



... and was unto him as a daughter...

Part Two – David is Apprised of His Sin

¹ And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. ² The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: ³ But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. ⁴ And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. ⁵ And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: ⁶ And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. ⁷ And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. (2 Sam 12:1-7)

As we saw in the previous devotion of 14th of August, David failed in a seemingly casual manner to fulfill his duty to lead his army in battle, but remained, instead, in the comfort of his palace from which he went to spy upon Bathsheba taking a bath in her courtyard. This led to adultery and finally to murder of Uriah. A small lapse in duty can have grave consequences, not just for the offender, but those who suffer under his leadership. We shall see that God does ultimately forgive David, but the legacy of his fatal lapse of duty (and the consequent sins engendered) will plague Israel for the duration of King David's reign. There will be a great contrast drawn for our learning between King David's legacy of sin, and the reign of righteousness of the coming Son of David (as was accounted the Son of God, Jesus Christ).

It is amazing to our consciences that a man can sin so reprehensibly and still feel no guilt of conscience unless reminded of the sin by the preacher. It brings to light the egregious sins so common in America today for which few feel guilt. They do not feel guilt because the preachers of America have failed to allow Judgment to begin in the House of the Lord. They have remained silent, and sometimes even abetted, concerning the present-day sins of abortion, homosexuality, and adultery (not to mention the irreverent and immodest dress of our people).

Nathan was the Court Prophet of David's reign. He wrote the histories of both the reign of David and of Solomon. David later named a son 'Nathan' most likely in

honor of this courageous and Godly prophet. As we see in verses 1-7 above, Nathan comes to David with a parable following David's double sins of adultery and murder. Though polygamy was never approved of God, David had more than one wife. He was a wealthy monarch who could afford the luxury, if not the nagging! So Nathan tells a story that perfectly reflects a rich man with many wives as compared with a poor man with only one – and that ONE being the treasure of his life.

1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him...

From Nathan's parable, we learn more than one lesson. First, we learn that the words of a prophet are not the words of God unless God SENDS him; secondly, we see that David still retains a high sense of justice when told of the injustice done to the poor man. It is possible for a man to commit serious sins without being given over to a reprobate mind in God's eyes. He may still be salvaged if a sense of conscience remains and has not been *seared as with a hot iron*. (1 Tim 4:2) We see in the parable that David's offense began with a lapse of duty, led to covetousness of another man's wife, then to adultery, and finally culminated in murder. Just as the one who tells a small lie may feel his offense small, that small lie will require a growing host of other lies to cover the first. In the beginning of the parable, David is unable to see himself in the parable and is incensed with righteous indignation at the greed of the rich man. His sense of justice is an OUTWARD, and not an INWARD, sense. We may all see our image reflected in the character of David.

Even if we have not committed an open act of adultery, every one of us has lusted in his heart. Even if we have not had a Uriah slain, we have hated another in our souls. We are not better than David, so do not even allow your imaginations to consider it so!

David's anger is incensed against the rich man¹, and he proclaims a fitting punishment for such a one – *5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: 6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.* David had taken a poor man's lamb (Bathsheba) while he had a full court of wives and concubines. He took no pity on Uriah because he was blinded by his desire to cover his own sins. Of course, no man can cover his sins. Like the leprosy of Naaman, it is an insidious progression of deformity and outrageous odor that will eventually reveal itself when it is the most disgusting in nature. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* (Gal 6:7) *ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.* (Num 32:23b) By the way, the wages of sin is death, and every reader of this devotion has sinned; therefore, we all DESERVE the penalty of death. However, owing to the unmerited grace of God, we have a Savior whose substitutionary death paid that penalty for all who receive Him and are the called according to His purpose.

David has accurately and justly pronounced judgment upon his own sin unwittingly! But now comes the hard and pitiful moment of awakening: *And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.*

¹ It is ever so easy to see sin in others; when you do, examine your own behavior the more closely.

There is a more subtle lesson in this parable and approach of Nathan that may go unnoticed without a deeper reflection. You will recall that our Lord told the Woman at Jacob's Well this famous prophecy: *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* (John 4:23-24) This fact is fully illustrated in Nathan's approach to David.

We have churches today whose approach is full of biblical truth, but sadly lacking in Spirit. Or, otherwise, we have churches whose approach is full of some spirit, but lacking on the side of truth. The happy union of the two is desperately necessary to convict of sin. Nathan knows that he must follow the Word of God as directed; but he also knows that to simply accuse David of the enormity of his sin will simply cause him to become defense. So he redirects the sin of David upon an fictional character at whom David can look with an unjaundiced eye. Once he pronounces the judgment against that character, it is an easy step to connect David to the sin. This is intelligent and thoughtful evangelism. Sinners are not generally converted by pounding the on the head with a Bible and telling them they are going to Hell. At such a threat, they will simply bow-up against you and not even listen to your attempts to lead to a remedy for sin. A thoughtful, reasoned, and logical advancement of truth will almost always be far more effective. I learned long ago in my military Fundamentals of Learning course that in critiquing students after a period of practical application of learning, it is far more effective to begin with the positives of what a student did well (even if difficult to determine) followed by pointing out areas necessary for improvement. The positive grabs their attention so that they will continue to listen when you point out weaknesses. At any rate, Nathan, with great tact and consideration, reveals – not only the enormity of David's sin – but has David pronounce the deserved punishment as well. Such advanced logic and reason was unknown outside of Holy Scripture in the days of David. It is almost a lost art today because the famine of the wisdom of God's Word in the broader society today.

We will next examine David's repentance and the beginning cost of David's forgiven sin.