

Theme: God sends David a word of judgment and forgiveness, detailing the consequences for his sin, but also assuring Him of God's love and covenant mercy that will prevail in the end.

I. Intro - When the Evil Guy Wins

- A. "Scar is going to win and Simba lost this time!"
- B. Kids don't want the bad guy to win and get away with it
- C. We are all that way: justice should be done - for others!
- D. What about David? Will he get away with his gross sin in 2 Samuel 11?
- E. What can we learn from this?

II. The Lord Responds

- A. The Lord sends Nathan to David
The Lord **sent** Nathan to David. 2 Samuel 12:1
 - 1. This points to a reversal of chapter 11
 - a. Yahweh was absent during chapter 11 until the final phrase (because He was not in David's view) - but now the Lord will act
 - b. 'Send' was used to show David acting in despotic power in chapter 11 (used 8x of David's actions), but now it is Yahweh who 'sends'.
 - 2. The Lord sends Nathan, who comes in the mantle of God's prophet to confront the king for his sin.
 - 3. The Game of Thrones is on! King Yahweh will now confront His vassal David. Will David submit?
 - 4. It often appears that someone is getting away with sin, but God is never asleep and He will deal with it in His own time and way.

B. Nathan's parable to David

There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ² The rich man had very many flocks and herds, ³ but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to **eat** of his morsel and **drink** from his cup and **lie** in his arms, and it was like a **daughter** to him. 2 Samuel 12:1-3 (ESV)

- 1. What an incredible contrast of a poor man, and his love for his one sheep, with a rich, powerful man.
- 2. The wording hearkens back to chapter 11 - eat, drink and sleep were verbs of what Uriah refused to do with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:11).
- 3. Also, the sheep was like a "daughter" - part of Bathsheba's name.
"Now a **traveler** came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he **took** the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him." 2 Samuel 12:4
- 4. A traveler - actually a walker (same word as used for David 'walking' on his rooftop)
- 5. Rich man wants to be hospitable, but he will not use his own sheep. He is callous, entitled and greedy.
- 6. In a violent abuse of power he "took" (same as David in 11:4) the little lamb from the poor man.
- 7. This story is presented as a probable court case, with a clear villain - the rich man who is abusing power and privilege to take the precious lamb from the poor, defenseless man

C. David's response of indignation, anger, and judgment
David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die! ⁶ He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity." 2 Samuel 12:5–6

1. David is so indignant and angry he does not let Nathan finish. How could someone abuse power and privilege like this? This can't stand!
2. David is so angry he takes an oath that the man deserves to die! The law states the penalty is a repayment of four sheep, but David wishes the "man" could be put to death for this abuse of power and privilege!
3. David had shown Uriah and his family no pity but had great pity on this unknown family. He can see the pitilessness of the rich "man" but is oblivious to his own pitilessness. He condemns the rich man's abuse of power and privilege but ignores the same sin in his own life.
4. David can not see his own sin, but he sees the sin of this "man" very clearly. Often, when we try to cover our own sin, our guilty conscience can still see the sin of others and judge it harshly.

D. Nathan's shocking response!

Then Nathan said to David, "**You are the man!**" 2 Samuel 12:7

1. What a hammer blow - You are the man!
2. Six times Nathan and David have spoken of a man, and now the 7th time David hears "You are the man!"

3. You are the man who abused power and privilege. You are the man who took from the powerless for your own needs. You are the man who stole and killed. You are the man who deserves to die!
4. You are the man who tried to cover his sin - and now it is revealed. You are the man who thought his sin was unseen and forgotten - but now you are the man who knows Yahweh has seen and calls you to account! YOU ARE THE MAN!

III. A Word of Judgment, A Word of Forgiveness

A. Yahweh sends a word of judgment

This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. 2 Samuel 12:7–8

1. This is not Nathan's word - it is the Word of Yahweh, the God of Israel, the true Ruler
2. Consider all I have done for you - anointed, delivered, made you king. And I would have done more if you asked!

Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰ Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.' 2 Samuel 12:9–10

3. Your actions show you despised My Word and my provisions for you.

4. At its core, sin is a despising of God, His Word, and His good gifts to us, preferring to follow our own wayward desires.
5. It was the same in the Garden. When we listen to the voice of sin rather than God, and when we are not grateful for all God has done, we fall into evil.
6. The punishment will fit the crime - you sent a sword against Uriah, so a sword will come into your family.
7. In fact, as David had pronounced a fourfold judgment, this will happen here. David had Uriah killed, and now four of his sons will die (the baby, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah) before this sad chain of events is complete.
 “This is what the Lord says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. ¹² You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’” 2 Samuel 12:11–12
8. You did evil, so calamity (same root in Hebrew) will fall upon you. You can not sin with impunity David.
9. The punishment will fit the crime. You slept with Uriah’s wife so someone will sleep with your wives. (Absalom - 2 Samuel 16:21-22).
10. David’s sin will be judged in the open because he is the king of Israel. God will make it known that the king must obey God’s Word like everyone else.
11. God has pronounced judgment on David - how will David respond? Will David confess, repent, and submit - or will he try to play the Game of Thrones and resist God, making excuses for his sin?

B. David’s repentance and confession

Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” 2 Samuel 12:13

1. David breaks in repentance & confesses his sin
2. David did not interrupt Nathan, nor does he argue with God’s Word exposing his sin.
3. True repentance humbly admits that God’s Word of judgment is true, and openly confesses sin.
4. We will be looking at David’s confession in detail as we examine Psalm 51 & Psalm 32 in coming weeks.

C. A Word of Forgiveness

Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” **Nathan replied, “The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die.”** 2 Samuel 12:13

1. God’s word of forgiveness is immediate. He does not withhold His forgiveness and love from His repentant child.
2. This is the Gospel! David has responded to God’s Word of Law, which exposed and judged his sin, and he now receives the comfort of the Gospel, assuring Him of forgiveness.
3. The basis of forgiveness is “The Lord has taken away your sin.” Sin is not just forgiven, it is taken away by none other than the Lord Himself. As David noted, sin is ultimately against God, and only God can ultimately forgive and remove our sin.
4. Note graciousness of the word of forgiveness - “You are not going to die.” David, by God’s Law and his own admission, deserved to die. But God’s mercy triumphs over judgment and David will not die.

IV. Forgiveness, Consequences, Hope

A. David is forgiven, but there will be consequences

Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” Nathan replied, “The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. ¹⁴ But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the Lord show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.” 2 Samuel 12:13–14

1. David repents and is forgiven by God. He is even spared the death he deserves - this is the mercy of God.
2. But there will be consequences for David’s sin. The child will die. In fact, four of David’s sons will die before this saga is ended. This is the horrible effect of sin, even when it has been forgiven.
 - a. The baby of Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12)
 - b. Amnon (2 Samuel 13:28-29)
 - c. Absalom (2 Samuel 18:14-15)
 - d. Adonijah (1 Kings 2:25)
3. Do not misunderstand - the child is not being judged, David is being judged. This is extremely unusual, and even here the child will be taken to be with God. This is severe, but it is the penalty & outcome of sin.
4. This is even true after David fasts and pleads for his child. David is forgiven, he is released from the death he deserves, he will even stay king, but there are consequences to his sin. This is yet another reason why we must never trifle with sin. Only a fool would play with something so deadly.

5. The same thing is true in human relationships and forgiveness. We must forgive others from the heart, but there may be consequences for sin. For example, a church leader who is guilty of gross moral failure should be forgiven but removed as pastor. A child must be forgiven, but discipline may remain.

6. However, we must never confuse the discipline of our loving Heavenly Father with punishment and the removal of relationship with Him. Christ has borne the punishment for sin in our place, and we will never be forsaken by God!

B. God’s mercy still brings hope into this situation

Then David comforted **his wife Bathsheba**, and he went to her and lay with her. **She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved him; ²⁵ and because the Lord loved him, he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.** 2 Samuel 12:24–25

1. His wife Bathsheba - the first time she is called this instead of “Uriah’s wife”.
2. Bathsheba gives birth to Solomon - and Yahweh loves Him.
3. The LORD “sends” Nathan - with a word of blessing and encouragement. Jedidiah means loved by Yahweh.
4. Solomon will be the fulfillment of God’s covenant with David. As promised, sin has brought discipline, but God’s covenant is still on track.
5. Amazingly, the covenant will be fulfilled even through David and Bathsheba! This is redemption!

V. Applying the Word

A. How do I respond to God's Law-Word of judgment?

1. God sent a word of judgment and discipline to David, and he responded with repentance
2. How do I respond when the Spirit convicts me of sin?
3. How do I respond when others speak God's Word of correction to me?
4. Am I able to hear God's Word of rebuke and correction, or do I resist it?

B. How do I respond to God's Word of grace?

1. God also sent David a word of grace, mercy, and forgiveness - the Gospel!
2. How do I respond to God's Word of forgiveness offered to me in the Gospel?
 - a. Have I trusted in Christ alone for salvation - or am I trying to remove my own sin?
 - b. As a believer, do I really receive God's Word of forgiveness, or do I wallow in my sin?
3. How do I respond to God's Word of forgiveness when consequences for sin remain? Does that make me doubt God's forgiveness?

C. The Table of Law and Gospel

1. This Table speaks of God's Law and the just punishment for sin, and it calls us to examine ourselves

2. This Table speaks of the Gospel, how Christ has borne the punishment we deserve, and that we are forgiven and loved.
3. Come and hear God's Word of judgment, and God Word of forgiveness, the Law and the Gospel.

A Word of Judgment, A Word of Forgiveness

2 Samuel 12:1-25

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Communion

Psalm 79:9

Teaching keywords: correction; confession and repentance; forgiveness; law and gospel; biblical characters; prophets; sin

Help us, O God our Savior, for the glory of your name; deliver us and forgive our sins for your name's sake. Psalms 79:9

The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, “There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor.² The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle,³ but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.⁴ “Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.”⁵ David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, “As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die!⁶ He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.”⁷ Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.⁸ I gave your master’s house to you, and your master’s wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more.⁹ Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.¹⁰ Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’¹¹ “This is what the LORD says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.¹² You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’”¹³ Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan replied, “The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die.¹⁴ But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.”¹⁵ After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he became ill.¹⁶ David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and went into his house and spent the

nights lying on the ground.¹⁷ The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them.¹⁸ On the seventh day the child died. David’s servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, “While the child was still living, we spoke to David but he would not listen to us. How can we tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate.”¹⁹ David noticed that his servants were whispering among themselves and he realized the child was dead. “Is the child dead?” he asked. “Yes,” they replied, “he is dead.”²⁰ Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate.²¹ His servants asked him, “Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!”²² He answered, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, ‘Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.’²³ But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”²⁴ Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved him;²⁵ and because the LORD loved him, he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah. 2 Samuel 12:1–25