

David's Sin and Repentance 2 Samuel 11-12, Psalm 51

David, son of Jesse, was given the title "man after God's own Heart" by God Himself. Does that mean David was perfect? No, he had sin in his heart, just like everyone else. What made him a man after God's own Heart then? We'll get a much better glimpse in this week's lesson, which isn't about David's success and greatness, but instead about his weakness and need for God's Grace, Mercy and God's Leading.

After having lots of success as a warrior and king, David began **to lose focus** on what God wanted, and became more interested in what he wanted.

Usually, in spring, David would be out leading his army in fighting God's enemies. However one spring, David chose to stay home instead.

While he stayed back in town alone, he sinned. He stole a man's wife! Not just any man, but one of his fighting men, Uriah, who was loyal to David and the Israelite nation! David became so selfish and sinful, that when he realized Uriah might find out about his sin, he had Uriah sent back to the most dangerous part of the war, knowing that Uriah would not survive.

Unlike the times of success in his life, when he would seek and trust in the LORD, David completely ignored God's heart in this instance and instead listened to his own selfish dark heart.

Since he was king, David might have gotten away with it since he did it in secret, and for the few people who might have known, they wouldn't dare confront him. But God did confront David. He sent Nathan the prophet to David to let him know that he did a horrible thing that grieved God's Heart.

Here is Nathan's parable:

"There were two men in a city. One man was rich, but the other was poor. The rich man had very many sheep and cattle. But the poor man had nothing except one little female lamb he had bought. The poor man fed the lamb. It grew up with him and his children. It shared his food and drank from his cup. It slept in his arms. The lamb was like a daughter to him.

"Then a traveler stopped to visit the rich man. The rich man wanted to give food to the traveler. But he didn't want to take one of his own sheep or cattle to feed the traveler. Instead, he took the lamb from the poor man. The rich man killed the lamb and cooked it for his visitor."

David became very angry at the rich man. He said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this should die! He must pay for the lamb four times for doing such a thing. He had no mercy!"

Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man!"

He then told David that although God took away David's sin, that there would be many hard consequences in David's life as a result of his disastrous choices. God remained **loyal** to His promise to establish a **Forever King of God's Kingdom through David's descendants**, but also promised that He would bring calamity on David and his household. (we'll learn more about that next lesson).

Does this mean that God was wrong about David being a **man after His own heart**? Well God has NEVER been wrong about anything. And he knew David would experience **true repentance**, once he accepted responsibility for his sin.

One of God's many gifts to humanity is Psalm 51, which David wrote as he repented and cried out for God to give him a clean heart! In that Psalm, David paints a picture of the horror of being cast from God's Presence, and a profound need for God's Saving Grace in order to remain.