



BACK TO THE BIBLE SERIES: A Hope-Filled Christmas

By Pastor Bryan Clark

Message Title: The Adulterer: Bathsheba Pt. 2

Release Date: Wednesday, 12/11/19

David had an adulterous affair with the wife of one of his most faithful and loyal soldiers. In order to cover it up, he not only killed Uriah, but several other soldiers had to die. He's now guilty of adultery; he's guilty of mass murder; he thinks he's covered it all up. At the end of 2 Samuel Chapter 11, we are outraged. We agree completely with the words of the narrator, "The thing which David did was evil in the sight of the Lord." (*NASB, 2 Sam. 11:26c)

Imagine you are Eliam. You are a faithful elite soldier who time and time and time again, have put your life at risk for this king - willing to die for him. And while you're out on the battlefield, laying it down, he's taking long naps and sleeping with your daughter and destroying her family. Imagine if you're Uriah's brother. If you're somehow connected to this, put yourself in the story. Just imagine you're a teenage son and this is your father and mother. What has this king just done? This king had multiple wives. This king had everything he could ever want, but he's taken what was not his, and he has absolutely destroyed your family. He has killed your father and he has taken your mother to be his own. You have to crawl inside this story to understand the level of outrage, and our hearts resonate with those words: "This was evil in the sight of the Lord."

Chapter 12:

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.

The rich man had a great many flocks and herds.

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.

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... [Don't miss that word.] ...he took the poor man's ewe lamb and

Prepared it for the man who had come to him.”

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. He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion."

(2 Sam. 12:1-6)

You can 't miss that this parable is set up very similarly. It 's almost as if it 's through the eyes of Eliam, the father. But you have this poor man who has one little ewe lamb. To him it was like his daughter and he cherished it and he treasured it; it was part of the family. The rich man had a whole herd of animals but, when somebody came to visit, rather than taking one of his own, the rich man took the one lamb from the poor shepherd and killed it. And David is absolutely outraged. David himself had been a shepherd; he would clearly identify with this and he says, "That man must die!" That 's his initial response—he must at least make restitution four times over. About the time he 's feeling the outrage...

Verse 7:

Nathan then said to David, "You are the man... [About the time David is reaching the peak of his outrage, Nathan sticks his boney finger in David 's nose and says] ... "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. 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! 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... [Don't miss the fact that David's taking of [Bathsheba] to be his wife is part of the outrage that God identifies here.] ...and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 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.' 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. Indeed, you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun!'" 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. 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." So, Nathan went to his house. (Vs. 7b-15a)

Nathan rebukes David for his sin and then God speaks to David through Nathan—and God 's statement is compelling! God says to David, "What were you thinking? I gave you everything; I gave you everything you wanted and more and if you wanted more, I would have given you still more." It isn 't possible that anyone could have been more blessed than David. "Why did you do this evil in My sight? But, because you have chosen to do this, the sword will not depart from your house." David 's words in Chapter Eleven come back to haunt him, when he said, "Hey, that 's the way it goes. You live by the sword; you die by the sword." And now David 's going to experience what that means.

If you don 't know how this story goes, it completes itself in 2 Samuel. David has a son who rapes his sister, David 's daughter. David chooses not to do anything about it. He becomes very passive, and so another one of David 's sons, Absalom, kills his brother to avenge the raping of

his sister and then he flees the country. Eventually, he comes back and he leads a revolution against David. He chases David, the king, out of the palace and takes over. He takes David 's wives up on the roof and has relations with them in broad daylight, just to make a mockery of his father. Eventually, he is run through with a sword and David crawls back up on the throne, but neither David nor the kingdom would ever be the same again.

David clearly confesses his sin. Many theologians say the biggest difference between Saul and David is, David owned his sin. There isn 't much said about his confession; it 's fairly matters of fact in this chapter. If you want to see the full confession, it 's in Psalm 51. David is clearly broken over his sin, but because of what David has done, he is assured that he is a forgiven man. God has heard that prayer, but there are still consequences to sin, and one of those consequences is this child, that never should have been conceived, will die.

Now the Lord struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was very sick. David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground. The elders of his household stood beside him in order to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and would not eat food with them. Then it happened on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Behold, while the child was still alive, we spoke to him and he did not listen to our voice. How then can we tell him that the child is dead, since he might do himself harm!" But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so, David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead." So, David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate. Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." He said,

"While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows, the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live.' But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." (Vs. 15b-23)

The child is struck with an illness and David is devastated. He lies on the floor and he weeps, and he fasts, and he begs God not to allow the child to die, but the child, after seven days, dies. And David responds by basically cleaning himself up and getting back to life. His servants are a bit puzzled by this, so they ask, and he says, "Hey, while the child was alive, you never know! The grace of God is so unpredictable; maybe He would change His mind, so I begged Him." But the child dies, and David accepts that, and he must now go on with his life. And thus, the story ends.

We find in our hearts that we feel David 's pain. We feel the disappointment; we feel the disaster of all this, but there 's something deep within us that resonates, "This was David 's

fault—you make your bed, you lie in it. If you ‘re going to traffic in that kind of behavior, you pay the price; that ‘s the way it works.” Our hearts resonate with those words: What David had done was evil. While his soldiers were fighting for the kingdom, he ‘s taking long naps. He sees this beautiful woman, the daughter and the wife of two of his best fighting soldiers, and he takes her, and he commits adultery. She becomes pregnant and, rather than confessing his sin, he covers it up by not only killing Uriah, but others of his faithful soldiers. And in our hearts, we feel like this is what he had coming! I crawl in the skin of Uriah ‘s family and all this seems right; it seems just. This guy should pay the price for what he has done. All that seems as it should be...

...until verse 24:

Then David comforted his wife... [No longer referred to as the wife of Uriah, she’s now the wife of David.] ...Bathsheba, and went into her and lay with her; [And I’m thinking, “You have got to be kidding me! Shouldn’t part of the deal have been you can never touch this woman again? How many times in God’s rebuke did he say, “The problem was that you took this woman who was not yours and you made her your wife?!” If I was in charge, there’s no question, I would say, “Hands off! You have dozens of wives; don’t ever touch this one again!”] ...and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon. Now the LORD loved him and sent word through Nathan the prophet, and he named him Jedidiah for the LORD’S sake. (Vs. 24-25)

The name Jedidiah means God’s friend. Everything about this feels wrong! I ‘m in complete disagreement. He should have never been allowed to touch this woman again. Even when she was married to David, the text kept referring to her as the wife or the widow of Uriah. She never should have belonged to David, yet God allows her to have a son and, low and behold, this son will be the next king of Israel. David had dozens of sons by multiple wives—not this one! But not only would he be the next king of Israel—you guessed it—he shows up in Matthew, Chapter 1, as the one through whom the seed of the Messiah would travel—in the line of the King of Kings. As a matter of fact, in very unusual fashion, in the genealogy in Matthew 1, when Matthew records that, he even says, “Solomon came from David and Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah the Hittite.” Even in the genealogy, it ‘s like Matthew can ‘t come to grips with this. She wasn ‘t even to be his wife! I ‘m telling you: if this came before the Board of Elders, I would side with Uriah ‘s family. They are right! Because of what King David has done to these people, his behavior now seems to just make a mockery of that. It is so far over the line, there is no way this should be acceptable. I find myself outraged; I find myself deeply offended.

And then, then I look in the mirror. Then I look in the mirror, and suddenly I ‘m not quite so outraged; I ‘m not quite so offended. This is amazing! It ‘s “...amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now I’m found; I was blind, but now I see...my chains are gone; I’ve been set free!” Suddenly I ‘m not quite so offended; I ‘m not so outraged. The scandalous grace that came to David has come to me and granted me the favor that He granted David. God reached into the trash pile and He found me, and He made me His treasure; He called me to help and change the world. That ‘s offensive; that ‘s outrageous; that ‘s scandalous! This grace is not soft; it ‘s not comfortable; it ‘s not predictable. It ‘s kind of raw; it

's kind of edgy and, at times, it seems to run contrary to everything we think is right. I don 't knows where you 've been. I don 't knows what you 've done. I don 't knows what has been done to you. I only know with all my heart; His grace is enough! His grace is enough. God 's grace is so scandalous, so contrary to everything that we think is right and decent that, who knows, God may choose to call you to change the world.

Arnie: Bryan, it's pretty easy to get comfortable with the idea of grace as good news, but it's also a reminder that we just don't measure up. And without Jesus, we are complete losers.

Bryan: Yeah, so grace is scandalous. When I read that story in Second Samuel 12, it's almost offensive in terms of how amazing God's grace is, and it's just easy to forget God's grace in our own stories. And I think the longer we're Christians, the greater the risk is that grace becomes pretty ordinary.

Cara: David did all he could to hide his sin, but in my experience, hidden sin never stays hidden.

Bryan: It never stays hidden. I like to think of it as just painting over rust. So, I like to restore cars. When you paint over rust, it looks good for a little while, but it eventually comes back and then you have a bigger problem to deal with. Cut it out, deal with it, face it, find the peace of forgiveness.

Arnie: Nathan tells David that his sins gave the enemies a platform for blaspheming God. That's a principle that we don't always think about when you think of this story.

Bryan: Right. So, there's always people that are angry and waiting to mock God. And so, when a Christian leader publicly fails, it's open season. And that's why we have to just really be careful within the church that talent doesn't overshadow character for leaders.

Cara: God restored David and Bathsheba, but just so we're clear, they both suffered terribly because of their sin.

Bryan: Yeah, absolutely. It's such an important point. Sin devastates, and I'm sure David relived that night of the affair with Bathsheba hundreds of times, as he dealt with the sad, negative consequences of his sin.

Cara: I feel kind of bad for her though, because I don't know that she had a choice. And then she had to lose a baby, and [Yeah], but then she did marry him, but like again, she had no choice.

Bryan: She had no choice. And any of those women in the King's harem lived pretty miserable lives. It wasn't marriage as God intended it to be.

Arnie: We mostly think of David as the example in this story, but Bathsheba came under God's grace too, didn't she?

Bryan: Yeah, absolutely. She's named in the genealogy. And it's interesting. Again, you go back to Matthew One, when it says by Bathsheba, it also adds who had been the wife of Uriah. So rather than trying to sweep it under the table, [Ouch!] it underscores the mess of this story.

Cara: Bryan, there's someone listening today who is feeling completely torn up from guilt and shame in their life. What hope do they have right now to move forward?

Bryan: Yeah. So, every hope. Sin has consequences, natural consequences, and all you can do is face them courageously. But we face them as one who has been forgiven and set free in Christ. So, when grace matters most, is when we mess up, and we still can stand in the righteousness of Christ, and not our performance. So regardless of the mess, there's a reason for hope.