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A Kindness Forgotten II Samuel 11

Intro: Our text is 1 of the evidences of the **divine origin** of the Bible. No human chronicler would have ever attempted to include the moral failure (**adultery/murder**) committed by their king. It would **never** have made it into the official Royal history of a monarch w/ this much power. Just the fact that this failure of David's is even placed before us is evidence of the **divine inspiration** of Scripture. David's not the only 1: **Noah** was a man of faith & obedience & yet he got drunk. **Abraham** lied about his wife – **twice!** **Jacob** lied to both his father (Isaac) & his brother (Esau). **Moses** was a murderer & **Peter** denied the Lord 3 times! The lesson we should take from this is that **God doesn't hide / cover up the sins of His servants**. He didn't back then & He doesn't today.

The context of this passage should be sobering to us b/c it is contemporary. Our current media culture constantly parades sexual immorality in front of us: **adultery, fornication**, etc. It's almost as if it's a contest to see who can be the most blatant / shocking & still get away with it. What's more, they always present sexual immorality as being normal, acceptable even glorious; but the worst thing they do is present it as being without consequence! They never show the broken homes, abandon children, destroyed bodies – the emotional toll that it takes on all parties involved. The truth is: every sin has consequences & sins involving sexual immorality are no exception. In fact, the consequences of sexual sins can be the most immediate, longest lasting & most destructive consequences in a person's life. David will face countless miserable consequences that stem from this 1 act. Did David repent? Yes, eventually. Did **YHWH** forgive? Yes, miraculously! But that still doesn't negate all the damage that is caused by this 1 moral failure.

Before we move into the specifics of the text, I want to point out a few oddities in the structure of the text. 1st, note the juxtaposition of the theme of **ch11** with that of **ch9-10**. In **9-10** David acts kindly & loyally but here he throws kindness & loyalty to the wind. There, David is controlled by his covenants & his memories but here, he's driven by his glands & his secrets. There, David spares & mourns life; here, he tramples & destroys life. David made a point to show **hesed** to the enemy of his monarchy & to a pagan king but when it came to Uriah, David forgot all about **hesed**. The

presentation should give us pause to think: which is the real David? We all should know the answer to that.

Lastly, we can decipher the main thrust of **ch11** not only by what the writer includes but also by what he leaves out. The details of the Ammonite war are sparse, almost too brief but, the events at the palace are discussed in great detail. The writer doesn't include much dialogue from important characters: Bathsheba (2 words in Hebrew); Uriah is only given 1 verse but his short speech identifies him as being the **only genuine Israelite** in the whole chapter! The writer also fails to mention the feelings of the characters. Was Bathsheba "baiting" David? Did she think a fling with the king would be an honor? We don't know. Did Uriah refuse to go home b/c he thought something was rotten in Denmark? We can't know. He doesn't even tell us how Joab felt about David's letter! We don't need to know. The emphasis of the entire chapter is on David's deed – that's really the only thing that matters here.

1-5- Consider the sad state of this scene. The action is quick; the verbs tick off in rapid succession like a stop watch: **David arose, walked, saw, inquired, sent, took, lay**. The act of royal self-indulgence doesn't take very long. No adverbs to describe it – its nothing but stark, bare action. There's no conversation, no hint of caring, affection or love – just lust. David never calls her by name in the text, doesn't even speak to her. At the end of the scene, Bathsheba is just "**the woman.**" The verb that counts the most is "**conceived**" but the most telling verb for David is "**took her.**"

How could this happen? How could David sink so far into gross sin in such a short time? Some commentators point out that David's place was with the army; he should have been with Joab at the siege of Rabbah even if he wasn't able to fight himself. We just saw in **ch10** that Joab & Abishai went out to fight the Ammonites & the Syrians but there was no clear victory. The decisive victory only came when David led the battle at the end of **ch10**. Could this have been **YHWH's** warning to David, telling him the he needs to be in the battle? That may be true; God does drop hints!

Others state that David's failure wasn't in seeing Bathsheba but in failing to resist the temptation to pursue her. Joseph was faced with an even greater temptation, propositioned in private; & he fled the scene. David should have let it go right at the 1st. When he found out that she was married & who she

was married to, he should have ran to the tabernacle, fell on his face & asked **YHWH** for forgiveness right then & there. But David didn't do any of that.

Both of these failures definitely factored into David's actions. The principle of **Gal 5:16** was as true in David's day as it is in ours: "**Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**" If David's focus had been where **YHWH** wanted it he would've never ended up where **YHWH** didn't want him to be. But, I think it's wrong to look at this as a few isolated events that quickly led a godly man into adultery & murder. The truth is, David had already showed his clear disregard for God's plan for marriage many years before when he took more than 1 wife. Bathsheba makes 8! This habit of adding wives shows a severe lack of restraint in indulging his fleshly passions. This seed of corruption, which was sown long ago, has grown unchecked & will now begin to bear bitter fruit. David's sin with Bathsheba didn't happen all at once, it was just the logical result of something that had been going on in his life for 20 yrs. Think of it, while Joab was laying siege to Rabbah, Satan was laying siege to David & Satan was a lot more effective.

What about us? Do we breathe a sigh of relief saying, "**Boy, I'm glad I don't have that problem!**" Hold up, you may not have multiple spouses but what's in your heart? The media constantly bombards us with messages of immorality.

"**Yeah, but I don't agree with them.**" Yes, but do you put up with & continue 2 watch it? **Consent= passive agreement.**

Remember, David is the king **YHWH** chose; this is the man after God's own heart. This warning should alert every servant of God: unchecked sin can cause us to fall suddenly & fatally into unsuspected sin! There's a phrase from an old hymn that should scare us if we understand it: "**prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.**" Don't think David's situation doesn't touch you simply b/c it's OT. Being a NT Christian doesn't make you immune to human nature. If you think, "Oh, but I could never..." you've already taken the 1st step in your fall. 1 thing I've learned in being in & observing others in ministry: "**You'd be surprised what you are capable of doing as a Christian.**" The only safe ground for the believer is to continue to stand on, walk in & cling to God's amazing **grace**. It is grace that saves us & it is grace that keeps us in fellowship with our Savior. That same hymn offers us divine direction: "**O to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm**

constrained to be; let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.”

6-25- When Bathsheba delivered the good news, it wasn't just for information sake. Basically, she's saying, "Hey baby-Daddy, the balls in your court now!" David, being a brilliant tactician devised a multi-level plan to pass the buck. He calls Uriah from the front lines & orders him to go home & wash his feet (*take your wife to bed*). He even sends along a couple of nice plate lunches from the king's table but ironically, this faithful soldier disobeys his king. Of course, vs11 explains why. Altho Uriah's giving reasons for his disobedience, David should've taken it as a rebuke!

But, David just says, "OK, that didn't work; let's get him drunk tonight!" David hoped that Uriah would be like him; instead, he proved to be a man of integrity; whose 1st loyalty was to the king's interests not his own pleasure. Uriah when drunk was a better man than David was sober. So, in order to preserve Bathsheba's honor (*& not to mention, his own*) the only option David had left was to make Uriah go away, permanently. Notice, Uriah was such a trustworthy soldier, David could trust him to carry his own death sentence with no threat of him ever reading it.

David thought he could escape guilt by all these maneuvers when all the while he was adding to his guilt. 1 by1, David's breaking the 10 Commandments: he *coveted* his neighbor's wife; committed *adultery* with her; bore *false witness* against Uriah (*by implication*) & had him *murdered*. David thought he was deceiving everyone but he was only deceiving himself. David thought he was merely pursuing his rightful desires but what he was doing fulfilling his fleshly lust & wreaking havoc on Uriah's family &, unknowingly, his own.

How does this relate to us? If we continue with the theme that David's kingdom acts as a preview of God's kingdom (in miniature) then we must conclude that like Uriah, life for God's people can be difficult even in the kingdom of God. In all my years in church, this has been the saddest & most devastating thing I've seen: when church leadership rules with harshness & severity, crushing the flock rather than comforting them; suffocating rather than sustaining. We can see that God's kingdom is not safe even in David's hands. The kingdom will only be safe when Jesus rules b/c He will rule with true justice & righteousness. But, until Jesus publically enforces His just

regime at His Second Coming, God's people will continue to suffer & sometimes that will even be within the kingdom itself.

26-27- It's all over but the crying. When the army officer & the chaplain show up with the death notice from the war department, Bathsheba falls apart. There's no telling if her grief was real or contrived but regardless, periods of mourning always come to an end & when hers did, David took her in as his wife (8th). Maybe this raised some eyebrows around town or maybe some thought David was being magnanimous, "Just look at how he stands behind his men! He takes care of their widows when they're killed in battle." We don't know what the people thought; we don't know what Bathsheba thought. Did she ever discover that it was David who ordered Uriah to be killed? We don't know. We don't know what Joab thought. In fact, the only thoughts that are revealed are YHWH's (27b).

Let's call this the **bottom line**: **1)** b/c it literally is the bottom line of the chapter & **2)** in the end, it's all that matters. We've gone thru this whole sordid story of lust, sex, deceit & murder without the writer making any moral comment along the way. He tells the story as if God is not involved. David appears to be driving the narrative the entire time. But, just b/c God is **silent** doesn't mean God is **absent**. David can satiate his lusts & mastermind his cover-up without any apparent divine interference – that is, until he runs right smack into YHWH's judgment. By all human accounts, David got off Scott free but just b/c evil runs on a successful course doesn't mean God's not watching. **Ps 11:4b** "His eyes behold; His eyelids test the sons of men." David's actions were evil in God's eyes; that's what God thought of it. God may be **silent** but He is not **sightless**. David may have Bathsheba's flesh & Uriah's blood but he cannot hide from YHWH's eyes.

Why was God displeased? B/c David misrepresented God & misused his authority; b/c David murdered a mighty warrior & immediately destroyed a family in Israel. Bathsheba was the grand-daughter of Ahithophel – 1 of David's chief advisors, who would later defect to Absalom's rebel govt. But I also believe the Lord was displeased b/c He knew what painful & destructive consequences David's sin would bring upon him, his family & Israel.

That's the thing about sin – it's like any other seed: you reap what you sow, whatever you plant comes up in the row. But there are a few other collation

with agriculture. Just like planting corn, not only will you reap what you sow but you will always reap later than you sow & you will always reap more than you sow. The consequences of sin must always be paid on the installment plan & bitter is the sorrow that is brought by the consequences of forgiven sin. 😊