

Life of David

A Man After God's Own Heart

The Bathsheba Incident

- In the springtime, David launched an offensive against the Ammonites [2 Sam 11:1].
 - David sent Joab and did not go out to lead the men of Israel.
 - Unlike the punitive strike in chapter 10, this was a more significant campaign so David should have gone out with the men.
 - The Israelite army had success despite this.
- David was being very lazy while he remained in Jerusalem [2 Sam 11:2a; Pr 6:9-11].
- David's evening walk was not sinful, but his mental attitude became sinful [2 Sam 11:2b; Matt 5:28; Jas 1:13-15].
- David acted upon his lusts when he inquired about the bathing woman [2 Sam 11:3a].
- David learned that the bathing woman was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite [2 Sam 11:3b].
 - Uriah was one of David's mighty men and was out fighting with the army [2 Sam 23:22-23, 39].
 - Uriah was a man of one wife, whereas David had many wives and concubines which diminished his capacity for marital blessings [2 Sam 12:2-3].
- David completely succumbed to his lusts by summoning Bathsheba to his palace and sleeping with her [2 Sam 11:4].
 - The NASB translation of this verse is poor and should read "David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her (for she had purified herself of her uncleanness), and then she returned to her house."
 - Bathsheba had just completed her menstrual cycle and her bath was possibly the completion of the purification process [Lev 15:19-33; 18:19].
 - This was evidence that Bathsheba was not already pregnant when David slept with her.
 - The fact that she went home shortly afterwards indicates that this was likely a one-night stand in David's eyes.
- David learned that Bathsheba was pregnant and reacted in his carnality [2 Sam 11:5-6].
 - David could have heard the news and responded by recognizing his sin and repenting.
 - Instead, he reacted in his carnal state and demanded that Uriah be brought to him.
 - Joab obeyed David's request, not realizing the circumstances involved.
- David made two attempts to get Uriah to sleep with Bathsheba so he would think that he was the father of the child [2 Sam 11:7-13].
 - David began by asking Uriah "innocent" questions about the state of the war [v. 7].
 - He then sent Uriah to his home, hoping he would be anxious to be intimate with Bathsheba [v. 8].
 - Uriah stayed outside and slept with the very servants who brought Bathsheba to David [v. 9].
 - David's servants told him what Uriah had done, so David asked Uriah why he had done that [v. 10].

- Uriah responded with divine viewpoint [v. 11].
- David asked Uriah to stay with him at the palace so he could get him drunk in an attempt to get him to give in to his desires [v. 12-13a].
- Even though Uriah was intoxicated, he chose to stay committed to his convictions [v. 13b].
- Some scholars speculate that one (or more) of the servants told Uriah about Bathsheba's adultery, so he made sure he was always in the presence of witnesses who could verify that he had not gone in to be with his wife.
- When David's original devious plan failed, he resorted to murder [2 Sam 11:14-15].
 - David would not kill Uriah by his own hand, but he murdered him with this order [2 Sam 12:9].
 - Joab obeyed the first part of David's order by placing Uriah in battle against the best of the Ammonites warriors but did not completely withdraw from him [2 Sam 11:16-17].
 - Joab sent a messenger to report on the battle, highlighting Uriah's death [2 Sam 11:18-24].
 - David sent the messenger back under the pretense of encouraging Joab but, in the process, he completely dismissed Uriah's murder as a mere consequence of war [2 Sam 11:25].
- After mourning the death of her husband, Bathsheba married David [2 Sam 11:26-27].
 - Joseph mourned Jacob's death for seven days [Gen 50:7-10].
 - The men of Jabesh-gilead mourned the death of Saul and Jonathan seven days [1 Sam 31:11-13].
 - The Israelites mourned the death of Moses for thirty days [Deut 34:5-8].
 - The Lord permitted Bathsheba to give birth to the child of adultery, but what David had done was evil in God's eyes [v. 27b] and would have consequences that would trouble David all the days of his life on this earth.