

THE SAD DECEPTION

For the last few years, I have often heard of the life of King David being referred to by some people as a buffer for their own sinful lives. They have made such statements as, "If God is going to judge me for my rebellion and immorality, then He will have to likewise judge King David." Such a statement is man's attempt to put God on trial and judge His love and dealings with King David; a judgment that I would seriously warn against.

Overlooking the life of David brings to mind his victories over wild bears, giants, and King Saul. He was a humble shepherd, and showed grace and mercy to his people as a warrior and as a king. He was a sensitive and a true lover of God as we see so clearly in the Psalms. But David was also a deceiver, murderer, and an adulterer. He suffered a lack of faith at such strategic moments in his life, as the time he numbered his soldiers to see if he could win a war and incurred the wrath of God, or the time he nearly killed Nabal out of anger at having been refused help.

The question I would like to ask you is which part of the life of David would you like to emulate, and which of the succeeding consequences would you like to receive? Many people are challenged to follow David's faith and inspired to follow in his worship and praise and they are greatly blessed; but there are others who have tried to use his downfalls, and God's subsequent faithfulness to him, as a defiant justification for their own sin.

Instead of being out at war with his men, David was in the comfort of his home. He looked out over Jerusalem and saw a woman bathing, and he lusted after her. He had her brought to him, and she became pregnant with his child. David found out that her husband was a soldier fighting in his army, so he caused him to be killed and then took his wife, Bathsheba, and she bore him a son. Everything was going well in the kingdom and God didn't seem to care about what David had done. There is a saying, "God's mill grinds slow, but it grinds fine."

The work of the Holy Spirit began to weigh on David. Day and night he began to agonize over his sin. He cried out to God in Ps. 31:10 that his very bones were being consumed in grief over his sin. God was silent and He wasn't speaking through David anymore. The feeling of being abandoned by God robbed David of the pleasure he thought he would enjoy with his beautiful wife, and though God hadn't struck him dead, he couldn't escape the consequences of his sin. God knew how and when to bring His judgment on David.

For many years in America, a very influential evangelical pastor lived a life beyond reproach. He spoke to the US President and met with national figures to give council, and he lead the opinions of many believers to vote for what he felt was right. He was invited to speak on national TV continually as a respected authority on many issues. He was a true leader and pastor of a community that numbered over 14,000, and brethren from all over the country came to hear him speak. I personally know one of his vice-pastors who told

me that this man had exceptional wisdom and ability, and all his jet-setting, money, and reputation had not seemed to affect him at all.

Everything was going well until a young man, angered by the pastor's public condemnation of immorality in American society, revealed their homosexual relationship, having been his partner for years, and his sin was exposed. He lost his reputation as a respected leader, and he lost his ministry in humiliation. Jesus gave us a law that is stronger than the law of gravity: You will reap what you sow. This is an eternal principal that David had to learn, and so will all those who follow the deception of sin.

I want to share what David Wilkerson wrote on this subject. Sin causes Christians to become craven cowards who live in humiliating defeat. They can't stand up with courage against sin because of the secret sin in their own lives. They excuse the sins of others because of the disobedience in their own hearts and they can't preach victory because they live in defeat.

King David had enemies. When David was right with the Lord and in good fellowship, none of his enemies could stand before him. But when David sinned and became estranged from the Lord, his enemies grew bold and triumphed over him.

David's sin of adultery immediately followed one of his greatest victories. This great man of God, basking in the glory of a great victory, began to lust after Bathsheba, killed her husband Uriah and committed adultery with her. "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord" (2 Samuel 11:27).

So the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to David. The prophet did not come to counsel David on how to handle his guilt and condemnation. Rather, Nathan got right to the heart of the matter. "You have despised the commandment of the Lord. You have done evil in the sight of the Lord. You are guilty of secret sin." David fled into the wilderness—a weeping, barefoot, cowardly man, shorn of his power and courage because of sin.

We have had enough teaching on how to cope with our problems and fear. We have not had enough teaching about how to deal with sin in our lives. How do you overcome a sin that has become a habit? Where is the victory over a sin that almost becomes a part of your life?

I have no formulas, no simple solutions. I do know there is much comfort in the Bible for those who are fighting battles between the flesh and the spirit. Paul fought the same kind of battle, against the same kind of enemy. He confessed, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Romans 7:19).

Many Christians today haven't had the fear of God planted in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. The writer of Proverbs declares, "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil" (Proverbs 16:6). "Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil" (3:7). "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death" (14:27).

The "fear of God" referred to here indicates much more than reverential awe and respect. We can't receive the full revelation of God's truth until his fear is deeply rooted in us. All revelation is tied to his holy fear.

I'm convinced that without the fear of God, we cannot experience lasting deliverance from sin. Yet, in many churches the fear of the Lord has become a taboo subject. When was the last time you heard a sermon on the fear of God?

One reason for this is that society's permissiveness has invaded God's house. In recent years, the term "grace" has come to mean a cover for sin. As the psalmist writes, "There is no fear of God before his eyes" (36:1). David Wilkerson, July 2, 2009 (by permission)

David's sin was exposed by the prophet Nathan. Psalms 51 is his declaration of repentance and it shows his heart's true desire. God forgave David, but his life would be never the same. Before his fall, David had enjoyed victories, celebrations and dancing, he had walked with the Lord and even though he had many difficulties, he had always faced them with great faith, knowing that God was going to identify with him, even in the valley of the shadow of death. But after the exposure of his sin, we see a different man. When the message came, "Your child by Bathsheba is dead," he probably thought it was over and that he had paid for his sin. Well, he was wrong, for even though he found forgiveness, there were consequences and grief that would follow him for the rest of his life.

Moral corruption began to undermine the foundation of David's family. Amnon, David's son, raped his half-sister and was murdered by her brother, Absalom, in revenge. David doted on Absalom and never punished him, but Absalom began to turn the hearts of the people to himself and 40 years later he usurped the throne of his father, forcing David to flee Jerusalem in fear for his life. Then David's trusted counselor, Ahithophel, defected to Absalom. Ahithophel, according to Bible genealogy, was the father of Eliam, and Eliam was the father of Bathsheba (II Sam. 23:34; 11:3). So he, being the grandfather of Bathsheba, could have conspired against David because he was angry and disillusioned with him after his affair with Bathsheba and the

subsequent murder by proxy of her husband, Uriah the Hittite. He counseled Absalom to defile David's remaining concubines in the sight of all Israel in a show of defiance.

David was no longer the victorious general who conquered all his enemies and accomplished great deeds; he was no longer the man who sought after God with all his heart and wrote psalms of praise. Now he was running away, beaten and broken. As he fled Jerusalem, Shimei came out to curse and insult him. Joab wanted to kill him, but David spared him saying, "Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him." (II Sam. 16:11) Was this the same God who had given him victory and strength, a God who would curse and torment him? Or had he become a depressed and grieving man who was still living under the guilt and shame of his past?

Then a sobering end came bringing disaster and more grief. Absalom is killed! David wept, "O my son Absalom...would God I had died for thee...!" (II Sam. 18:33) "Why Absalom? It was I who sinned!" The consequence of his sin was the mill of God, grinding David fine.

"A.W Tozer wrote, 'What comes into our mind when we think about God is the most important thing about us'. There is a real danger in the contemporary misunderstanding of God's love. In spite of God's clarity of Scripture on God's love, millions are in darkness by a notion of God completely out of balance. They want a God who is loving but not wrathful. That is not the God of scripture. They are worshiping a God of their own making.

There is always a danger when any one attribute of God such as His love is only empathized. Paul wrote in Romans.11:22, "Behold the goodness and severity of God." It is crucial that we maintain a biblical balance in our thinking. While we study God's love we must bear in mind He is also holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens and that He is a righteous judge who has indignation every day. Psalm 7:11, Hebrews 7:26. God's love is measureless, but it does not negate any of these other truths. David realized this. The God Who Loves, John Macarther, pg. 41.

David repented sincerely and was spared death but not the consequences of his sin.

David was in his mid 50's when he fell in sin. He lived a long time after he returned to Jerusalem as king, but we see almost nothing noteworthy that he accomplished from then until the time of his death. Sin had taken a great man who was loved, used, and appreciated by all, and sin silenced him for the rest of his life. He made history in his youth, was a

great hero, and his accomplishments will be spoken of for eternity. The love and wisdom God gave him was very special, but even one as David paid a high price for disobedience. This is an example to us all. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forwarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." (1Thess. 4:3-8)

We are living in a time when great temptations are all around us, so we must not let our guard down. Pray always in the Spirit and walk close to our beloved Savior, and one day we can talk about this with David in eternity. I definitely have a few questions for him. Love, Clark