

**Thou Art The Man (2 Sam. 12:1-13:22)**

**Nathan’s Parable (2 Sam. 12:1-6)**

*1 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: “There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds. 3 But the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. 4 And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.” 5 So David’s anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! 6 And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity.”*

- Nathan didn’t go to David until Yahweh sent him. Most of what we know or what God reveals to us is purely for the purposes of intercession.
- The figure of a “traveler” has often been seen as a symbol of David’s lust.
- The flock is an uncomfortable reference to David’s many wives and concubines.
- Nathan stings David by saying the lamb was like a daughter to the poor man. In Hebrew the word for daughter was *bath*, part of Bathsheba’s name.
- David’s guilt drives him to call for an excessive penalty. The penalty for theft in the Torah was to pay back four times over.

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**Thou Art The Man! (2 Sam. 12:7-12)**

*7 Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8 I gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more! 9 Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. 10 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.’ 11 Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.’”*

- David had grown spiritually dense because of his sin.
- David must have taken some of Saul’s wives and/or concubines.
- God now describes David, of all people, as a man who despised the commandment of the Lord. Powerful judgments are pronounced.
- Death and bloodshed would stalk the house of David from now on, but this prophecy would be redeemed on the Cross.
- God says He will take David’s wives and give them to his neighbor. (2nd Sam. 16.)

**Mercy And Judgment (2 Sam. 12:13-15a)**

*13 So David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. 14 However, because*

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*by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.” 15 Then Nathan departed to his house.*

David made no excuses or shifting of blame. God was merciful to David and did not have him put to death. Paul used David’s example to demonstrate the truths of the Gospel:

*...David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.” (Romans 4:6, quoting David in Psalms 32:1-2)*

- David also recognizes that this sin, like all sins, is in the first instance a sin against YHWH Himself.
- David’s failure would no doubt haunt him, and color people’s opinion about him.

In response to these crimes, the Bible specifically tells us that David wrote Psalm 51:

*To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. 4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight – that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward*

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parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; you do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart — these, O God, You will not despise. 18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

One more judgment that couldn't be avoided: the death of David and Bathsheba's son.

### **A Prayer Unanswered (2 Sam. 12:15b-23)**

And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill. 16 David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. 17 So the elders of his house arose and went to him, to raise him up from the ground. But he would not, nor did he eat food with them. 18 Then on the seventh day it came to pass that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, "Indeed, while the child was alive, we spoke to him, and he would not heed our voice. How can we tell him that the

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*child is dead? He may do some harm!” 19 When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, “Is the child dead?” And they said, “He is dead.”*

*20 So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate. 21 Then his servants said to him, “What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food.”*

*22 And he said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’ 23 But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”*

- The judgment against the child is called a direct act of YHWH.
- David gives us a clear expression of the Hebrew belief that there was life after death. He fully expected to be reunited with this child, in a knowing way.

### **Jedidiah (2 Sam. 12:24-25)**

*24 Then David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in to her and lay with her. So she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. Now the LORD loved him, 25 and He sent word by the hand of Nathan the prophet: So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.*

- This is the first time the Scripture gives Bathsheba the title “David’s wife.”
- Nathan (who is now described in the text as Nathan the prophet) comes with a name from the Lord. *Solomon* means *peaceful*, or *His peace* (that is, *God’s peace*), but God brings him the name *Jedidiah*, which means *beloved of Yahweh*.

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### **The Devil's Capital Captured (2 Sam. 12:26-31)**

*26 Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the people of Ammon, and took the royal city. 27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, "I have fought against Rabbah, and I have taken the city's water supply. 28 Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called after my name." 29 So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, fought against it, and took it. 30 Then he took their king's crown from his head. Its weight was a talent of gold, with precious stones. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance. 31 And he brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them cross over to the brick works. So he did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.*

- Remember: the Ammonites represent the Devil. They were always involved in trying to create disgrace in Israel. When did David fall into sin?
- As soon as the issue of reproach was resolved, Joab was able to subdue Rabbah. This is the real ending of the story, not the birth of the child.
- From here on out there will be trouble again and again in David's life.

### **Amnon Pressures Tamar (2 Sam. 13:1-11)**

*1 After this Absalom the son of David had a lovely sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2 Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick; for she was a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her. 3 But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother. Now Jonadab was a very crafty man. 4 And he said to him, "Why are you, the king's son, becoming thinner day after day? Will you not tell me?"*

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Amnon said to him, “I love Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.”

5 So Jonadab said to him, “Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. And when your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘Please let my sister Tamar come and give me food, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat it from her hand.’” 6 Then Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, “Please let Tamar my sister come and make a couple of cakes for me in my sight, that I may eat from her hand.”

7 And David sent home to Tamar, saying, “Now go to your brother Amnon’s house, and prepare food for him.” 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house; and he was lying down. Then she took flour and kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. 9 And she took the pan and placed them out before him, but he refused to eat. Then Amnon said, “Have everyone go out from me.” And they all went out from him. 10 Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand.” And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them to Amnon her brother in the bedroom. 11 Now when she had brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, “Come, lie with me, my sister.”

- Amnon is the eldest child, and heir to the throne. He seems to have been emotionally unstable and filled with lust. He was lovesick over Tamar, his half-sister, who was a full-blood sister to Absalom, David’s third son.
- Amnon’s name means *faithful*, and *Tamar* means a *palm tree*. These names are significant in the telling of the story.

### **The Rape Of Tamar (2 Sam. 13:12-22)**

12 But she answered him, “No, my brother, do not force me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing! 13 And I, where could I take my

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shame? And as for you, you would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you.” 14 However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her. 15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, “Arise, be gone!” 16 So she said to him, “No, indeed! This evil of sending me away is worse than the other that you did to me.” But he would not listen to her. 17 Then he called his servant who attended him, and said, “Here! Put this woman out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her.” 18 Now she had on a robe of many colors, for the king’s virgin daughters wore such apparel. And his servant put her out and bolted the door behind her. 19 Then Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that was on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly. 20 And Absalom her brother said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this thing to heart.” So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house. 21 But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. 22 And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

- Tamar, aside from her other good qualities, is pious. Her argument is extensive and shows a clever mind.
- Absalom did nothing except play it down and seek to calm her down and give Amnon the silent treatment.
- The final, sad vignette in this story is David learning of this and doing nothing.

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