And it's a good question. He writes that in his 38 years of traveling ministry he has counseled pastors, pastors' wives, missionaries, Sunday school teachers, Christian counselors, and church members who reflect the increasing incidence of extramarital affairs among professing Christian people. There is a "*tendency to find reasons to support this behavior, even though those reasons might be contrary to the moral and biblical convictions we have long held.*"

Today we want to talk about **relationships**, not **sin**. Peterson points out the relationship of David and Bathsheba, and the results of their affair. The lessons we can learn from the story of David, a man of God who fell into sin, apply to all of us, men and women alike. Here are some of the, pointed out by Petersen:

1. No one, however chosen, blessed, and used of God, is immune to an extramarital affair.
2. Anyone, regardless of how many victories he has won, can fall disastrously. (1Co 10:12)
3. The act of infidelity is the result of uncontrolled desires, thoughts, and fantasies. (Jas 1:14,15, 2Co 10:3, 4, 5, Php 4:8, 9)
4. Your body is your servant or it becomes your master. (2Pe 2:19, Pr 5:22)
5. A Christian who falls will excuse, rationalize, and conceal, the same as anyone else. (cp 2Sa 12:5, 6, 7, 8ff)
6. Sin can be enjoyable but it can never be successfully covered. (Heb 11:25, Nu 32:23, Pr 28:13)
7. One night of passion can spark years of family pain. (2Sa 11:1, 2, 3, 4, 2Sa 12:10 ~ "never depart"!)
8. Failure is neither fatal nor final. (2Sa 12:13)

Source unknown

**2Samuel 12:12 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun:**

- **Secretly:** 2Sa 11:4,8,13,15 Ec 12:14 Lk 12:1,2 1Co 4:5

### SECRET SIN ON EARTH... OPEN SCANDAL IN HEAVEN

**Indeed** - This passage is simply amplifying the preceding description of God giving David's concubines into the hand of his son Absalom who had relations with them in view of all Israel.

**John MacArthur** has a discussion entitled "Nothing Safe About Secret Sin" in which he asks the piercing question...

Do you want to know who you really are? Take a hard look at your private life--especially your innermost thoughts. Gaze into the mirror of God's Word, and allow it to disclose and correct the real thoughts and motives of your heart. ([Nothing Safe about Secret Sin](#))

**Secretly** (05643) ([cether/seter](#) from **cathar** = hide with thought of protection Ex 3:6, 1Sa 20:5, 1Ki17:3) speaks of a covering, veil, i.e., that which covers something to make it secret from another, as a figurative extension of a veil as a cloth covering -- God is seen in approaching storm, making darkness His hiding place Ps 18:11.

**NIDOTT** adds that **seter**

conveys a meaning of secret activity, like Abigail covertly aiding David (1Sa 25:20). More commonly, this activity is evil or malicious, as in the case of David's adultery with Bathsheba (2Sa 12:12), idolatry and murder committed in secret (Dt 27:15, 24), or slanderous accusations made in secret (Ps 101:5). However, Job recognized human sin can never be kept secret from God, who knows all things (Job 24:15). On one occasion, the psalmist uses סֵתֶר to describe the mystery of divine activity in human procreation (Ps 139:15). (VanGemeren, W. New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis 3:302. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House)

The root verb **satar** is used to hide the sin of adultery...

(If) A man has intercourse with her (another man's straying, unfaithful wife - Nu 5:12) and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband and she is **undetected** (satar), although she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act (Nu 5:13 - read context Nu 5:14-30 for how her "secret sin" of adultery is exposed or brought to the light!).

**Job** uses **seter**

The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, Saying, 'No eye will see me.' And he disguises his face. (Job 24:15)

Setzer - 37v: Dt 13:6 27:15,24 28:57 32:38 Jdg3:19 1Sa19:2 25:20 2Sa12:12 Job13:10 22:14 24:15 31:27 40:21 Ps18:11 27:5 31:20 32:7 61:4 81:7 91:1 101:5 119:114 139:15 Pr9:17 21:14 25:23 Song 2:14 Isa4:6 16:4 28:17 32:2 45:19 48:16 Je37:17 38:16 40:15

## SECRET SINS PUBLIC CONSEQUENCES

**But I will do this thing before all Israel and under the sun** - The former phrase clearly refers to the nation of Israel, a prophecy that was fulfilled in David's day. The latter phrase under the sun implies that it will be known wherever the sun shines, which has been fulfilled in that this sad story is read in Bible around the world!

This truth also indicates that David will reap not just what he has sown, but more than he has sown. In other words, he will reap "with interest." Such is the nature of the consequences of sowing evil seeds as pictured by the prophet Hosea who wrote to faithless Israel...

They sow the **wind** (especially idolatry) and they reap the **whirlwind**. (Hosea 8:7)

**Cornerstone Biblical Commentary:** The imagery suggests that what Israel has done will come back on them with overwhelming force

**KJV Bible Commentary:** In their defection, they have sown the seed of their defeat and undoing. However, they will not reap what they have sown but much worse, the harvest of what they have sown. They have sown a **wind** (Heb rūach), but will reap a **hurricane** (Heb sūpah). They will be swept away in the judgment of God, and any benefits that they desired would fall to the hands of the strangers to whom God would deliver them.

**Job** also reminds us of the law of the harvest...

According to what I have seen, those who **plow iniquity** and those who **sow trouble** (Septuagint - Lxx = **odune** means physical suffering or misery, consuming grief, sorrow, mental pain, distress) **harvest** (reap) it (**What?** Iniquity! Trouble!). (Job 4:8)

**Comment:** What an incredible picture this passage paints. Plowing suggests the idea of deliberately preparing (or cultivating) life for evil! The idea is that even before the farmer sows his seeds, he expends considerable effort in preparing the soil. In a similar manner, the one who seeks to **plow iniquity**, is purposefully preparing for his wicked seeds (cp Ro 13:14-note)! The idea of sowing is that the type of seed sown determines the kind of harvest reaped (later and greater ~ a "bumper crop" of suffering and misery!)

**W A Criswell** issues a warning noting that...

Practitioners of sin who profess to be children of God should contemplate carefully the response of God to David. David sinned in relative privacy and secrecy. But God's judgment upon him was public, before "all Israel" and even "the sun." The universality of that judgment may be observed in that every generation has read of it for 3,000 years! The explanation for the severity of this judgment is given in the first part of 2Sa 12:14.

**Warren Wiersbe** reminds us that...

God will forgive our sins.

### In His grace He forgives In His government we face the consequences.

God requires that we reap what we sow. Temptation is not sin, but it is a sin to cultivate temptation and yield to it. Sin is usually a process, and David went through several stages that led to his sin. First, David laid down his armor (2Sa 11). Do you put on the spiritual armor? (Eph. 6). We put it on through prayer. We need to come to the Lord each morning and put on the armor. Second, David was not looking to God. He was looking at Bathsheba. We need to make sure our bodies belong to God. After you put on your armor, turn yourself completely over to Him (Ro 12:1). Third, David did not watch and pray. The flesh is weak. As we mature in the Christian life, sin becomes more subtle. We must guard against this. Fourth, David was alone. He was not fellowshiping with the saints. When people try to rely solely on themselves, they usually fail. Fifth, David ignored God's Word. The Word keeps us clean. Finally, David did not depend upon the Spirit. We need to yield to Him. If you do, you will conquer sin. Commit these six stages to memory and read Ephesians 6. Don't make the same mistakes David made. Never cultivate a temptation with a view to yielding to sin. Meditate on the Word of God, obey it and guard your heart with its truth. Stay in fellowship with the Lord. ([Psalm 51:18-19 The High Cost of Conquering](#))

2Samuel 12:13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die:

- **David:** 1Sa 15:20,24 1Ki 13:4 21:20 22:8 2Ki 1:9 2Ch 16:10 24:20, 21, 22 2Chr 25:16 Mt 14:3, 4, 5,10
- **sinned against the LORD:** 2Sa 24:10 1Sa 15:24,25,30 Job 7:20 33:27 Ps 32:3, 4, 5 51:4 Pr 25:12 Pr 28:13 Lk 15:21 Ac 2:37 1Jn 1:8, 9, 10
- **The LORD:** Job 7:21 Ps 32:1,2 130:3,4 Isa 6:5, 6, 7 38:17 43:24 44:22 Lam 3:32 Mic 7:18,19 Zech 3:4 Heb 9:26 1Jn 1:7,9 2:1 Rev 1:5
- **You shall not die:** Lev 20:10 Nu 35:31, 32, 33 Ps 51:16 Acts 13:38,39 Ro 8:33,34
- **See Torrey's topics** [Pardon](#); [Repentance](#))

## TRUE CONFESSION

**Then** - When? Having been pierced to the core by Nathan's parable and subsequent stinging rebuke describing his sins and the consequences of his sins. Finally, David's proud, rebellious heart was broken and contrite before His LORD (Ps 51:17-[note](#)).

**I have sinned against the LORD** - No excuses. No rationalizations. Full and complete recognition of his sin as against God. While David had defiled Uriah's wife and then destroyed Uriah's life, he understood that ultimately his sin was against God. Joseph believed the same truth, but instead of confessing his sin, he declared it to prevent his sin...

(When being enticed and lured by Potiphar's wife Joseph said) There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. **How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?** (Ge 39:9)

**Ray Pritchard** is spot on when he describes...

the time for the king to do the hardest thing anyone can ever do, to look in the mirror and say, **I have sinned.**" Those may be the three hardest words in the English language. No one wants to say, "**I have sinned.**" We would rather do anything than say that. But there is no getting right until we admit how badly we have done wrong. ([How Much Sin Will God Forgive](#))

**David** in Psalm 51 reiterates that his sin is against God...

**Against You, You only, I have sinned** and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You speak and blameless when You judge. (Ps 51:4).

**Spurgeon comments:** The virus of sin lies in its opposition to God: the Psalmist's sense of sin towards others rather tended to increase the force of his feeling of sin against God. All his wrong-doing centered, culminated, and came to a climax, at the foot of the divine throne. To injure our fellow men is sin, mainly because in so doing we violate the law of God. The penitent's heart was so filled with a sense of the wrong done to the Lord Himself, that all other confession was swallowed up in a broken-hearted acknowledgment of offence against Him.

**And done this evil in thy sight.** To commit treason in the very court of the king and before his eye is impudence indeed: David felt that his sin was committed in all its filthiness while Jehovah Himself looked on. None but a child of God cares for the eye of God, but where there is grace in the soul it reflects a fearful guilt upon every evil act, when we remember that the God Whom we offend was present when the trespass was committed.

**That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.** He could not present any argument against divine justice, if it proceeded at once to condemn him and punish him for his crime. His own confession, and the judge's own witness of the whole transaction, placed the transgression beyond all question or debate; the iniquity was indisputably committed, and was unquestionably a foul wrong, and therefore the course of justice was clear and beyond all controversy.

**I HAVE SINNED...**  
**BUT...**

**King Saul** had given a similar confession after Samuel confronted his overt disobedience...

**Then** (Context - 1Sa 15:14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23) Saul said to Samuel, "**I have sinned**; I have indeed transgressed the command of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people (**Note**: Saul should have feared God and obeyed HIS voice!) and listened to their voice. (1Sa 15:24)

Then (1Sa 15:25 26 27 28 29) he said, "**I have sinned**; but please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and go back with me, that I may worship the LORD your God." (1Sa 15:30)

**Matthew Henry helps us understand the difference between the confession of David and the confession of Saul:** There were several signs of hypocrisy in Saul's repentance. (1) He besought Samuel only, and seemed most anxious to stand right in his opinion, and to gain his favor. (2) He excuses his fault, even when confessing it; that is never the way of a true penitent. (3) All his care was to save his credit, and preserve his interest in the people. Men are fickle and alter their minds, feeble and cannot effect their purposes; something happens they could not foresee, by which their measures are broken; but with God it is not so. The Strength of Israel will not lie.

**Pulpit Commentary:** Saul had used the same words, and had meant very little by them; nor had he added "against Jehovah," because his purpose was to appease Samuel, and prevail upon him not to disgrace him before the people. David's confession came from the heart. There is no excuse-making, no attempt at lessening his fault, no desire to evade punishment. Ps 51:1 2 3 4 5ff is the lasting testimony, not only to the reality, but to the tenderness of his repentance, and we may even feel here that confession was to him a relief. The deep internal wound was at length disclosed, and healing had become possible. Up to this time he had shut God away from his heart, and so there had been no remedy for a soul diseased. It was because his sorrow was genuine that comfort was not delayed.

**Blaikie** comments that...

We cannot pass from this aspect of David's case without marking the terrible power of self-deception. Nothing blinds men so much to the real character of a sin as the fact that it is their own. Let it be presented to them in the light of another man's sin, and they are shocked. It is easy for one's self-love to weave a veil of fair embroidery, and cast it over those deeds about which one is somewhat uncomfortable. It is easy to devise for ourselves this excuse and that, and lay stress on one excuse and another that may lessen the appearance of criminality. But nothing is more to be deprecated, nothing more to be deplored, than success in that very process. Happy for you if a Nathan is sent to you in time to tear to rags your elaborate embroidery, and lay bare the essential vileness of your deed! Happy for you if your conscience is made to assert its authority, and cry to you with its awful voice, "Thou art the man!" For if you live and die in your fool's paradise, excusing every sin, and saying peace, peace, when there is no peace, there is nothing for you but the rude awakening of the day of judgment, when the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies! ([An Exposition of 2 Samuel](#))

**Thomas Scott**

The dormant spark of divine grace in David's heart now began to rekindle, and before this plain and faithful statement of facts, in the name of God, his evasions vanished, and his guilt appeared in all its magnitude. He therefore was far from resenting the pointed rebuke of the prophet, or attempting any palliation of his conduct; but, in deep humiliation of heart, he confessed, '**I have sinned against the Lord**.' The words are few; but the event proved them to have been the language of genuine repentance, which regards sin as committed against the authority and glory of the Lord, whether or not it have occasioned evil to any fellow-creature.

**Pulpit Homiletic...**

The guilty king sat in silence till the prophet had delivered his charge. The time was brief, but the power accompanying the words was Divine. Swifter than lightning the spell of hypocritical concealment was broken. The bonds in which the unholy passion had long held the soul were snapped asunder. The eye of conscience, turning in upon self, gave fresh life to the old suppressed loyalty to righteousness and God, and, as a consequence, the confession came, "I have sinned against the Lord." The question as to whether the historian here simply gives a summary of what passed, and intended to include also the fifty-first psalm, or whether literally this is all that was said and done, does not affect our purpose. There is here a recognition prompt, unqualified, of sin, not as a fault, a weakness, but of sin as known by conscience and stamped with the curse of God and man. It is also a recognition of sin as against God, not as a wrong done to Uriah, Bathsheba, or Israel, or his own family. The conscience is not indifferent to the injuries done to men, but when fully aroused,



and face to face with sin as sin, it seems to see only God. Hence the expression in Ps. 51:4. Again, there is pain and shame, not because of what men may say or do, not because personal influence will now be weakened, but because it is sin. It is the sin which troubles and appals the truly convicted soul. Moreover, there is abstention from all claim to consideration; no excuse, no palliation. The convicted one can only say, "I have sinned." There is obviously an inward bowing of the spirit before the holy God; an absolute surrender as undone, condemned, helpless, lost. The very brevity of the confession bespeaks the depth of penitential woe. Contrast the wordy confession (1Sa 15:17–25; cf. Lk 15:18, 19; 18:13).

**Wiersbe** notes that...

Saul used the words "**I have sinned**" three times, but didn't mean them (1Sa 15:24, 30; 26:21). David said "I have sinned" at least five times (2Sa 12:13; 24:10, 17 [1Chr. 21:8, 17]; Ps 41:4; 51:4). David was the Prodigal Son of the Old Testament, who repented and "came home" to find forgiveness (Luke 15:18, 21). For others who used these words see Ex 9:27; Nu 22:34; Josh 7:20; 2Sa 19:20; Mt 27:4.

**Keil** notes that **David's**

words are very few, just as in the case of the publican in the Gospel of Luke (Lk 18:13). But that is a good sign of a thoroughly broken spirit....There is no excuse, no cloaking, no palliation of the sin. There is no searching for a loophole,...no pretext put forward, no human weakness pleaded. He acknowledges his guilt openly, candidly, and without prevarication.

## THE REST OF REPENTANCE

**Peter** described the **rest of repentance** calling on his Jewish audience (but applicable to all sinners)...

**Repent** (**Aorist imperative** = Do it now! It is urgent!) therefore and **return** (**Aorist imperative** = Do it now! It is urgent!), that your sins may be wiped away (exaleipho from ek = out, intensive + aleipho = wipe thus to wash or smear completely. To cause something to cease by obliterating any evidence, to eliminate, to do away with), in order that times of refreshing (anapsuxis/anapsyxis from anapsucho/anapsycho = to cool or refresh with a breath) may come from the presence of the Lord and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you (Acts 3:19, 20)

**Comment:** While the ultimate fulfillment of the **times of refreshing** will be when Jesus returns, there is certainly a refreshing associated with having one's sins **wiped away** when one repents. We see this in the life of David who upon restoration of his fellowship with God, followed up his confession by penning the beautiful song, Psalm 51.

**G Campbell Morgan**...

Note the "**also**" in verse 13. A man puts away his own sin when in sincerity he confesses it. That makes it possible for God also to put it away.

**Our sinfulness can sap our joy  
And make us feel far from the Lord;  
Confession and repentance, though,  
Provide the way to be restored.**  
—Sper

**Repentance means hating sin enough to turn from it.**

**Repentance** is a decision to want freedom instead of bondage.

**Repentance** is turning from sin which always results in changed behavior. Repentance is not saying you are sorry and continuing willfully in a sin. Repentance does include the emotion of being sorry but goes much further - it means to be sorry for sin, to hate it, and to forsake it because it displeases God. So don't miss this point - I hate sin and I forsake sin not because it makes me uncomfortable or bring heartache (which it does!), but because it displeases God!

Don't fall into the trap of substituting confession for **repentance**. Don't just say "God really spoke to me on that issue in my life." That means nothing if you don't also do something about that on which He convicted your heart. Let it also change your heart and your behavior and then it is true repentance. Otherwise, it is pure hypocrisy! When is the last time you repented of something? Are you having difficulty thinking of such a time? If you can't remember the last time that happened, you may have become so insensitive to

the Spirit that you don't even seek repentance. If so you need to repent of your unrepentance! A final possibility is that you have never repented and believed the first time and are not truly regenerate. You can't remember when you repented because you have never repented the first time. If it is the latter, than I beg of you, to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be granted a new heart that is able to henceforth repent of sins you commit. Repentance is an ongoing work of the Spirit of God in the believer's life.

**Repentance** is illustrated by the story of the little girl who after witnessing a wedding, asked her mother why the bride had changed her mind? The mother was confused and asked her daughter to explain what she meant, to which the little girl responded "The bride when down the aisle with one man and returned with another man!" An interesting picture of repentance!

**Remorsefulness** is showing sorrow for the past but it does not want to change the future. **Repentance** is also sorrow for the past but it makes a change in heart so that the future will be different. It changes future behavior so that past mistakes won't be repeated. One take away point is that if you mistake confession for repentance, you will never end up with true repentance. If I merely tell God "I've done wrong" and this leads to no change of behavior, it is essentially another type of worldly sorrow as Paul explains...

I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of **repentance** (**metanoia**); for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a **repentance** (**metanoia**) without regret (not feeling sorry about), leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. (2Cor 7:9, 10)

**Sinned against the LORD** - Some more cross references - Ps 32:5 Lev 5:5,16:21 Lev 26:40; Jer 3:13 Dt 30:1,2; Pr 28:13; 1Jn1:9 Nu 5:7 Ezra 10:11 Job 33:27 Pr 28:13 Jer 3:13 2Sa 12:13;2Sa 24:10, Ps 38:18; Lk 15:21.

## FULL FORGIVENESS

**I have taken away your sin** - Nathan seems to speak these words without any delay which underscores the authenticity and completeness of David's repentance. The Law of Moses prescribed death for David's sins (Lev 20:10) but in His grace and mercy, God chose to give life. Notice that God does not say "I **will** take away your sin." It is a past tense, completed action the moment the words were uttered by Nathan. Remember that truth the next time you commit some "horrible" sin and come to Him in conviction, confession and repentance. You have been forgiven. Consequences may remain but the fact is that you are completely forgiven by God. Don't fall into the trap of saying "I can't forgive myself." Think about that statement. Who is the sin against? God. Who alone can forgive sin? God (cp Lk 7:49). Has He forgiven our sin when we genuinely confess and repent? John writes that God forgives "us our sins" and cleanses "us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9) so clearly we are completely forgiven. We must learn to receive and rest in the times of refreshing that come after repenting and returning to the Lord (cp Acts 3:19).

**Taken away** (05674)(**abar**) means to pass over. It refers primarily to spatial movement, to "moving over, through, or away from." **Abar** is used first in Ge. 8:1 where it describes God causing a wind to "pass over on top of" the flood waters (waters that served as a picture of His judgment on the sin of the ancient world) and carry them away.

The Septuagint translates the Hebrew verb **abar** with the rare Greek verb **parabibazo** which means to remove or to put aside. David himself uses this verb in a request of God...

2 Samuel 24:10 Now David's heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please **take away** (parabibazo in the ) the iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

**Comment:** This event was clearly after the events of 2Samuel 11 and 12 and again we see David commit a great sin against God. And while he apparently was forgiven his sin, he again suffered severe consequences that affected the nation of Israel. Read this compelling drama in 2Samuel 24:10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. These events led to the building of the Altar to God in 2Sa 24:25 , 2Sa 24:19-24)

It is in light of God's great grace and mercy to David, that the sweet psalmist was inspired to pen the words of Psalm 32...

A Psalm of David. A Maskil. How blessed is he whose transgression is **forgiven**, Whose sin is **covered**! How blessed is the man to whom the LORD **does not impute iniquity**, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! (Ps 32:1,2)

The **prophet Micah** spoke of the depth and degree of God's forgiveness...

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and **passes over** (Hebrew = **abar** = same verb used of David's sin being taken away) the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His

anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. 19 He will again have compassion on us. He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea.

**Comment:** Notice that God "delights" to show forgiveness! What an incredible truth.

#### **Pulpit Homiletic...**

How long Nathan stood by the prostrate silent king, and whether this confession was the literal whole or not, we do not know; but he saw enough to enable him to say in the name of God, "**The Lord hath put away thy sin**"—a statement clear and unreserved, intended to go home to the smitten heart.

The forgiveness of sin has to do with a personal relation of God to man. It is the restoration of the personal relation of favor and fellowship which had been interrupted by sin. It is conditional on true repentance, the objective ground being the sacrificial death of Christ—under the Old Testament dispensation by anticipation (Ro 3:25-note), and under the New by retrospective reference. God is the sole Judge of the reality of repentance. He looks at the heart. He knew that David's conviction had issued in the state of mind known as true repentance, and foreseeing this before it occurred, he commissioned the prophet to "declare and pronounce" to David, "being penitent," the remission of his sin.

"**Thy sins are forgiven thee!**" Blessed words! How often brought to penitents since our Lord uttered them! But the pardon left untouched the natural consequences of sin referred to in 2Sa 12:19, 20, because a personal relation does not alter the course of the forces which a man sets in motion on earth by his sin.

### **PENALTY REMITTED**

**You shall not die** - Why not? Because he was forgiven. When God forgives sin, He forgives it completely (see Micah 7:18, 19 above). Forgiveness however does not necessarily remove the consequences of sin as the remainder of David's life demonstrates.

><>><>><>

**Flyleaf Wisdom** - All right, Mary, I confess. While I was a guest at your home in Manila, I used your Bible one day for my devotions. When I opened it, I saw these words written on the flyleaf:

### **Acknowledgment. Acceptance. Adjustment.**

Those words express the steps that believers in Christ need to take when they receive bad news. I see these actions illustrated in the life of David.

**Acknowledgment.** When David was confronted by Nathan about his sin, he admitted his guilt (2Samuel 12:13). When we are faced with a problem, whether it's the result of our sin or not, it's futile to run from the truth.

**Acceptance.** When his infant son died as punishment for his sin with Bathsheba, David accepted it as God's will (2Sa 12:19 20 21 22 23) and learned from it. We too need to see difficulties as opportunities to trust God and to grow spiritually (James 1:2 3 4).

**Adjustment.** David turned to the Lord for forgiveness and help, and he later wrote about what he had learned (Psalm 32:1 2). For us, we may need to ask the Lord for the ability to make a lifestyle change or to take some specific action.

Have you been hit hard by bad news? These steps from Mary's Bible can help you to handle it in a way that will please the Lord and result in good. —David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Day by day and with each passing moment,  
Strength I find to meet my trials here;  
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,  
I've no cause for worry or for fear. --Berg

**God takes us into His darkroom  
to develop our character**

><>><>><>

**Space Junk** - Orbiting our planet at speeds more than 4.5 miles per second is a growing collection of space junk. Nuts, bolts, and other discarded debris from space flights are presenting a real hazard to future spacecraft. Their sheer speed makes the tiniest object strike with the impact of a bullet. During one of the shuttle missions, a speck of paint created a pit a quarter-inch wide in a window of the craft.

One study revealed that there are 110,000 objects larger than 1 centimeter in orbit. Their combined weight is 4 million pounds! To avoid a space junk disaster, the US Space Command monitors orbiting debris for NASA.

Sinful choices create their own kind of junk—unintended consequences. When Achan stole and hid forbidden booty, it cost him his life (Joshua 7). After King David committed adultery and murder, family discord followed (2Sa 15-18).

Do you have any “junk” in your life? Sin’s consequences have a way of accumulating. When we confess our sins to God, He promises to forgive and cleanse us (1 John 1:9). For those we have hurt, we can seek ways of righting wrongs through restitution (Luke 19:1-8). The God of grace will give us wisdom in dealing with bad decisions from our past and help us to make good ones in the future. —Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What shame can overwhelm the soul  
Because we’ve chosen paths of sin!  
But if we humbly call on God,  
He’ll grant anew His peace within.  
—D. De Haan

**The law of sowing and reaping  
has never been repealed**

**2Samuel 12:14 "However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." (**

**Because of this deed:** Ne 5:9 Ps 74:10 Isa 52:5 Ezek 36:20, 21, 22, 23 Mt 18:7 Ro 2:24

**The child:** Ps 89:31, 32, 33 94:12 Pr 3:11,12 Am 3:2 1Co 11:32 Heb 12:6 Rev 3:19

## **THE HIGH COST OF SIN!**

**Warren Wiersbe** recalls that...

Dr. William Culbertson, late president of Moody Bible Institute, sometimes ended his public prayers with, “And Lord, help us bear the consequence of forgiven sin and to end well.” There are consequences to forgiven sin; for though God in His grace cleanses us, God in His government says, “You will reap what you have sown.” After King David confessed his sin, the Prophet Nathan assured him that the Lord had put away his sin, but the rest of his days, David suffered the tragic consequences of what he had done. But when God establishes His kingdom on earth, He will restore His people, renew the land, and give His people a new beginning that will cause them to forget their past disobedience and focus on praising the Lord and glorifying His name. Jehovah is “the God of hope.” Therefore, He can fill us with “all joy and peace in believing” so that we can “abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Ro 15:13NKJV). Is that your experience today? ([Wiersbe, W. W. Be concerned](#))

**The enemies of the LORD blaspheme** - David was the visible head and earthly representative of Jehovah’s government on earth and for that reason he must be punished.

The enemies blasphemed in David’s day and continue to do so in our day because they read this story in the Bible. **J Vernon McGee** wrote that...

When I was a pastor in downtown Los Angeles, there were many times when some unbeliever or skeptic came to me and said, “How could God choose a man like David?” They would actually leer at me while waiting for my reply. The enemy is still blaspheming. God is going to take David to the woodshed. ([2 Samuel 12:10-21](#))

This passage reminds one of the prominent Christian ministry scandals in recent years which have brought great shame to the church of God. Each time a prominent servant of God has fallen into sin, the news media seems to have relished telling the lurid details.

**The child...shall surely die** - Who sinned? David. Who was forgiven of his sin? David. Who died? David's child. Why? Is God being fair? Always! And neither Nathan or David accuse God of being unfair. They see the child's death as congruent with David's sin - David slept with Bathsheba who did not belong to him and brought forth new life which cannot belong to David.

**Steve Zeisler**

Let me make a couple of observations in conclusion. First, the record suggests that David was never again a great king. He had been a remarkable ruler and a brilliant general, but he declined in stature from this time forward.

On the other hand, he grew and deepened as a man of God. Most of the psalms people have loved in every generation for three thousand years were written as David reflected on what he had learned throughout his life. David was restored as an intimate of God. He was once again the sweet singer of Israel. He could lead others in genuine worship and offer hope to the failed and broken.

History does not remember David as a failure. Neither Jews nor Christians, when they tell David's story, turn primarily to this account. It was not the center of David's life story. He was a man whose life is summarized more by his psalms than by his failures, a man who wrestled with God, a man who loved God. He is, by any standard, one of the greatest and most influential figures in human history. My son is named David in honor of King David.

The only thing Nathan had to persuade David with was God's word, and David assented. He could have refused. But the voice of one man saying God's words changed everything. ([YOU HAVE DESPISED THE WORD OF THE LORD](#))

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**NAIL HOLES** - "I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and You forgave the iniquity of my sin." - Psalm 32:5

All sin carries a price tag. Its consequences may range from minor to major, but the bill always comes due.

### **Somebody always pays.**

There's a story about a boy whose father pounded a nail in the barn door every time the boy did something wrong. Soon there were many nails. Then one day the boy accepted Christ as Savior and began living for Him. To impress upon his son the wonder of being forgiven, the father took him to the barn and pulled out every nail from the door. "That is what it means to have all your sins forgiven," he said. "They are gone forever."

The boy was deeply impressed. Then looking at the door he asked, "But Father, how can I get rid of the holes?"

"I'm sorry," said the father, "but they will remain."

The psalmist David paid dearly for committing adultery with Bathsheba and engineering her husband's death to cover up his sin. Guilt sapped his strength (Ps. 32:3, 4). Even though he confessed his sin, and God "removed the nail," David carried with him a deep sorrow (2Sa 12:15 16 17). But this did not rob him of the blessedness or forgiveness.

Even though we may have to live with the consequences of sin, we who have trusted in Christ as the sacrifice for our sins can rejoice in His complete forgiveness. -- D D H ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

How blest is he whose trespass  
Has freely been forgiven,  
Whose sin is wholly covered  
Before the sight of heaven.-- Psalter

**Although God heals the wounds of sin,  
scars may remain.**