

CONCERNING THE WAY

November 18, 2008

LESSON 38: ISRAEL: 2 SAMUEL



Chapter 11

This is one of those passages that people wish wasn't in the Scripture, for many reasons. You always like to see a hero come out good at the end; it's very disheartening to see a man given all the things that David was given, blow it. It's not a very pleasant story and we don't like it, but God, in His wisdom, insists we read this kind of story because it describes us. Now when we see David fall apart and collapse, notice God sustains him. He disciplines him but He sustains him because God has made a sovereign promise to sustain him. So similarly when you fall apart, God has made a promise to sustain us, and so He will sustain us over each of these kinds of difficulty.

2 Samuel 11:1 In the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally conduct wars, David sent out Joab with his officers and the entire Israelite army. They defeated the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed behind in Jerusalem.

When there's a war, David is usually right in the middle of it; so this is our first clue that something is wrong. Something has happened to David, he's no longer got the zeal, there's been a change in his life for the worst. He is not excited about following God's Word, about God's plan for his life any more. And here we get perspective on how sin operates, and there are some very vital principles here that can save you from a lot of grief in life.

It appears that David, first of all, has failed the prosperity test. God can test believers two ways; He can test us by adversity or He can test us by prosperity. I'm sure most of us would rather be tested by prosperity, but don't be so sure that the prosperity test is easier. It sounds easier, but recorded history in Scripture shows that more people fall apart under the test of prosperity than the test of adversity. God has graced David with everything, literally. God has given him a kingdom, an army that is victorious in the field, a family, by this time David has many sons. David's attitude, by staying in Jerusalem, would seem to indicate he is no longer thankful for what God is doing to him.

Let's look at the mechanics; turn back to Genesis 4 because this explains what's happening in David's soul. Understand this and you'll understand why other people do crazy things. Since the fall everyone of us has soul damage. We have problems with our bodies, dying flesh, our emotions, our thoughts, attitudes, etc. This means that every person's soul is under bondage. The human spirit is also affected, total depravity. The human spirit, instead of listening to the conscience, always wants to go contrary, it is a rebellious spirit and this factor operates on the mind and on the emotions. So the mind and the emotions faced from one side with the deterioration of the body, faced on the other side with a spirit of rebellion, are wounded to some degree in every person.

The Bible also tells us that your wounds or your areas of weakness in the mind and in the emotions are peculiar to your family, so that you actually inherit weaknesses through your father and mother. And therefore you are not just a product of your own sin, you are a product of your family's sin. You may not like it but that's just the way it is. Just as you inherit various abilities, you inherit your physique, you inherit various characteristics of your body from your parents, so also you inherit various soul damages from your parents.

Genesis 4:5-7 but with Cain and his offering he was not pleased. So Cain became very angry, and his expression was downcast. (6) Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why is your expression downcast? (7) Is it not true that if you do what is right, you will be fine? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. It desires to dominate you, but you must subdue it."

In Genesis 4, Cain in verse 5 was in the mental attitude sin stage. It's just mental attitude here, and it hasn't burst into anything violent yet. But God gives him a warning in verse 7, and that's the crouching principle. "If you do what is right," that means if you walk in fellowship, if you adhere to the Word, then you'll be accepted. But if you stay on negative volition, "then sin is crouching at the door."

Now what does that mean? Let's look at the soul again. David grew up in a family where there was a family habit of passion in the emotions. This passion was not by itself bad. For one thing, it promoted a lot of art; David wrote most of the Psalms. David was a very emotional person, not in the bad sense that he let his emotions spill out, but he could respond to situations in life to a greater degree than most of us can. He's under the curse, as all creatures are, but God is gracious and God has what we call restraining grace, so that David's passions would be contained. So David's passions were kept in line as long as David was obedient to what he knew of the will of God. Now when David chooses to disobey God, one of the results is God is going to remove his restraining hand of grace on passion and the sin crouches at the door. There is deep in David's heart a vicious beast, and this is the sin nature teamed up with his passionate nature that is going to blow overboard, and we're going to see murder, adultery and violence as a result of this. It was always there, it was always canned up in the fallen creature. It never spilled out because God's grace kept it in. Now don't think this is unusual of David. It's true of you and it's true of me. Every one of us have areas where our sin nature, if God tonight were to take His hands of restraint off you, your sin nature would come out in various gross forms and it would amplify itself into something very vicious and very ugly.

Don't get fatheaded, no amount of spiritual exercise is going to keep your sin nature completely in line. The only thing that keeps our sin natures in line is God's hand of restraining grace; that and that alone. But if by our own volition we choose to go against God's restraining hand of grace, then He gives us up. He gives us up to the passions that are there all the time, and David's family pattern is going to break forth.

Remember 2 Samuel 6:16, where David passionately responded to the ark, dancing before the Lord? There is nothing wrong with that because David was responding to God this way. So David's response pattern itself isn't wrong, it's the orientation. God has been keeping those passions oriented toward himself, up until this point. And now David has allowed weeds to grow in his life.

The very fact that he's acting as he is as chapter 11 begins, indicates that David may have been out of fellowship for some time. This is how you can get in trouble fast. If you have as big a libido as David had, and you stay out of fellowship, it's going to show up. That's just the way we're made since the fall. The only insurance policy you've got is to stay in fellowship. That's the only thing that'll get you through.

2 Samuel 11:2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. Now this woman was very attractive.

Does that sound like David? Psalm 5:3, 59:16, 143:8 seem to indicate David is an early riser. So now we notice two things about David; one, he has forsaken his responsibility as the commander in chief. He's sitting at home, and he's going to get chewed out for it later on by Uriah. And now he's up late walking around when he should be in bed. He's pacing; obviously this indicates that he's worrying, so right here he's in mental attitude sin. I want you to see the prelude, it wasn't that he just hopped in the sack with Bathsheba. So David stops walking and he starts looking. And he likes this show and so he just sits there and watches for a while.

2 Samuel 11:3 So David sent someone to inquire about the woman. The messenger said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

The servants of the court are in on all these escapades that go on. People have said well how did the writer know what happened in these intimate moments? The servants, look who he's sending; David doesn't go to Bathsheba personally, he sends an intermediary. Do you think these servants were any better at stopping gossip than we are? No, there's gossip all over David's court about this thing. So obviously many people knew what was going on. Now it's no accident those two names are there, because if you hold the place these two names show up some place else.

In chapter 23, we see the same two names in David's honor roll for his army. These are the distinguished officers of the army of the Israelites. In other words, this woman is the daughter of one of David's army buddies, and she is the wife of one of David's army buddies. Eliam is listed as one of David's top commanders, an outstanding soldier. In verse 39 you have "Uriah, the Hittite," another one of David's top commanders. So this particular woman is directly involved, not just the wife of some enlisted man, she is the wife of a prominent officer in David's army and the daughter of another prominent officer in David's army. David probably knows her.

2 Samuel 11:4 *David sent some messengers to get her. She came to him and he had sexual relations with her. (Now at that time she was in the process of purifying herself from her menstrual uncleanness.) Then she returned to her home.*

There is no indication that Bathsheba ever protested at any point, but what woman would refuse the king? Now what's this about uncleanness? Let's turn back to Leviticus 15:19 to find out what's going on.

Leviticus 15:19 *When a woman has a discharge and her discharge is blood from her body, she is to be in her menstruation seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean until evening.*

Under the Law of the Old Testament a woman who was in menstruation must abstain from sex for seven days, or according to this passage of Scripture, until the menstruation stopped if it lasted longer than seven days. Now along with this there are a series of commands to the husband.

Leviticus 18:19 *You must not approach a woman in her menstrual impurity to have sexual intercourse with her.*

No sex was allowed during the menstruation period, for seven days. In 20:18 there's even a stronger command.

Leviticus 20:18 *If a man has sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her fountain of blood and she has exposed the fountain of her blood, so both of them must be cut off from the midst of their people.*

So it's very clear that under the Old Testament menstruation was a time when the woman was considered ceremonially unclean, and therefore, during this period no sex was allowed. Now this had the effect of doing something very interesting. It had the effect of starting sex at the time when the women were most fertile. And if the Old Testament commands are carried out logically, then most of the sex activity of the male would be directed to his wife at the exact time of her fertility. Why is this? Because God was telling them to multiply, to be fruitful.

Now let's see how it looks in Bathsheba's case. She had gone through seven days; at the end of those seven days, she, it says in verse 4, was purifying herself. That is, the next couple of days was spent washing herself and then she would become clean again. It so happens, biologically, that a woman is fertile after about four or five more days; this is when the ovum is released. So therefore, the fertility period is very close; in Bathsheba's case she must have had a short menstrual period and she was very fertile at this time. And that's why in verse 4 there's this notice that she was purifying herself. It has the hint, if you take it with all these verses that I've shown you, that what David was doing is that he was essentially disregarding the Law, he was not giving her time to become purified. She was in the process of being purified and David just barged right in. This underscores the fact that David at this time could have cared less about the Word of God. Even his sexual treatment of Bathsheba was not in line with the Law.

Now I want to summarize the David and Bathsheba incident and try to pull this together. First point: David had probably been spiritually out of it for some time, long enough to establish life dominating patterns of rebellion against God, patterns that controlled where he was going to spend his time during the day. The self-discipline had been lost; David's life was changed. So the Bathsheba incident had a long prelude. And you can apply that in your life, every person that gets involved in these kinds of things has had a pattern of behavior.

Second point: David's passions, which were his inherited passions, we're going to see this, his sons have the same problem, they're just a highly sexed family. David's passions were not being held in check by God's restraining grace.

Third point: David's best woman was not Bathsheba, it was Abigail. Why? In 1 Samuel 25 Abigail is pictured as the ideal woman for David. She was a woman who knew the Word and could tell David he was out of it without bossing him. Abigail was exactly what David needed. When David's passions got out of line, it would take an Abigail to get them back; she could be the one that would keep David towing the line with the Word of God. Now David had six other women including Michal, Saul's daughter, who wasn't much of an inspiration, but David definitely had variety in his life.

Fourth point: Bathsheba was a passive woman and not real smart. She was very beautiful but spiritually she was pretty stupid. Every place she shows up in Scripture she's being used by a man. Every time! Bathsheba is always being led around by the nose. Now that is false submission. If you want a proper concept of what a submissive woman is in Scripture, Proverbs 31. A woman can be submissive and still active. A woman can be submissive properly to her husband and not buy everything he does. A woman can be submissive Scripturally and God honoring by her insistence on adhering to the standards of the Word of God. Abigail is such a woman; Bathsheba was not. She's being used by David to gratify his sex desires. Now turn to 1 Kings 1 where she shows up again:

1 Kings 1:11-13 Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Has it been reported to you that Haggith's son Adonijah has become king behind our master David's back? (12) Now let me give you some advice as to how you can save your life and your son Solomon's life. (13) Visit King David and say to him, 'My master, O king, did you not solemnly promise your servant, "Surely your son Solomon will be king after me; he will sit on my throne"?' So why has Adonijah become king?"

Bathsheba has a nice cover but there isn't much on the pages inside. Here is a woman who's grown up in the court, who has been exposed for years to the intrigues of the court. Her husband is dying, as a senile old man, Bathsheba sees Adonijah take over, and she lets him, she doesn't raise a hand, doesn't say anything. She hasn't even told David about it, doesn't apparently even realize that her own life is in danger, Nathan has to come tell her. And apparently she didn't know how to handle her husband. This is in the closing days of their marriage, it's about to be terminated by death and she still can't handle David. She's got to be told how to do it. How does that compare with Abigail; Abigail didn't even know David and she knew how to handle him. Now here's another place she shows up:

1 Kings 2:12-23 Solomon sat on his father David's throne, and his royal authority was firmly solidified. (13) Haggith's son Adonijah visited Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. She asked, "Do you come in peace?" He answered, "Yes." (14) He added, "I have something to say to you." She replied, "Speak." (15) He said, "You know that the kingdom was mine and all Israel considered me king. But then the kingdom was given to my brother, for the LORD decided it should be his. (16) Now I'd like to ask you for just one thing. Please don't refuse me." She said, "Go ahead and ask." (17) He said, "Please ask King Solomon if he would give me Abishag the Shunammite as a wife, for he won't refuse you." (18) Bathsheba replied, "That's fine, I'll speak to the king on your behalf." (19) So Bathsheba visited King Solomon to speak to him on Adonijah's behalf. The king got up to greet her, bowed to her, and then sat on his throne. He ordered a throne to be brought for the king's mother, and she sat at his right hand. (20) She said, "I would like to ask you for just one small favor. Please don't refuse me." He said, "Go ahead and ask, my mother, for I would not refuse you." (21) She said, "Allow Abishag the Shunammite to be given to your brother Adonijah as a wife." (22) King Solomon answered his mother, "Why just request Abishag the Shunammite for him? Since he is my older brother, you should also request the kingdom for him, for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab son of Zeruiah!" (23) King Solomon then swore an oath by the LORD, "May God judge me severely, if Adonijah does not pay for this request with his life!"

This is just a clever gimmick on Adonijah's part to get the throne back. And Bathsheba just buys the line like a gullible girl and walks on. Solomon sees right through it, and has him executed. In other words, this woman is never pictured as an alert woman, anywhere you read it in Scripture. She's always slow, doesn't understand, walking around in a fog.

Now the fifth point. You might guess this from everything we've said: The washing that she is doing on the roof isn't just taking a shower, she is washing her genitals. Now is that the kind of thing you do in public, so the king can peek and watch? We can only come to one of two conclusions, either this woman is deliberately seducing the king, or she is very foolish. There is no other conclusion possible for this kind of behavior. That's not what you do in public. But obviously any woman that would do this kind of thing on a roof, right next to the palace, and not only David can see anybody in the palace can see. So David fell for this woman because he was out of it. He's held responsible, the Word of God does not condemn Bathsheba; the author of Scripture is gentle here, he just simply describes it and he lets us draw our own conclusions. But it seems like the woman was very foolish, she was not David's best woman.

But here's the clincher to it all. Bathsheba becomes the mother of the Messianic line, and that's the sixth point. She, not Abigail, by God's grace winds up as the mother of the Messianic seed. Now if you haven't seen grace yet, after this you ought to be able to see it; a woman this out of it, is honored by being named as one of the four women of history in the line of Jesus Christ. How did she ever get there? God only knows.

David was a man who had a great libido. His family was troubled with this thing; Solomon his son had it; he got a thousand women. This was his area of weakness. Now by calling it an area of weakness we are not condoning it; we're simply saying that every person has what we will call areas of strength and areas of weakness. Your area of strength may be in one particular area of, say in this fornication thing that David's involved in, you may have very little temptation there. That's your area of strength, that to you is not an issue, yet on the other hand you may have an area of weakness of mental attitude pride that just won't quit. So you walk up to some other believer and your area of weakness is pride, mental attitude sin. Their area of weakness is sex, an overt thing. So the tendency is to look down your nose at them and consider them some sort of a creep and some sort of a low class Christian, when as a matter of fact, your mental attitude sin of pride is just as bad, in fact Proverbs 6 says it's worse. And the tendency always in religious circles is to take something that is easily measured, such as this overt activity, and make a federal case out of it, instead of making a federal case out of the mental attitude sins that lead to it.

2 Samuel 11:6 *So David sent a message to Joab that said, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David.*

David knows he has sinned, he knows he's out of it, but he's trying to cover it up without taking it to the Lord. This is man in his human viewpoint way of trying to problem solve his way out, and you can't problem solve your way out except by grace. Now the significance of this is that the Hittite is a Gentile. Now this is a most interesting because here you have a Jew, a member of the elect nation, a man who's been exposed to Bible doctrine for years and years, a man who has done great things for God and incidentally still will do great things for God. David's career is not ended; David has a lot to do in the future. But David should know better.

Uriah, the Gentile, who is more loyal to Jehovah, the God of Israel, than David is at this point. And there's a potent interplay going on between Uriah and David. You couldn't ask for a more highly contrasting behavior pattern between two men at any point in time. Remember Uriah was one of David's great commanding officers.

2 Samuel 11:7-8 *When Uriah came to him, David asked about how Joab and the army were doing and how the campaign was going. (8) Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your home and relax." When Uriah left the palace, the king sent a gift to him.*

David starts out by making small talk. The real intention of David is in verse 8. The Hebrew here really is implying that David is suggesting that Uriah go home and have sex with his wife; obviously if his wife is pregnant he wants to blame it on Uriah. Then David sends a gift, probably food, which is probably a bribe to get him to stay at home. He has always been a crafty guy, but now it's coming out in a bad way.

2 Samuel 11:9 *But Uriah stayed at the door of the palace with all the servants of his lord. He did not go down to his house.*

Here you have the heroic Gentile, and beginning in verse 10 through 13 you have the explanation. Now watch the character you are seeing in this man Uriah. This is going to prepare you for what's coming up in chapter 12; Nathan is going to come to David and he's going to make certain remarks. To appreciate the confrontation between Nathan and David you have to be prepared from chapter 11.

2 Samuel 11:10-11 *So they informed David, "Uriah has not gone down to his house." So David said to Uriah, "Haven't you just arrived from a journey? Why haven't you gone down to your house?" (11) Uriah replied to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah reside in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and my lord's soldiers are camping in the open field. Should I go to my house to eat and drink and have marital relations with my wife? As surely as you are alive, I will not do this thing!"*

Notice what he is loyal to as a Gentile; he is loyal to the ark, which means he is loyal to the God of Israel. The Hittites didn't have Jehovah as their God, but this is proof that Uriah is a regenerated, born again believer. He is fiercely loyal to the God of Israel. The ark, he says, is out there in the middle of battle, that is where I belong. Now this should be a rebuke to David because he should also be where the ark is. If the King who is God is out there, then the king who is the man should also be out there. So in a way this is a little sermon directed at David. And Uriah said I'm not going to sit here and enjoy myself while my buddies are being shot at.

2 Samuel 11:12-13 So David said to Uriah, "Stay here another day. Tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem both that day and the following one. (13) Then David summoned him. He ate and drank with him, and got him drunk. But in the evening he went out to sleep on his bed with the servants of his lord; he did not go down to his own house.

That shows you something else in verse 13, that Uriah's patterns of loyalty were so strong that when he was bombed out of his mind, he still maintained his loyalty. Now that is really saying something. This man is staggering drunk at this point, and yet he had at least some control of himself. And that can't happen unless this man has been operating in the Word of God for many years and developed a very strong set of godly behavior patterns. So that ploy by David doesn't work.

2 Samuel 11:14-15 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. (15) In the letter he wrote: "Station Uriah in the thick of the battle and then withdraw from him so he will be cut down and killed."

David finally resorts to a despicable plan. Talk about adding insult to injury. Here's a guy carrying his own death warrant right in his hand, it's sealed, but the man has his own execution right in his hand and doesn't realize it.

2 Samuel 11:16-17 So as Joab kept watch on the city, he stationed Uriah at the place where he knew the best enemy soldiers were. (17) When the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, some of David's soldiers fell in battle. Uriah the Hittite also died.

This is one of the most abominable orders ever given in history. Now this shows you what a believer in compound carnality can do. Believers can be tremendously cruel sometimes. Believers can be very vicious, and you could argue at this point, Oh, David can't be saved and do these things. Oh yes he can. So Uriah is killed in action.

2 Samuel 11:18-21 Then Joab sent a full battle report to David. (19) He instructed the messenger as follows: "When you finish giving the battle report to the king, (20) if the king becomes angry and asks you, 'Why did you go so close to the city to fight? Didn't you realize they would shoot from the wall? (21) Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerub-Besheth? Didn't a woman throw an upper millstone down on him from the wall so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go so close to the wall?' just say to him, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead.' "

When he says that, I want you to tell David something, after you get through your report, and he's blowing his stack at losing a great elite unit, you just add one little sentence, "Uriah is dead." That'll take care of it.

2 Samuel 11:22-25 So the messenger departed. When he arrived, he informed David of all the news that Joab had sent with him. (23) The messenger said to David, "The men overpowered us and attacked us in the field. But we forced them to retreat all the way to the door of the city gate. (24) Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall and some of the king's soldiers died. Your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead." (25) David said to the messenger, "Tell Joab, 'Don't let this thing upset you. There is no way to anticipate whom the sword will cut down. Press the battle against the city and conquer it.' Encourage him with these words."

Now look at this, a man who for years and years, all through 1 Samuel, all through 2 Samuel up to this point is one fantastic illustration that God is a sovereign God; there's no such thing as chance, everything happens by God's

decree. David has been trained in that, but see his reply? How could David be so hardened in his heart? He just slaughtered a whole unit and he knows why, because of his messing around with Bathsheba. Now, let's be honest, that ultimately is our attitude when we're out of fellowship. It is not until the process of repentance begins that you have any remorse over what you do when you're out of fellowship. One of the marks of being out of fellowship is insensitivity, where you can look at all the stuff you've done and say well, so-what kind of attitude.

Let's turn to Psalm 51, and see how David felt out of fellowship, all during this period. Now I'm going to upset the chronological order of this chapter but it's by design not by chance. I'm going to go through David's confession before David confessed. The reason is I want to hit this confession three times, I want to hit it in Psalm 51, I want to hit it in Psalm 32 and I want to hit it in the last part of 2 Samuel 12, so when you see this you will have a good basic review of getting back in fellowship, spiritual first aid.

We've just seen David cover up one sin with another, he's got one glaring sin, I'll cover it up with another one, I'll cover that up with another one, all the way up until it's a massive pile. I know I've sinned but I just don't care. That's David's attitude. Now while this is true, deep down in his heart David is pained, and these confession hymns from the book of Psalms depict his inner heart. David was neurotic during the time he was out of fellowship. In compound carnality, one of the greatest believers of all time, a believer singled out by God as type of Jesus Christ, he is neurotic. Can believers be mentally ill? You bet they can.

Psalm 51, verses 1-2, this is David's immediate need; I'll give the outline and then we'll go through it. Verses 3-6, David acknowledges two things in his confession, both his personal act of sin and his sin nature; both form the component for his confession. Then verses 7-12, David deals with his request for restoration. Then verses 13-17, David's vow, what he's going to do when he is restored. Then finally verses 18-19, David prays for God's program.

Psalms 51:1-2 For the music director; a psalm of David, written when Nathan the prophet confronted him after David's affair with Bathsheba. *Have mercy on me, O God, because of your loyal love! Because of your great compassion, wipe away my rebellious acts! (2) Wash away my wrongdoing! Cleanse me of my sin!*

I want you to notice the words. What is it in God's character David appeals to? He does not say, oh God, I'm in such a mess, get me out of this. David appeals directly to God's character. Why he's doing this? Because under the law of Israel there was no way of escaping crimes of murder and adultery; they were capital offenses. So to get forgiveness in this case he's going to have to go directly to God's character, the Law-maker, and get a special dispensation. It's going to be a special dispensation because he's the king; if he is killed at this point Solomon won't be born, and God's covenant won't go on. "loyal love", that's the word *chesed* again, it is the word that means I am faithful to an agreement I have made in the past. So he appeals to God's faithfulness to the Abrahamic Covenant.

When you have the desire in your heart to be clean from what you know is filth in God's sight, you are well on your way because the Holy Spirit is working. So the fact that David has the awareness in the first two verses shows you it is the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit now working in the depths of his heart. Remember all through the Mosaic Law the Jews had to wash themselves and their clothes. So the first step, verses 1-2, he has a desire to be clean, he's aware of his filthiness in God's sight; he wants cleansing.

Psalms 51:3 *For I am aware of my rebellious acts; I am forever conscious of my sin.*

Notice it begins with "for," this is the reason he wants to be clean, and this tips you off to something to look for in your life, something that will tell you the Holy Spirit's working. Where you have the Holy Spirit working, the first step is always going to be guilt, and that's good divine guilt, not the kind of guilt Satan tries to make you feel. True guilt is specific, you will feel guilty about some specific way you disobeyed the Word of God.

Now the reason that true guilt is this way is that God doesn't want to make you miserable. God doesn't get pleasure out of making you miserable. He wants to get this whole thing over with quick. When you discipline your child, you don't want to beat him all night, you want to get it over with, and so does he. So God's guilt is specific. He doesn't want you to dangle at the end of a line wondering what the deal is. He wants you to deal with it so you can move on.

And when God convicts it will inevitably be through Scripture. This is why it's so important, even if you don't feel like it, pick up the Bible and read it, anywhere, just read it. Revelation, Genesis, Isaiah, the Psalms, just start reading because if you can get your eyeballs on the text the Holy Spirit can use it, you're putting something into His hands, a "Nathan" in front of you. So go to the Bible when you know you're out of fellowship and you've got to do something about it. That's one of the keys of beginning. How can you get an awareness of a need to be cleansed? By first becoming aware of the dirt. How do you become aware of the dirt? By getting into the Word of God.

Psalms 51:4 *Against you — you above all — I have sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. So you are just when you confront me; you are right when you condemn me.*

Verse 4 is the confession proper, it's a specific thing. He's confessing the act of sin. So the second point in the doctrine of confession is we confess the responsibility for the act. The first point was that we acknowledge the sin is there and we want to do something about it. And he's agreeing with God that he deserves condemnation.

Psalms 51:5-6 *Look, I was guilty of sin from birth, a sinner the moment my mother conceived me. (6) Look, you desire integrity in the inner man; you want me to possess wisdom.*

He goes all the way back before his birth. David understands that all men from physical birth onward tend to develop negative learned behavior patterns, just like the soil tends to grow weeds instead of fruit. This analogy is made over and over again in the Bible. What David is doing, and here's the third point of the doctrine of confession, David is acknowledging a need for changing negative learned behavior patterns to positive learned behavior patterns. This didn't happen overnight, that is a product of 30 years of development of his sin nature. The tendency towards this kind of sin ran in David's family, it was his weakness.

See if David just stopped the confession at the end of verse 4, it would be this: David would rock along for a while, and mind his P's and Q's and maybe six months later it'd be somebody else taking a shower on the roof and David would have another problem. And then eventually it'd be somebody else, it would be this pattern the rest of his life. Would he be forgiven each time? Sure would. Did he confess his sin each time? Sure did. But would the underlying pattern change? No it would not.

So the guilt that he experienced after confession was the tug of the Holy Spirit saying David, let's get with it, this pattern has to go. That was the voice of God in his heart speaking. So point three, then, of the doctrine of confession is David acknowledges a need for a deep change in learned behavior patterns.

Psalms 51:7-12 *Sprinkle me with water and I will be pure; wash me and I will be whiter than snow. (8) Grant me the ultimate joy of being forgiven! May the bones you crushed rejoice! (9) Hide your face from my sins! Wipe away all my guilt! (10) Create for me a pure heart, O God! Renew a resolute spirit within me! (11) Do not reject me! Do not take your Holy Spirit away from me! (12) Let me again experience the joy of your deliverance! Sustain me by giving me the desire to obey!*

All of that can be summarized under a fourth point. Here is a petition that David is making; in addition to his confession he is making a post-confession petition. After he's confessed, he prays for a specific kind of change. What change? He is going to pray for the Biblical opposite to his learned behavior pattern. Thus, if David is a lazy person, he wants to be a hard-working person; if he is an emotional person he is going to pray that he will be a controlled person. In other words, he recognizes the learned behavior pattern that has caused his problem and he pits against it something from the Word of God that will collide with it 180 degrees. Paul calls it to "put off the old man and put on the new man".

The original language behind verse seven is the hyssop branch, so this carries an imagery out of Leviticus 14, and that is that David can come back and function in the camp. I want you to understand that verses 7-12 have nothing to do with salvation. David is already saved. Verses 7-12 have to do with service, and he is petitioning that he can now function again as king.

Now what has happened is that God has made an issue out of these learned behavior patterns and David knows it.

He knows that he cannot stay on that throne as king if this problem in his life isn't dealt with right now. The weeds have to be pulled up. And when he does so he says that "I will be whiter than snow." He says, Lord, I see the issue, I want to change, I want my basic patterns to change, but being grace oriented I know I can't do it. It's too frustrating, it's too big, I know you have to change me, and so the request for a pure heart and the right spirit.

And again, verse 11 is not talking about loss of salvation, the taking of the Holy Spirit refers to his office as king. Remember in the Old Testament the Holy Spirit did not indwell every believer, it was only some people and it was temporary at that. So the Holy Spirit could be taken or He could be given. And He was given to the king. So what verse 11 is really saying is Lord, restore me to my calling. Don't disqualify me from the office, I want to do the job that I've been called to do.

Now this does not mean David is going to sit back and say well, I've got this big problem and I've got to change, so I'll wait till God does it. That's not the spirit of the Psalm. What David is praying for is God, keep me motivated so I can actively in my daily life conquer this thing, and replace negative behavior with positive behavior.

To review four points that we have covered:

1. You must be aware of the sinful act itself; to do this you have to stop covering it up.
2. Confess the responsibility for that act and stop blame-shifting.
3. Acknowledge the need for deep change in your learned behavior patterns.
4. Petition specifically for a positive change that will be exactly opposite to the negative behavior pattern; make the petition razor sharp so that you're petitioning something that is biblically sound but exactly opposed to the previous pattern of life.

Psalms 51:13-15 *Then I will teach rebels your merciful ways, and sinners will turn to you. (14) Rescue me from the guilt of murder, O God, the God who delivers me! Then my tongue will shout for joy because of your deliverance. (15) O Lord, give me the words! Then my mouth will praise you.*

Then verse 13 through the end is David's praise. Everywhere you go in God's Word we find praise. Now something to recall and remember in this day when there's confusion around about praise and worship, is this praise gibberish or is this praise a known human language. Obviously if he's going to teach transgressors it's got to be in the language of the people he's trying to teach. **So true praise has got to be in the language that other people can understand.**

Psalms 51:16-17 *Certainly you do not want a sacrifice, or else I would offer it; you do not desire a burnt sacrifice. (17) The sacrifices God desires are a humble spirit — O God, a humble and repentant heart you will not reject.*

Now up to verse 17 the praise is focused on what has happened in David's life. We are to praise God for specific changes He brings into our life. That means what He does in answer to your prayer when you get out of the pile of filth. When you are under the pile and you're praying to get out from under it, there ought to be this thought: when I get out of this I am going to share with others what God has done for me. Don't be silent. If you have petitioned God to get you out of a jam, then you have an obligation to tell others what He has done for you.

Psalms 51:18-19 *Because you favor Zion, do what is good for her! Fortify the walls of Jerusalem! (19) Then you will accept the proper sacrifices, burnt sacrifices and whole offerings; then bulls will be sacrificed on your altar.*

And finally, there is praise for His eternal master plan. This gets you off just yourself and it's a healthy conclusion, this is not introspection. This is a great Psalm to use when you fall into sin, and are out of fellowship. You should have it bookmarked always. David models for us how to confess our sins.

All right, we've gone through Psalm 51, now we'll deal with Nathan and how he deals with David.

Chapter 12

Now the confrontation between David and Nathan. It's interesting that God did not send Nathan to David immediately. You see, this thing with Bathsheba had probably gone on for many months, and all during that time God and Nathan were silent about it. God could have said something much earlier. Well, God waited until David was ready to listen to Nathan. Bathsheba is now about ready to bear the baby that was born of adultery. So for a period, probably more than a year, God kept Nathan away from David in this area, because Nathan could not have had an effect on David until the time was right. You will find this true in your own experience if you haven't already. There are times when you will not listen to the Word of God and no matter what someone says, even if an illuminated sign is dropped by parachute from the nearest cloud, you still would not be prepared to receive that as the authoritative Word of God because you haven't dug a big enough pit for yourself. After you're in a big enough hole there's only one place you can look and that's up.

Now we are going to study this period just before Nathan walked up to David and began to speak. Psalm 51 tells us what happened after Nathan spoke to David, but there's another Psalm in Scripture, Psalm 32, we'll now look at how David felt emotionally during this period of compound carnality. Psalm 32 was written after the event; David has already confessed, he's back in fellowship, but it pictures very vividly how he felt when he was out of fellowship.

Psalms 32:1-2 *How blessed is the one whose rebellious acts are forgiven, whose sin is pardoned! (2) How blessed is the one whose wrongdoing the LORD does not punish, in whose spirit there is no deceit.*

Notice the three words for sin. From all three of these aspects God covers, He forgives.

Psalms 32:3-4 *When I refused to confess my sin, my whole body wasted away, while I groaned in pain all day long. (4) For day and night you tormented me; you tried to destroy me in the intense heat of summer.*

This goes back in time to how David felt. Apparently God had to strike him ill physically. God had to work a medical disaster in his life. Now you see, by bringing physical illness into the picture He forces David to look up because David has to be flat on his back; see, that's one way of literally getting the believer to look up.

I might add a little application to this, when you pray for yourself in the area of illness, if you are thinking biblically, the first thing obviously that ought to enter your mind is an analysis of why am I sick. You can't always pinpoint the answer, that's true, but if you are thinking correctly and Biblically the first thing to do is ask yourself: is this discipline? Paul insisted that the Corinthians were sick because they violated the communion, some had even died. We don't know whether it was a plague that hit the congregation at Corinth or not, but some medical disaster had hit that congregation, and Paul, being a spiritually sensitive man saw it; it was due to a spiritual reason. Now are we saying that all discipline is due to sin? No, but the first thing should be hey, let's think about this.

Psalms 32:5-6 *Then I confessed my sin; I no longer covered up my wrongdoing. I said, "I will confess my rebellious acts to the LORD." And then you forgave my sins. (6) For this reason every one of your faithful followers should pray to you while there is a window of opportunity. Certainly when the surging water rises, it will not reach them.*

Here he recounts what happened after Nathan visited. In verse 6, he begins to instruct us. Here's what David learned about this. What does he mean by "while there is a window of opportunity"? He's saying, listen to your conscience, while you can still hear it. It is the time when the conscience is telling you through your mind.

Psalms 32:7-9 *You are my hiding place; you protect me from distress. You surround me with shouts of joy from those celebrating deliverance. (8) I will instruct and teach you about how you should live. I will advise you as I look you in the eye. (9) Do not be like an unintelligent horse or mule, which will not obey you unless they are controlled by a bridle and bit.*

Now verse 8 is the final application to the congregation to whom this Psalm was sung. Commentators differ as to whether David is speaking this or whether God is speaking this through David, and it looks to me that verses 8-9 are primarily God the Holy Spirit speaking to us through David's mouth.

Now the bit and the bridle refer to the powerful means of restraint God will bring upon sin; that's the whole point here. Will this mule go running all over the place, no because God has his hands on the bridle. This mule is going to have a very sore mouth if he tries it. And this is God's point here, that He has a bit and a bridle. Now you can go one way or the other way down the path. You see, the believer has a path by predestination; we are predestined to be conformed to Jesus Christ; visualize it as a highway going up a mountain. We can choose to go along that highway, happy or sad, but we will stay on the road. That's the fine print in the doctrine of eternal security most people don't look at. The fine print says yeah, you'll go on the road and if I have to put a bit in your bridle I'll drag you along the road. So what David is saying, don't be like one of these people, don't be a stupid mule.

Psalms 32:10-11 *An evil person suffers much pain, but the LORD's faithfulness overwhelms the one who trusts in him. (11) Rejoice in the LORD and be happy, you who are godly! Shout for joy, all you who are morally upright!*

All right, that's how David felt. Now let's turn back and see how Nathan confronted him in 2 Samuel 12. Nathan is going to confront David with a two-fold approach. Nathan is a student of God's Word. He must have known just from observing David in the court, he knew David wasn't acting right, he knew David had a problem.

He's going to start out with an indirect approach, then he's going to try the direct one. The indirect approach is by means of a parable. Those of you who like to read Jesus' parables in the New Testament, here is why so much doctrine is taught in the Bible by means of parables. I used to be frustrated, as a young Christian, why does God teach in parables, why doesn't He just say what He's going to say, all that stuff about the talents and everything else, why didn't He just say it right out, why go through this parable business?

It is because we are not prepared to receive the truth that He has, and so this is His way of sneaking up on you. He gets you to agree that He's right before you've really realized the implications of what you've agreed to, because if you realized all the implications to what you agreed to you'd never have agreed to it, because you see, the sin nature always likes to cover itself up. Remember why did Adam and Eve cover themselves with fig leaves; they were naked before and it didn't bother them. Parables are to get over the fig leaves, the cover-up and all the rest of it.

And Nathan knew that David had all sorts of excuses ready, so he knew if he just went in there and plowed into David like a bulldozer, David would harden his heart further. So he approaches it first with a parable because David at heart knows God's standard. He still knows God's Law. So the parable is designed to get David's agreement that wrong has been done.

2 Samuel 12:1-4 *So the LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to David, Nathan said, "There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. (2) The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. (3) But the poor man had nothing except for a little lamb he had acquired. He raised it, and it grew up alongside him and his children. It used to eat his food, drink from his cup, and sleep in his arms. It was just like a daughter to him. (4) "When a traveler arrived at the rich man's home, he did not want to use one of his own sheep or cattle to feed the traveler who had come to visit him. Instead, he took the poor man's lamb and cooked it for the man who had come to visit him."*

It's obvious to us what Nathan is saying here, who the rich man and the poor man is. It doesn't seem to be obvious to David, but maybe he's just playing dumb.

2 Samuel 12:5-6 *Then David became very angry at this man. He said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! (6) Because he committed this cold-hearted crime, he must pay for the lamb four times over!"*

He's judging someone else but not himself; this is the speck and the beam of Matthew 7, taking the beam out of your own eye before you go trying to remove the speck out of another's eye. In a little bit David is going to become an advocate of the abolition of capital punishment but right here he's very much for it because it's someone else. And God and Nathan have maneuvered David into judging himself, because the sentence that David passes on the man is the sentence that David will receive from God. Jesus talks about this principle in Matthew 7:

Matthew 7:1-5 "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. (2) For by the standard you judge you will be judged, and the measure you use will be the measure you receive. (3) Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, but fail to see the beam of wood in your own? (4) Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye,' while there is a beam in your own? (5) You hypocrite! First remove the beam from your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Now where did David get what he said in verse 6? Turn to Exodus 22:1, here is why David said he must pay four times over. David knew the Bible, he was actively using Bible doctrine.

Exodus 22:1 "If a man steals an ox or a sheep and kills it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox, and four sheep for the one sheep.

So the first thing David says, capital punishment for theft, is out of line. And you're going to see how God is going to correct that in a moment. But his second sentence was right on, that was the Law. And then Nathan goes to his direct approach. Now keep in mind the four-fold restoration because that is going to reappear again in another verse.

2 Samuel 12:7-8 Nathan said to David, "You are that man! This is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'I chose you to be king over Israel and I rescued you from the hand of Saul. (8) I gave you your master's house, and put your master's wives into your arms. I also gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all that somehow seems insignificant, I would have given you so much more as well!

When you see the word house, it doesn't just mean the kingdom, it includes the harem. In the Old Testament it was legitimate that when a new king took the throne he took all the old king's girlfriends with him. It was a sign that he was reigning as king. And the claim to try and marry one of the king's wives was tantamount to saying I claim the throne. So the harem went with the throne, you can't separate them. "Into your arms" means the right of sex, God said I gave you those women and you had the right to have sex with any one of them because I gave you that privilege as king, and not only that, "I gave you the house of Israel and Judah," do you know what the implication of that is? You could have gone out and married any virgin girl that you wanted to in all of Israel. In other words, he was saying, David, I know you have a big sexual drive, and I was willing to give you any lawful women you chose, but you chose a woman that was not lawfully yours.

2 Samuel 12:9-12 Why have you shown contempt for the word of the LORD by doing evil in my sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and you have taken his wife as your own! You have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. (10) So now the sword will never depart from your house. For you have despised me by taking the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your own!" (11) This is what the LORD says: 'I am about to bring disaster on you from inside your own household! Right before your eyes I will take your wives and hand them over to your companion. He will have sexual relations with your wives in broad daylight! (12) Although you have acted in secret, I will do this thing before all Israel, and in broad daylight.'

So God pronounces the sentence on David. He reverses David's sentence of capital punishment, but confirms the four-fold sentence. Let's look at the four-fold restoration that David had to make. We'll get to some of these verses anyway, but we'll look into the future to see how this sentence of God was carried out. In 2 Samuel 12:19, the boy that is born to David and Bathsheba dies. David loses his first son as a result of this. Notice adultery led to death.

In 2 Samuel 13:28, David has a daughter by one wife and a son by another, and the son is Amnon, and the daughter is Tamar, and Amnon rapes his half-sister, Tamar. Then Absalom, another son of David and the full brother of Tamar, has Amnon murdered. So David loses a second son, Amnon. Then in 18:14, Absalom captures all of David's wives, he had sex with them, and so again you have adultery and then Joab kills Absalom. And so again you have murder, and David loses a third son. Finally in 1 Kings 2:24, Adonijah claims David's wives for himself, Solomon is king, and Solomon recognizes it as an attempt to capture the throne, and so Solomon has Adonijah put to death. David loses a fourth son.

Now is this just chance, that in every one of these three instances after Bathsheba's baby dies, David loses a son after the son has done a sin very parallel to his own? Of course not. Now back to 2 Samuel 12.

2 Samuel 12:13 Then David exclaimed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD!" Nathan replied to David, "Yes, and the LORD has forgiven your sin. You are not going to die."

This shows you that David has come through to recognizing his sin, and I want you to notice that immediately, with no song singing, no long misery, immediately there's grace. See, that's how urgent God wants grace to flow toward us.

Let's have a postmortem on this event. I think we can all see how willing God is that we do confess our sins to Him. If you are a Christian and you think you've committed some sin and you're walking around holding off confession because you want to work up some good behavior to impress God, just confess it, and relax. Instead of getting up tight about yourself let's just look at it from the point of the Word of God. God wants you functioning as a Spirit-led believer. God is not going to smash you in the face if you will come to Him and confess your sin. He's not that kind of a God; Satan has bewitched you if you think that God the Father is going to throw mud in your face when you come to Him with a penitent heart. Some people are like that, Satan is that kind of a person, but not God. God the Father would have us understand His grace, call upon Him while He may be found, don't wait.

Let's talk about God's forgiveness. The pronouncement of forgiveness solved all the other problems. Now watch how this works, because David is going to get relief, but it starts with the pronouncement of forgiveness. What was David's prime problem? Guilt through disobedience. Nathan is saying "God has moved your sin away from you," literally, it is a powerful form of the Hebrew verb to cross over. Why is it important for Nathan to pronounce his temporal forgiveness even though we know David was eternally justified? Because justification has to do with the transaction that is in heaven, that you and I cannot experience. There's no way any of us can experience justification; it is not an experience. All of our sins that have been forgiven at the point of justification, of which we will never consciously realize until we get to heaven and really see what our record looks like.

So therefore how does God make justification real to the believer? Every time we confess our sins, that's how He makes it real in your life. Justification only means something to you if you know your sins at this moment are cleansed, and this moment you have access to God. When you have that certainty then you know what justification is, even though the justification legally has occurred once and for all, experientially, God reveals it every time He forgives us of our sins. So restoration from being out of fellowship is a revelation of justification

2 Samuel 12:14 Nonetheless, because you have treated the LORD with such contempt in this matter, the son who has been born to you will certainly die."

God is going to take the fruit of his sin and show that it too must be removed. The sin is forgiven but its fruit must be destroyed. God will not tolerate that; it must be removed.

2 Samuel 12:15-19 Then Nathan went to his home. The LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and the child became very ill. (16) Then David prayed to God for the child and fasted. He would even go and spend the night lying on the ground. (17) The elders of his house stood over him and tried to lift him from the ground, but he was unwilling, and refused to eat food with them. (18) On the seventh day the child died. But the servants of David were afraid to inform him that the child had died, for they said, "While the child was still alive he would not listen to us when we

spoke to him. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He will do himself harm!" (19) When David saw that his servants were whispering to one another, he realized that the child was dead. So David asked his servants, "Is the child dead?" They replied, "Yes, he's dead."

Something that must have stabbed David in the heart, was the fact that the child died a very slow death, for seven days. Now what do you think went through David's mind for those seven days? The death that I deserved has been transferred to that baby. That baby is suffering vicariously for me. There was a substitution, the suffering was removed from my life but it was passed to the infant, look what I have done.

And in this we have a picture of the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. When you look at the cross of Christ, we take communion and we commemorate it, the thought ought to be foremost in our minds, that when Christ died He was dying for us; the death that we should have experienced, Christ experienced. So when we sin we are the ones who cause Christ to suffer historically.

Notice it does not say David petitioned God. The Hebrew has a word for ask, but that verb isn't used here, strangely. Isn't it strange that it doesn't say David asked God for the child? Well, the prophet had told him that it was an irrevocable sentence that the child must suffer and die. So David can't sit there and say oh, I got to work up faith, I just have to have enough faith. That is not faith; that's fanaticism. And faith can't be worked up. You can sit and read Psalms, you can sing songs, you can do anything but you cannot work up faith. Faith comes by intellectually perceiving God's Word, plus of course, believing it. But it's got to be rational and it's got to be perceived.

David can't say God heal the child. He has no right because he's not sure that's God's will for the child. So not being able to pray for the healing of the child, he does the next best thing, that is to just seek God. The word "seek" means intensively search. Let's skip temporarily to verse 22, he explains what he's doing.

2 Samuel 12:22 He replied, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept because I thought, 'Perhaps the LORD will show pity and the child will live.'

David knew that in prayer God can be affected and moved by petition, as Moses in Exodus 33 and other passages. Even though God had said the child would die, David probed God's very character to see if He would be gracious and grant that the death be transferred somewhere else and the life saved. So he was probing God for grace. He couldn't pray for healing by faith because he didn't know God's will, so he had to pray first for God's will. Now as we're going to see, he never got beyond this. Reason: it wasn't God's will. It's very simple.

Now why he did he fast? Prayer of this kind demands great concentration. I'm not sure all that is involved, but I do know that when men in the Bible are faced with great trials, when they begin to pray intensively, they fast. Now this is different from something like lent and giving up bubble gum or something for forty days, it's not talking about that kind of fasting. That isn't true fasting, that's asceticism. Don't confuse asceticism with Biblical fasting. Biblical fasting is like something that we've all done at one time or another; where we're involved in some activity and we haven't had time to eat. Generally you're thinking I'm too busy to bother with it right now. That's the mentality of Biblical fasting. It may also have something to do with the body, it may be that the human spirit has greater freedom in the body when the body's energy is not being used for digestion of food.

Now the original language shows us here that David was continually praying for seven days, and he did not sleep or eat. Now this shows you something about David's character, you can tell he's back in fellowship here.

2 Samuel 12:20-23 So David got up from the ground, bathed, put on oil, and changed his clothes. He went to the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then, when he entered his palace, he requested that food be brought to him, and he ate. (21) His servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? While the child was still alive, you fasted and wept. Once the child was dead you got up and ate food!" (22) He replied, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept because I thought, 'Perhaps the LORD will show pity and the child will live. (23) But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Am I able to bring him back? I will go to him, but he cannot return to me!' "

This shows you that David had not bathed or eaten in seven days. He was a mess physically. The first place he went after he got up and washed was the tabernacle. Why did he go to the house of God? To thank God for His will. You see, for seven days he's been praying God is it your will, make it known to me what your will is in this situation, is my son going to die? For seven days God didn't answer and communicated his will finally by the act of death itself. So sometimes you can pray for someone who's dying and you'll never receive the answer until the time they literally die. This was the answer.

And so when he goes to the temple and goes to the house of the Lord, he worships. David, back in fellowship, knows that the fundamental mental attitude of the Christian is thankfulness in all things. He accepts God's answer to prayer, and he gives thanks for it. It was tough for him to do, he'd just been through seven days of suffering in prayer over the child. But he gives thanks and that's very critical. If he did not go to the house of the Lord and worship in verse 20 he would have been back out of fellowship. He had to be able to give thanks at this point.

Now the servants, operating on human viewpoint, cannot believe it because usually when someone dies, people grieve and mourn, some very emotionally. Now they see David rejoice, just when, according to their human viewpoint, he should be in depression. But David knows the correct doctrine of death in the Scripture. Verses 22-23 are one of the great classic doctrines on death; it also is going to teach about whether infants are saved, and the passage also tell's us about procedures for praying for sickness. So it's a very important passage.

Verse 23 is one of the great sentences in God's Word. This is the answer to the question of what happens to children who die. Now some say no, that sentence doesn't teach that because that child was a child of the covenant, and since he was circumcised (they would argue) he therefore was on his way to heaven because of the faith of his father. There's only one problem, he wasn't a covenant child; circumcision didn't happen until the eighth day. The child was named and circumcised on the eighth day; this child died on the seventh day; he never got a name and he was never circumcised. So this is not a covenant child, so you can't say that this is a special case. This is a general case of all infants who die before the age of accountability.

David says, "I will go to him," now David is a saved individual; therefore where he'd go is the place where his son had gone before him. So that teaches that this infant of his was saved. How, I don't know, don't ask me. How can a responsible being, even a child, have the atonement of Christ applied to them. Don't ask me, all we can do is base it on the Scriptures. Some people say well it just means that David is going to die along with the kid. Well, would that give consolation to the father? He wants to see his son. That just doesn't fit the whole spirit of the passage. The spirit of the passage is David didn't want the child to die, but now that he has died, he is not worried about it any more. He knows he will see him again, the passage is referring to paradise; David will go to paradise, the place of the Old Testament saints after death, and the child will be there to meet him.

The last point we learn from this passage, be open to a "no" answer. Don't think it's a lack of faith. One of the cheapest tricks in Christianity is to say oh so and so didn't get healed because he didn't have faith; that is a cruel statement. Don't ever get wrapped up in that kind of thing. God can say no. Do you know why? Because eventually He says no to everyone. We're all going to die, so at least there's going to be one time in your life He's going to say no. We live in a fallen world. The curse of Adam cannot be ultimately reversed. We can only get out of it through resurrection, that's the only way around it.

2 Samuel 12:24-25 So David comforted his wife Bathsheba. He went to her and had marital relations with her. She gave birth to a son, and David named him Solomon. Now the LORD loved the child (25) and sent word through Nathan the prophet that he should be named Jedidiah for the LORD's sake.

The naming of Solomon is important. The name Solomon looks like this, "Soloma" is really the way it looks, and the Hebrew word for peace looks like "slm", supplying the vowels, "shalom". Now why is Solomon called peace? What has David just been through for 18 months? The opposite of peace, this constant turmoil in his life, that God wasn't pleased with that son, that son couldn't sit on the throne, it was a fruit of David's own works. If there was going to be a seed that succeeded David by the Davidic Covenant it had to be by grace, and here's a son now that qualifies, and that's why it says "and the LORD loved the child." The seed is going to survive, the Davidic Covenant can progress in

history, there is going to be someone who is David's male heir who is acceptable before God.

The name Jedidiah was part of Solomon's tutelary, a tutelary is a list of names that kings have. Historically kings usually had multiple names.

And you won't see Solomon again in this book. Solomon passes off the stage, not spoken of again as long as David's reign continues. Three other sons take the stage and everybody forgets the Lord loved Solomon. And everybody gets excited about Absalom and he leads a great revolt against his father, surely Absalom is king, lots of noise, lots of propaganda, lots of attention. But behind it is this quiet "God loves Solomon." And all the political shenanigans you see from chapter 13 through the end of 2 Samuel collapse; one son after another dies as a result of political accidents until finally we get to 1 Kings 2 and all of a sudden the curtain opens and who's standing there? A young boy by the name of Solomon, with a special gift from God, perfectly qualified for the throne. And for years and years there's been all this political intrigue, assassination, murder, rape, confusion, but behind it all God's man was waiting in the wings.

2 Samuel 12:26-31 So Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and captured the royal city. (27) Joab then sent messengers to David, saying, "I have fought against Rabbah and have captured the water supply of the city. (28) So now assemble the rest of the army and besiege the city and capture it. Otherwise I will capture the city and it will be named for me." (29) So David assembled all the army and went to Rabbah and fought against it and captured it. (30) He took the crown of their king from his head — it was gold, weighed about seventy-five pounds, and held a precious stone — and it was placed on David's head. He also took from the city a great deal of plunder. (31) He removed the people who were in it and made them do hard labor with saws, iron picks, and iron axes, putting them to work at the brick kiln. This was his policy with all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.