

## David - Pride Before The Fall - Part Seven

*by Charles E. Wigg*

### **Pride Goeth Before A Fall**

Victory and success are wonderful, but being human we can be exposed to danger through these very things. 2Sam. 10, is a record of success after success in David's experience. It seems that it lulled him into a false sense of security. He did not realise that the worst enemy that any of us can face is not external. In David's case it was not the armies on the battle fields, but his own lust that conquered him.

We read in chapter 11:1, one short phrase, which told of David's complacency, and resulted in endless sorrow. "But David tarried still at Jerusalem". While others went to war, while kings fought, David retired in the luxury of his palace. In the cool of the evening he rose from his bed, and then he was attacked by the lust of the eyes. The pride of life, glorying in his position, he gave way to the lust of the flesh. The result was that he fell into adultery, and later had the husband of the woman he used for his pleasure, murdered by strategy in battle. What a sad and sordid story it all is. The fault was not all his, as the woman should never have been seen bathing in public. Such a thing in the eastern culture was very wrong. Satan will see to it, that when our lust awakes, there will always be one to encourage and assist us in gratifying that lust, in leading us into temptation and sin.

Though it seems that there was only one night's sexual encounter, yet the woman conceived, and David's sin was about to be discovered. Moses said, "Be sure your sin will find you out", Num. 32:23. David tried to cover his sin, and sent for Bath Sheba's husband, (one of his most loyal soldiers), Uriah. David doubtless thought that having been away from his wife for some time, that (like most soldiers), he would be thinking of enjoying the normal pleasures of married life. However it was not to be. Uriah proved to be a man of more noble principles than his king. He thought of the Ark of Jehovah dwelling in a tent, and his fellow soldiers, engaged in warfare, enduring hardships, and he refused the pleasures offered by David. So David arranged to sacrifice the life of his faithful and loyal servant, in a vain attempt to cover his sin. After the death of Uriah, David then sent and took his widow to be his wife.

However what David had done was witnessed by God. He being a righteous God, would not pass over the sin of His servant. God sent His servant Nathan to David with a message. It would not be an easy message to deliver, however Nathan was faithful and fearless. He delivered the message in the form of a parable. The word of God is like this, it often does not point the finger of condemnation directly, but is like a mirror, in which we see ourselves. As Nathan unfolded the story, David was made angry by the injustice of what was done to the poor man. In righteous indignation, he burst out, "As the Lord liveth, the man that has done this thing shall surely die". He was stunned when Nathan replied, "Thou art the man". However the word of God went right home to his heart, he bowed his head in humility and cried, "I have sinned against the Lord". Because he humbled himself in repentance, he received a message of forgiveness. "The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die." Nathan could only say this, because another, the sinless Son of David, was to die in David's stead. Thus it was that David's guilt and iniquity was forgiven, removed. However the effect of his sin was to remain, he was to reap what he had sown.

We should remember this at all times. It is gloriously true that the blood of Jesus Christ His cleanses from all sin, yet the effect of our sin remains. The solemn things that God said would happen to David did take place. God drew David's attention to all that He had done for him. His kindness was beyond contention, and God told him that if all that had not been enough, God would have given him more. Yet in spite of all that God had done. In spite of all that He had given him, yet David through his sin and his subsequent actions had despised both God's law, and even despised God Himself. The time would come when an evil adversary would arise from amongst his own sons. This man, (Absalom), would rape David's wives openly, in the sight of the sun. The life of David's unborn child would also be snuffed out.

There were other awful events that would bring sorrow to David's heart. His own daughter would be raped by her own brother. He in turn would be murdered by his own brother. David would be driven from his throne into exile, by his own son, and that son would be slain in battle.

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David could never have dreamed that such would be the consequences of a night's illicit pleasure. Let us heed the warning! Sin does give pleasure, but it is only temporary, the pleasure soon passed, but the guilt, the blame, the consequences remain; often for generations to come.

There are lessons for us to learn from Nathan's parable. "There came a traveller to the rich man," that traveller is still around, let us never invite him in. Let us put him on the road, that is what he deserves. That traveller is temptation and lust, we are never to cater for him. We are warned to "Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lust thereof." Rom. 13:14. We are never to "give place to the devil", Eph. 4:27. If we are so foolish to indulge our lust, who knows what the sorrow and the consequences may be?

### **David's Overthrow**

The following eight chapters in 2 Samuel, unfold the tragedy that resulted from David's sin. Yet we also have a beautiful Psalm in our Bible, (Psalm, 51), as a direct result. How many a fallen Christian has gained comfort and assurance from that Psalm! Perhaps it is best to draw the veil over many of the details that those sad chapters reveal. So we will keep our focus on David himself, because there are many beautiful things that come to light in him, as well as some sad failures.

At the end of his life David said, "Th ruler over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." 2Sam. 23:3. However, he did not always obey his own words. He was a man of great affections, he really loved his own children, but on occasions allowed that human love to becloud his vision, and to cause him to go beyond the law, and the principles of righteousness. We do well to learn from these failures. When David heard of the vile actions of his son Ammon, though he was angry, yet he did nothing about it. Had he been just, and had he ruled in the fear of God, he would surely have carried out the sentence of the law of God. It was his natural love that kept him from acting in righteousness.

David must have been greatly humbled, when he saw the same sin come to light in his son, as had blighted his life. Ammon's sin caused the spirit of revenge, and of murder to fester in the heart of Absalom, the full brother of the girl who had been raped. He waited for the right opportunity to come, and then took revenge. Ammon was murdered, and Absalom had to go into exile, thus David was bereaved of two sons in one day. This broke his tender heart, and he mourned for his son every day. However he had forgiven Absalom, and he longed to bring him home again, but one thing stood in the way, and that was the principle of righteousness. It is true that David had been forgiven by God for his sins of adultery and murder, but this forgiveness was based on his genuine repentance. There was no evidence of repentance with Absalom.

Joab, (a very hard man himself), discerned the king's longings, and contrived to make use of a wise woman, to concoct a story that would enable David to understand the thoughts of his General. This led David to act contrary to justice, and Absalom was brought back to Jerusalem. Though back home again, yet Absalom was not permitted to enter the king's presence, and he resented this. To keep the story short, Absalom was brought into David's presence, David stooped to kiss his rebellious son, and in so doing (as another has said), overturned his throne. He had sacrificed the principles of righteousness, being swayed by his own natural affections. He was to reap much sorrow because of this.

Absalom used his own natural beauty, (in which he gloried), and flattery, to steal away the hearts of the men of Israel. Let this be a warning to us all. Beware of men who seek to use their own personal charm and personality, as well as flattery to gain a following. At length the history of the Church will reveal that there have been many such, down through the ages.