

LESSON 24
“Create in Me a Clean Heart”
2 Samuel 11-12, Psalm 51

OVERVIEW:

David and Bathsheba and the killing of Uriah.

SCRIPTURES:

THE SECOND BOOK OF
SAMUEL
OTHERWISE CALLED
THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS
CHAPTER 11

David lies with Bath-sheba and she conceives—He then arranges for the death in battle of her husband Uriah.

1 AND it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that David sent ^aJoab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. (David was supposed to go to war. It was spring time and the war against the Ammonites could be resumed. Up to this point, only their auxiliaries had been crushed. The ark was now with them and used in battle and David should have been with them. He had been so successful in battle that he didn't think he needed to go forth this time.)

2 ¶ And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he ^asaw a woman washing herself; and the woman *was* very beautiful to ^blook upon. (He walked upon his roof and saw Bathsheba washing herself. It was that time of the month. Many homes had flat roofs. David's home was probably tall enough to be able to see into the courts of several homes.)

3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this ^aBath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of ^bUriah the Hittite? (David sent to find out who the woman was. He learned that her name was Bathsheba which meant “daughter of the covenant” the wife of Uriah, which meant “Jehovah is my light.” When he heard their names he should have stopped there and not proceeded further. Their names should have been a reminder to him of covenants and Jehovah and doing the right things. His thoughts were wrong. His thoughts turned to action. If he had just controlled his thoughts, he would not have committed adultery. He was lazy. He should have been in battle with the army. He should have been reading his scriptures, having family prayer, family home evening. But he got casual in his righteousness.)

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he ^alay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. (David commits adultery with Bathsheba. If David had repented at this point, he would have been forgiven and exalted. Instead, he compounded his sin by murdering Uriah.)

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, *I am* with child. (David finds out that Bathsheba is pregnant by him.)

6 ¶ And David sent to Joab, *saying*, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the

king's house, and there followed him ^aa mess of meat from the king. (David sends for Uriah and orders him to go home. He hopes that Uriah will sleep with his wife so that it will look like the child is his.)

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? (Uriah refuses to go home. He is one of the thirty top leaders of the army (2 Samuel 23:39 - Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all).)

11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in ^atents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. (Uriah says he will not go home because the leaders and the ark have no home, but live in tents. Uriah also may have been suspicious of David.)

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house. (David invites Uriah to his home for a meal and tries to get him drunk and sends him home, but he does not go home.)

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be ^asmitten, and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. (David writes a letter to Joab, the captain which is delivered by Uriah, ordering Joab to put Uriah in the front of the battle and then withdraw to allow Uriah to be killed.)

17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also. (The battle carries on and Uriah dies in battle. He is valiant and faithful in obeying his king and is killed by the treachery of David.)

18 ¶ Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,

20 And if so be that the king's ^awrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who smote ^aAbimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

22 ¶ So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him. (Joab sends word of the battle indicating that he did not strictly obey David's command, which caused the death of more men than expected. He also reports the death of Uriah.)

26 ¶ And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his ^awife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done ^bdispleased the LORD. (After a week of

mourning, David brings Bathsheba to his house, marries her, and she brings forth a son. The Lord was very displeased with David. David, who was the king after the Lord's heart, could have had anything he wanted and God would have given it to him.)

CHAPTER 12

Nathan tells David the parable of the ewe lamb—The Lord gave many wives to David, who is now cursed for taking Bath-sheba—David fasts and prays for his son, but the Lord takes him—Solomon is born—David conquers the royal city of the Ammonites.

1 AND the LORD sent ^aNathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich *man* had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor *man* had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. (The Lord tells Nathan what David has done and is sent to David. Nathan tells David a parable of two men, one of whom is poor with only one lamb. The rich man takes the poor man's lamb.)

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this *thing* shall surely die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb ^afourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. (David is angry and judges that the rich man shall die and that the poor man shall be restored four fold his loss.)

7 ¶ And Nathan said to David, Thou *art* the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I ^aanointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. (David is informed by Nathan "Thou art the man." Nathan begins to tell David of the blessings of the Lord and says that the Lord would have given him anything he desired.)

9 Wherefore hast thou ^adespised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast ^bkilled ^cUriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his ^dwife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast ^adespised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up ^aevil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

12 For thou didst *it* secretly: but I will ^ado this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. (Nathan tells David his sins and the consequences of them. That the sword will not depart from his family. We cannot sin in secret, they will all become public if we do not repent properly. Hugh B. Brown said: "Don't let anyone tempt you to believe that what you do is secret and won't get out. The devil will see that it does [get out]. Lucifer and his agents have unfortunately devised means by which men may partially protect themselves against the natural physical results of their indecency and have thereby led many into shameful acts by whispering the twin lies, 'It is no longer dangerous,' and 'No one will ever know.'" With these false assurances, thousands who might have been deterred by fear of consequences have been lured into transgression. (The Abundant Life, p. 66))

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have ^asinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The

LORD also ^bhath (not) put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. (David acknowledges his sins. Joseph Smith corrects the translation with The Lord hath **not** put away thy sin. But David will not die at this time. Remember, the penalty for murder and adultery were death. Both David and Bathsheba were worthy of death.)

14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to ^ablaspheme, the child also *that is* born unto thee shall surely die. (Nathan tells David that the son born to him and Bathsheba will die.)

15 ¶ And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. (Nathan departs. The baby is born and is stricken ill.)

16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David ^afasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.

17 And the elders of his house arose, *and went* to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. (David fasts the week.)

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed *himself*, and changed his ^aapparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing *is* this that thou hast done? thou didst ^afast and weep for the child, *while it was* alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.

22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell *whether* GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. (The baby dies and David stops fasting. Why did the baby die?)

24 ¶ And David ^acomforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name ^bSolomon: and the LORD loved him. (David and Bathsheba have another son, named Solomon, whom the Lord loves.)

25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD. (Nathan names him Jedidiah, because of the Lord. It means the Jehovah loved.)

26 ¶ And ^aJoab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.

27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters.

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 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.

30 And he took their king's ^acrown from off his head, the weight whereof *was* a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was *set* on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.

31 And he brought forth the people that *were* therein, and put *them* under ^asaws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem. (Jerusalem is taken. The Ammonites are defeated. David's family has very serious problems. Some of his children die. He writes Psalms of his feelings about his sins and forgiveness. The chronological order is 38, 6, 51 and 32. Here are some selected verses from these psalms: 38:3 neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. 38:4 as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. 38:6 I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. 38:8 I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

38:21-22 Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation. 6:2 Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. 6:4 Return, O Lord, deliver my soul; oh save me for thy mercies' sake. 51:1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.)

THE BOOK OF
PSALMS
PSALM 51

David pleads for forgiveness after he went in to Bath-sheba—He pleads: Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

1 HAVE ^amercy upon me, O God, according to thy ^blovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies ^cblot out my ^dtransgressions.
2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and ^acleanse me from my sin.
3 For I ^aacknowledge my transgressions: and my ^bsin *is* ever before me.
4 Against thee, thee only, have I ^asinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be ^bjustified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.
5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother ^aconceive me.
6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.
7 Purge me with ^ahyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.
9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.
10 Create in me a ^aclean heart, O God; and ^brenew a right spirit within me.
11 Cast me not away from thy ^apresence; and take not thy ^bholy spirit from me.
12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.
13 *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be ^aconverted unto thee.
14 ^aDeliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.
15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
16 For thou desirest not ^asacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering.
17 The ^asacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a ^bcontrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.
18 Do good in thy good ^apleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.
19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

David did three things temporally that Christ will do spiritually. David united the 12 tribes into one nation. David succeeded in winning the whole extent of the promised land for the covenant people. David established Zion or Jerusalem as the spiritual and political center of Israel.

But what of David? D&C 132:38-39: 38 David also received ^amany wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me. 39 ^aDavid's wives and concubines were ^bgiven unto him of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the ^ckeys of this power; and in none of these things did he ^dsin against me save in the case of ^eUriah and his wife; and, **therefore he hath ^ffallen from his exaltation**, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world, for I ^ggave them unto another, saith the Lord.

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, commenting on David's sin, said: "David committed a dreadful crime, and all his life afterwards sought for forgiveness. Some of the psalms portray the anguish of his soul; yet David is still paying for his sin. He did not receive the resurrection at the time of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter declared that his body was still in the tomb, and the Prophet Joseph Smith has said, 'David sought repentance at the hand of God carefully with tears, for the murder of Uriah; but he could only get it through hell: he got a promise that his soul should not be left in hell.'" (Answers to Gospel Questions, 1:74)

Conclusion:

Sow a thought reap an action.

Sow an action reap a habit.

Sow a habit reap a character.

Sow a character reap a destiny.

Sins begin as thoughts. Don't let them get a foothold in your mind.

Although David was triumphant in battles, he was tragically vanquished in the battle for his own soul. Endure to the end.

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