



A MAN OF GOD, BUT NOT LIVING LIKE IT

## **WHAT DID IT MEAN TO THEM**

### **1) The "King" on the run**

In the last 7 studies we have talked about God's timing and keeping our faith in the fact that if God is working we can rest on the fact that He will get it done. Each of us, from smallest to greatest, have times where we question if things are really true. Those things that we have believed to be true for a long time come into question in our minds at times. However, the things of God shouldn't be this way... that doesn't mean that we don't question at times, but we shouldn't.

David had been pursued by Saul for some time. He had narrowly escaped being killed a few times already and now David makes a statement that shows his lack of trust.

Then David said to himself, "Now I will perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to safely escape into the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of searching for me anymore in all the territory of Israel and I will escape from his hand." 2 So David set out and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath. (1 Samuel 27:1-2)

Here is a young man that was anointed king by one of God's greatest prophets, a man that killed bears and lions with his bare hands, the same man that picked up a small stone and dropped a giant and potentially saved a nation. This young man should have no doubt in what God was doing and was going to do. Yet here he was running for his life because he feared that Saul would kill him.

David gets hung up on his present circumstances. His outlook was that of complete doom, gloom and despair. We can all empathize with him when we look at his situation. The present king and the first king of Israel, Saul was out to take David's life. The song was sung, "Saul has killed his thousands and David his 10 thousands." This made the king jealous and now Saul was bitter towards David.

The reality that Saul wanted to end David's life was a grind on the heart and mind of David. He wanted to get away from that. He wanted to run from it. He wanted to be free of it. Every day that David woke up in the morning and every night when he would lay his head down to sleep there was a constant pressure that existed in knowing that his life was in great danger.

Again didn't God call out Samuel to anoint David to be Saul's successor? Didn't God promise David that he would soon have the throne? He did. Those promises are rich and they came from God Himself. Oh, how David should have been comforted by that! Somehow David seems to have completely forgotten what God has done in his life.

## 2) The King shrinking his duties?

In 2 Samuel 11 we read of a time in David's life that is something that I am sure he wasn't proud of. After killing Goliath, this story is probably one of the stories that David is most remembered for. Unfortunately, the times we mess up in life can be what people remember us for. Consider many of those men that stood on stages on TV. Those that fell to sexual or other sin are remembered for their sin, not for the work they did before they fell. The same is true of David. The good news is this. God doesn't remember David for that sin. Yes, we read about it in God's word, but that is so we don't do the same things David did. This story and what we gain from the end of the story teaches of us of God grace and redemption. Let's take a look at the first part of chapter 11.

Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they brought destruction on the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem. 2 Now at evening time David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. (2 Samuel 11:1-2)

It's interesting that the writer starts this chapter out like this. The story doesn't seem to be about war, although we will see later how it relates. But why does it start with "Then it happened in the spring"?

According to the history, wars were generally fought in the spring of the year. We have to understand the weather patterns of that part of the world to know what is meant by this. The weather from November to about March is usually rainy and in the spring the rain generally breaks and things dry up. Also the days were longer in the spring than in the winter. So it just makes sense that springtime is when wars were fought.

It makes one wonder about if the remainder of these two verses talk about David being on his roof, why wasn't he with his soldiers, when verse one ends with "at the time when kings go out to battle"? David is the king of Israel by this time and Biblical historians put his age at about 50. He has a great history of leading his soldiers into battle and God had blessed him with miraculous success. So why was he home? It seems that he is shirking his duties as the man that is leading the great nation on earth.

David goes to his roof in the evening and looking out over his kingdom. As he scans the horizon and considers all that God has done for and through him, he notices a woman on a neighboring roof. This woman was bathing and the Bible says that she is "very beautiful". The Bible doesn't use the word "Very" that often, so we can assume that she was a stunner. And David stops and stares.

Not only is David not with his soldiers he has now taken notice of this beautiful woman and he is allowing lust to get the better of him. This is an example of how when we start into sin, it can snowball and before long it is gaining speed as it rolls downhill quickly. And in David's case it is rolling downhill very quickly.

### **3) The King falls**

David is called a “Man after God’s own heart”, yet we see him in the wrong place again.

First we saw David running for his life from Saul and even saying that Saul will eventually kill him. Then we see David still in Jerusalem when he was supposed to be leading his army at war. Next we see him walking on his roof, which is innocent enough, but now we see David stopping and assumedly lusting after a “Very beautiful” woman on the roof near his palace.

This progression of sin is similar to what we see in the first two verses of the book of Psalms.

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the person who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! <sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the Law of the LORD, and on His Law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2)

There is a progression of sin that is shown in these three verbs, "walking," "standing" and "sitting" describes the progressive steps of a person's involvement in sin and evil. What we can learn from these two verses is that the person that begins a life in sin often progresses deeper into sin.

1 John 1:9 explains how we (Christians) can get out of sin and right with God. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) This is redemption.

Once we start falling into a sinful pattern we will continue deeper and deeper into it, unless we confess. David was on this downward spiral. He was “walking” on his roof, when he should have been with his army. Next he was “standing” and staring at the woman on the next roof. Then we see him “sitting” in the midst of a sinful life when he invites Bathsheba into his bedroom and sleeps with her.

This sinful spiral goes far deeper when David learns that Bathsheba is pregnant and David is the only possible father because her husband Uriah is off fighting the battles that David should be fighting. David brings Uriah back from the war and attempts to get him to go in and sleep with Bathsheba, but he refuses. Eventually, David has Uriah murdered to cover his own sin.

### **4) A king rebuked**

David's life is a mess. He is now out of a close relationship with God and things aren't going well for him. In the progression that we looked at earlier we are at the “sitting” stage. David is living in the middle of his sinful choices and he does appear to be trying to get out. But God sees everything and He knows the mess David has made.

In 2 Samuel 12 we read that God send Nathan to confront David about his sin. First Nathan lays out a story of a poor man that raised just one small sheep. A wealthy man with countless sheep came and took the poor man's sheep and slaughtered it. (2 Samuel 12:2-4)



When David heard about this gross injustice he was furious and said, “This man deserves to die” (2 Samuel 12:5). Little did David know, he was signing his own death sentence. The wealthy man that Nathan spoke of was David himself and the situation was what David had done to Uriah when he took his wife and had him killed. In David’s own words, “This man deserves to die”.

Our God is a merciful God and He loved David like He loves you and me. David confessed his sin and God forgave him. Even though he was forgiven, Nathan laid out the consequences that David would deal with for many years to come.

We must realize that even though we can be forgiven and redeemed, there will always be consequences for the sins that we commit. God is merciful and He will give us what we need to get through the consequences, but many of these issues we will deal with will be painful.

### **5) A man after God’s own heart**

Through all of the sinful issues that David dealt with God still saw something in him that was useful. David was human like the rest of us. We are in need of redemption because as Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God”.

It’s like a talented woodworker that can see a log and he sees what is on the inside. He sees what can be made from the beautifully grained wood when most of us see the rough, ugly bark. He cuts, shapes and sands that wood until the finished product is an amazingly beautiful piece of art.

It’s a great example of how God sees you and I. From the time we were in the womb, God knew us and saw something about us that could someday be beautiful.

Psalm 139:13-14

“for it was You who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise You because I have been fearfully and wonderfully made”.

God did the same with David. He removed those things that kept him from being what He saw deep down in David and then afterwards He sanded away the rough spots and eventually He hand polished him until God saw a reflection of Himself in David. At the time of his anointing and still at the end God saw something in David that made him know that David was “A man after God’s own heart”.