

Promised Land 2 Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Four: David's Sin and Its Consequences - 2 Samuel 11-24; 1 Chronicles 20-21; selected Psalms

Read 2 Samuel 11-12 and 1 Chronicles 20:1-3.

- 1) What sins did David commit in 2 Samuel 11? **Coveting Bathsheba (who belonged to Uriah, as David was reminded [11:3]), adultery, murdering Uriah, scheming and deceit (in tempting Uriah to sleep with his wife in wartime and in plotting to cover up his adultery with murder).**
- 2) Was it possible (even likely) that Bathsheba was known to David prior to his inquisition about her? Who was Bathsheba (reread 2 Samuel 11:3 carefully with 2 Samuel 23:8a, 24a, 34b, 39; 2 Samuel 16:23; and 1 Chronicles 27:33a)? **Bathsheba was the daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah, both of whom were among a small, elite group of thirty warriors known as David's Mighty Men (or "The Thirty") and surely known to David. Additionally, Bathsheba was the granddaughter of David's personal counselor Ahithophel (father of Eliam's father). Even if David did not know Bathsheba, she certainly knew King David. Her decision to bathe in close proximity to the palace seems suspicious, although the biblical writer lays the blame on David. Perhaps David did not recognize her from afar. The servant who told David, "She is Bathsheba," may have believed David mistook her for another woman. But it is also possible that David's inquiry ("send someone to find out about her") was not to discover her identity but her willingness to come to him.**
- 3) As we read Bible stories, it is always good to ask, "Why was this event included in the record of the Scriptures? What purpose does it serve in the larger story of the Bible? What does it reveal about God? What lesson is contained in it for my life?" How would you answer some of these questions with regard to the story of David's infidelity with Bathsheba? **The story reveals the history of the birth of Solomon, Israel's next king (12:24-25), even though Solomon was not the child of David and Bathsheba's adulterous affair. The account encourages us that sinners who repent can still be characterized and remembered as individuals "after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). The story shows that God is able to redeem the messes created by our sins.**
- 4) Reread 2 Samuel 12:5-7a with Matthew 7:3-5.
 - a) Would you be willing to pray this week that the Lord will open your eyes to any faults in you, faults for which you quickly condemn others but fail to see in yourself? Come back to this question at the end of the week and record any insights you receive that you might consider sharing. **Personal sharing**
 - b) At some point in your life, you have probably been on the receiving end of rebukes given by an individual who knows you well, as was David. Perhaps you have been tempted to ignore or scorn your critic's words because of your awareness of his or her own faults (faults which may even be similar to the one for which they are correcting you). What can you learn from David's example in 2 Samuel 12:13 and from Proverbs 12:1, 13:1, 15:5? (You may also be interested to read 1 Chronicles 3:4-5 to see how David apparently later honored Nathan.) **Regardless of how mistaken a person may be in their presentation of criticism or rebuke, many criticisms contain some grain of truth from which we can benefit. Personal sharing**

From 2 Samuel 11 -19:

- 5) Read 2 Samuel 13. According to 2 Samuel 3:2, what important position did Amnon hold and how were his passions (2 Samuel 13:2) a reflection of what he had witnessed in his father's life (see 1 Samuel 25:43 and 2 Samuel 3:2-5, 3:13-16, 5:13-16, 11:2-4, 15:16)? **Amnon was David's firstborn son and Israel's heir apparent. He was "frustrated to the point of illness" because of his infatuation with his stepsister Tamar (2 Samuel 13:2). David had also allowed his passions to rule him, at times: he had an affair with Bathsheba and he took the many wives and concubines. His example undoubtedly influenced his children. Polygamy brought trouble to the families of the Bible. Although it is revealed in Scripture as having been a cultural norm, the Scriptures never condone it. God ordained marriage to be between one husband and one wife (Genesis 2:21-24). Adultery was punishable by death (Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22-27).**

- 6) Reread 2 Samuel 13:21. Is there any indication in chapter 13 that David took action to discipline Amnon for raping his stepsister? Perhaps you need to discern whether to take action or remain silent about something you've recently heard. Will you ask your discussion group to pray with you for discernment (avoid sharing details that would make you guilty of slander or gossip)? **There is no indication that David took any action when he when heard about Amnon raping Tamar. The text only says that he was furious when he heard about it. Personal sharing**
- 7) Compare 2 Samuel 12:1-14 (the telling of Nathan's story and David's response to that story) to 2 Samuel 14:4-21 (the telling of the story of the widow from Tekoa and David's response to her story). You may include details from other parts of 2 Samuel 11-19 in your answer if you choose. **Both stories were presented to David under the guise of gaining his sympathy and requesting justice. Both were told with the intention of opening David's eyes to his own faults. David repented after hearing both stories. Both were given (at least in part) because of the death of someone (Uriah, one of David's "mighty men," was killed at David's directive [1 Chronicles 11:41], and Amnon, David's firstborn son, was killed after David failed to discipline him [2 Samuel 13:21]).**

See Questions 8 and 9. Then skim 2 Samuel 14-20, looking for answers.

- 8) Record the names of the people who took sides for or against David (include verse numbers):

FOR DAVID	AGAINST DAVID
15:15-16: David's officials and all of his household except Absalom	15:12, 16:15-17:23: Ahithophel, David's counselor (and also Bathsheba's grandfather), joined Absalom in his insurrection.
15:19-22: Ittai the Gittite and his men (who apparently arrived only one day earlier) bound themselves in life or death to David. Later, Ittai became one of David's commanders (18:2).	16:5-13: Shemei, from Saul's clan, cursed David and threw stones and dirt at him. He later begged David's forgiveness (19:16).
15:24-29: Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, who returned with their two sons and the Ark to Jerusalem, at David's request.	17:25: Amasa, head of Absalom's army in place of Joab (later, David wooed him [19:13])
15:27: Ahimaaz and Jonathan, sons of Zadok and Abiathar, carried news from Jerusalem to David (17:17-21, 18:19-30).	20:1: Sheba, a Benjamite, led Israel in a civil war against David and Judah. He was besieged by Joab's army and beheaded by the people of Abel (20:22).
15:32-37: David's friend Hushai the Arkite returned to Jerusalem, feigned loyalty to Absalom, and frustrated Ahithophel's advice, at David's request.	
16:1-4: Ziba, steward of Mephibosheth (son of Jonathan, son of Saul), brought David donkeys and supplies.	
17:27-28: Shobi, Makir, and Barzillai the Gileadite brought supplies to David and his people while they were in Mahanaim. Later, Barzillai (an 80-year-old man) met David again on his return (19:31-38).	
18:2: Joab (David's nephew), Abishai (Joab's brother), and Ittai the Gittite (also listed above), the three commanders of David's forces (also 16:9)	
19:24: Mephibosheth claimed Ziba betrayed him (the truth is not given)	

- 9) Imagine how David must have felt as he left Jerusalem and then as he returned. Record your thoughts. David stated that he trusted God would do what was right, whatever that might have been (15:25-26, 16:11-12). In these passages, David considered that he might have been at fault, in which case, he reasoned, God might have been punishing him. As he ran from his own son Absalom, he surely recalled the years he ran from Saul. He may have developed a mental list of the mistakes he had made with Absalom that could have resulted in the situation. He also must have returned to Jerusalem with mixed emotions: grief over the death of Absalom, awareness of the need to win back the hearts of his countrymen (19:8-15), and great relief to have the kingdom secured.
- 10) From the chart in Question 8, notice how our life can be defined by our choices. List some decisions that you have to make for which you need the Lord to give you wisdom. **Personal sharing**

Skim 2 Samuel 21-24 and 1 Chronicles 21, in which David faced two national crises (famine and a plague). Also read Psalm 32 and 51, David’s psalms of repentance.

- 11) According to 1 Chronicles 21:27-22:1 and 2 Chronicles 3:1, for what later purpose was Araunah the Jebusite’s threshing floor set apart? **The site of Solomon’s Temple**
- 12) Compare 2 Samuel 24:1 with 1 Chronicles 21:1. How might these two verses be reconciled (see Job 1:9-12, 2:4-6, and James 1:13)? **God, in His foreknowledge, permitted Satan to tempt David’s ego regarding the size of his army, knowing that David would succumb. He permitted it knowing that the Israelites deserved the resulting judgment by plague (2 Samuel 24:1). The reason God was angry at Israel is not stated.**
- 13) State the most outstanding lesson you learn about God in:
 - a) 2 Samuel 21 **Personal sharing**
 - b) 2 Samuel 22:1-23:7 **Personal sharing**
 - c) 2 Samuel 24 **Personal sharing**
 - d) Psalm 32 and 51 **Personal sharing**

David faced many crises during his forty-year reign. Some were the result of his own sins and some were not. Since the fallout of David and Bathsheba’s sin plays such a big role in this lesson, we will conclude by returning to 2 Samuel 11-20 for some final thoughts.

- 14) Consider all the people who suffered from David’s sin with Bathsheba, a sin that he had hoped to keep private.
 - a) How were Nathan’s prophetic words in 2 Samuel 12:10-14 fulfilled in the remaining chapters of 2 Samuel? **The child David and Bathsheba illicitly conceived died (2 Samuel 12:18). David’s son, Absalom, killed his brother Amnon (2 Samuel 3:2, 13:28- 29). Absalom slept with ten of his father’s concubines in broad daylight (2 Samuel 16:22).**
 - b) Which other individuals suffered as a result of David’s adultery? **Bathsheba suffered the death of her husband (11:26) and the child she and David illicitly conceived (12:18). Uriah was killed and so were unnamed “king’s men” (11: 24). David’s daughter Tamar was a victim of rape by her own brother, who allowed his passions to go unchecked, as his father had done (13:2a, 14, 20b). We can assume that all of David’s children suffered in some way from their father’s poor example. Absalom’s insolence seems to have resulted from disrespect for his father, who twice failed to take action: when Tamar was raped and when Amnon was murdered. David also allowed Absalom to return to Israel, while neglecting to either forgiving him or punishing him. Rather, he simply ignored him (14:24, 28). All Israel suffered from the weakening of David’s rulership and the fracturing of the country that resulted from Absalom’s attempted abdication. 20,000 were killed when David and Absalom’s armies fought (18:7), and civil war broke out as a result (chapter 20).**
 - c) What conclusions can you draw about “private” sins? **Private sins rarely remain private. In God’s mercy, He often causes His children to be found out. Even when the nature or circumstances of our sin does not come out into the open, the results can significantly impact many people, particularly subsequent generations of the offender’s family. Personal sharing**

15) Reread 2 Samuel 12:24-25 with 1 Kings 4:29-34 and 2 Chronicles 3:1, 5:1.

- a) What do Solomon's birth and the magnificence of his life tell you about God's desire and ability to redeem the messes of our lives, as He did for David and Bathsheba? **Solomon was born to parents who entered their marriage sinfully. However, once we truly repent, God is not only able but desires to take the heart-breaking circumstances we deserve and weave them into a thing of beauty, for the sake of His glory. This is evidenced in God's grace to David and Bathsheba, whose son Solomon spoke to many of God's glory during his lifetime, authored Biblical books, and built the Temple.**
- b) Which mess will you bring to the Lord and trust Him to redeem? **Personal sharing**