

# KINGS OF ISRAEL I: 1 & 2 SAMUEL

## WEEK 5

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November 29, 2019

# OUTLINE

## DAVID'S SELF-DESTRUCTION

Bathsheba

Judgment and Consequences

## EPILOGUE

Literary Structure

Conclusion

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# THE DEED

The straightforward reading is that David slept with Uriah's wife. When he couldn't cover it up, he had Uriah killed. Let's look closer:

1. David's sin advances in stages. He could have stopped at each one.
  - ▶ David made himself vulnerable by failing to do his job as commander-in-chief. This is noteworthy because the author goes out of the way to explain a cultural detail: "at the time when kings go out to battle . . . David stayed in Jerusalem."
  - ▶ While aimlessly sauntering, David does not merely notice Bathsheba, but leers at her. "The glance becomes the gaze." (Baldwin, 248)
  - ▶ Instead of satisfying his sexual appetite with one of his half-dozen wives, David asks who she is—a little "research."
  - ▶ Even after discovering that she is married, he pursues her.
  - ▶ After a one-night stand, he tries (probably weeks later) to trick Uriah—twice! Once with a little gift, second with drunkenness.
  - ▶ Finally, he resort to foul play and conspires with Joab.

# THE DEED

Let's look closer (cont'd):

2. Bathsheba was not a random woman:

- ▶ Her father, Eliam, was among most trusted warriors, the Mighty Men.
- ▶ Her grandfather is one of David's advisers, Ahithophel the Gilonite.

3. Uriah was no random man:

- ▶ Uriah was also among Mighty Men!
- ▶ Uriah was a Hittite! That means he's a converted Gentile.
- ▶ Ironically and tragically, Uriah is out in battle (not David), he won't sleep with his wife (not David), and obviously is not in adultery (not David).

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## THE IMPLOSION OF DAVID'S FAMILY

Here are the judgments of God (II Sam 12) and their fulfillment:

1. V.10—'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house . . .' *In the short term, we witness the murderous saga between his sons (Amnon-Absalom, Solomon-Abijah). In the long term, the endless skirmishes that culminate in exile and the destruction of the City of David.*
2. V.11— 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.' *This is fulfilled by Absalom and David's concubines.*
3. V.14—"... the child also that is born to you shall surely die." *This happens immediately.*

Why do you think God chose these ways to judge David?

## O! THE HUMANITY!

These episodes show depth of personality and realism captured by the author:

- ▶ Shimei, son of Gera—David is curiously merciful towards him during his return to Jerusalem yet calls on Solomon (man of peace!) to kill him.
- ▶ David's Pitiably Optimistic—He goes from saying, "If he is by himself there is good news," to seeing another and saying, "This one is also bringing good news." (Ironically, the news is actually good.)
- ▶ David, Joab and Absalom—Waltke persuasively argues that the language of II Sam 13:39 indicates that David wanted to go kill Absalom after he killed Amnon. Joab compels him through subterfuge to forgive Absalom after years of exile. Then after Absalom conspires to seize the kingdom, Joab—rightly—kills Absalom (cf. Saul's similar vulnerability) and David is inconsolable.
- ▶ Joab's Wisdom—Joab is an ungodly violent pragmatist. However, at key junctures he speaks wisdom to David (after Absalom's death, discourages the census).



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## CONCENTRIC FORMAT

Rather than a slapdash effort to add all the extras in, the epilogue to the books of Samuel are carefully constructed.

A	Story (short)	21:1-14	Prayer for Gibeonites
B	Annals (short)	21:15-22	Mighty Men in Gath
C	Poetry (long)	22:1-51	David's Song of Praise
C'	Poetry (short)	23:1-7	David's Last Words
B'	Annals (long)	23:8-39	Mighty Men's Exploits
A'	Story (long)	24:1-25	Prayer for the Plague

*At a deeper level, [these chapters] present Israel's greatest king as a man who both inherited problems from his predecessor and created them himself (A, A'); who fought and achieved his victories with the help of many others who were celebrated here (B, B'); and whose joy and strength was his God, whom he praised with total abandon because everything he was and everything he had achieved was to be attributed to the faithful Lord God of Israel (C, C'). (Baldwin, 302)*

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# FINAL LESSONS

1. Through David, God brought about the greatest event in human history: the sacrifice of God himself in the man Jesus Christ. We are direct beneficiaries of David's humble obedience to God. What will the generations say about you?
2. David's failure is instructive:
  - ▶ Remember David when Satan accuses you in your own failures—God still used him.
  - ▶ None of us is above major failure. Who would guess the faithful lad who defeated Goliath would also kill his friend for a woman?
  - ▶ There is nothing more grievous than seeing preventable chaos in one's family. What could David have done differently?
3. David's godly approach to his superiors is worth lifelong meditation.
4. We read several times that the LORD was with David. Yet, Jesus says, "Surely I am with you to the end of the age" in Matthew 28:20.

## REFERENCES

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3. Youngblood, Ronald F. *Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 3: 1 & 2 Samuel*, edited by Frank Gaebelin. Zondervan, 1992.