

The Twists and Turns of Life

David's Story II Samuel 12:1-11a

This Week's Message
May 22, 2022

The Twists and Turns of Life
David's Story

Then Nathan said to David,
"You are the man!"

II Samuel 12:7
(New International Version)

Sunday's Scripture Reading **II Samuel 12:1-11a**

1 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 must 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 all 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 on you.

On Sunday we continue the series of messages titled *The Twists and Turns of Life*. In this series, we are studying the lives of various Biblical characters and the way the twists and turns of their lives led to some very surprising outcomes. On Sunday, we will study the story of David.

There are Biblical characters, and then there are Biblical characters. Simply put, some of the Biblical characters loom much larger than others. The upper echelon of characters consists of a small number of people, and amongst that elite group is David. A character who casts a long shadow over Biblical history, David is also a figure who is very complicated. He is the only person in all of Biblical history to be described as, *a man after God's own heart; he will do everything I want him to do* (Acts 13:22). That is a very interesting description of David, as it speaks as much to the potential of David as it does the reality of his life. Some of the actions of David could not, as we know, be described as doing what God would want him to do. The story of David and Bathsheba, for instance, is one that reveals the stark truth of David's failures. Using his position of king, he took advantage of that position not only to enter into a relationship with Bathsheba, but to

Questions to Consider –

* Do you think David would be a viable political leader today? Why or why not?

* What would you say are the primary qualities that should be evident in leaders?

* Considering the foibles and failures of David, how do you think it is possible for the Bible to say of him that he was *a man after God's own heart*?

* Do you think there is truth in the saying, *power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely*? Was David done in by his own success and power? Do you think David's position as king allowed him to feel invincible to failure?

* What lessons do you think we are meant to learn by the fact that God used David in spite of such major failures? How might this bring hope to us, when we consider the mistakes and failures of our lives?

* David is certainly not the first, nor the last, political figure to be caught up in scandal. Why do you think it seems so hard for people in power to learn from the failures of others?

arrange for her husband Uriah to be killed in battle. That David would engage in such behaviors and actions is all the more troubling because he had witnessed first-hand the similarly troubling behaviors of his predecessor, Saul. David became Saul's replacement as king because of Saul's failures, and now, in an ironic twist, David was committing equally troubling offenses.

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David's failure with Bathsheba, his most well-known failure, was not his only one. David's family life was riddled with failures and mistakes as well, especially regarding his son Absalom. David and Absalom had a terrible falling out as a result of a tragic event that took place between David's daughter Tamar and her half-brother Amnon (II Samuel 13:1-18:33). David's failure to act upon the situation led to Absalom eventually wresting control of the kingdom for a time from his father. In the battle that ensued between their soldiers, Absalom was killed, even though David had instructed his men not to harm Absalom. When David learned of the death of his son, he uttered the painful cry that resonates across the centuries – *O my son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you – O Absalom, my son, my son!* (2 Samuel 18:33).

All of David's failures had a great impact upon his life and the lives of others. It certainly had an impact upon his spiritual life, which was seen when he desired to build a temple for the worship of God but was denied the opportunity because of the amount of blood he had shed throughout his life.

And yet, in spite of all the failures and mistakes of his life, David was used in powerful ways by God. In our historical moment, when a single mistake in someone's past can render them disqualified from any kind of position of leadership or service, the story of David reminds us of an important truth – we have all made mistakes, and while those mistakes might render us unfit in the eyes of others, they do not in the eyes of God.

I look forward to seeing you on Sunday, as we talk about the story of David. See you then, and God bless you!