

2 Samuel 11 records the sad and tragic incident in David's life when he committed adultery, murder, and deception to satisfy his own sinful and selfish lust. It is the story of David and Bathsheba who was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Bathsheba became pregnant with David's child, and David plotted to deceive Uriah into thinking that the child was his own. As we know, David's plot did not work, so he formed another plot to have Uriah killed. He then took Bathsheba to be his wife, and the rumors began in Jerusalem. After their child was born, the LORD sent His prophet, Nathan, to confront David.

(2 Samuel 12:1-4) - Nathan began with the story of a rich man who had many flocks and herds and a poor man who *"had nothing, save one little ewe lamb."* When a traveler came to the rich man, rather than taking one of his many sheep to feed his guest, he took the poor man's one lamb. Nathan was obviously speaking of David as the rich man who had many wives, and Uriah as the poor man who had only one wife. David did not recognize this, and this indicates that he may have conveniently put the matter out of mind. Many speculate about David's thoughts and attitude over this, but this is all the Scripture tell us. But though David had not lost his salvation, which no true believer can, as we know from his psalm of repentance which came later (*Psalm 51*), he had lost the peace and joy of salvation. David was a sinner saved by God's grace in Christ, but a man who had been *"overtaken in a fault"* and needed to be restored *"in the spirit of meekness"* (*Gal. 6:1*).

(2 Samuel 12:5-6) - David's anger and judgment proved that he did not recognize himself as the culprit in Nathan's story, yet his words were consistent with the law of God - *"As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die."* It was established from the creation that all sin deserves death (*Gen. 2:17*) as the sentence of God's justice (*Ezek. 18:4,20; Rom. 6:23a*). Under the law of Moses, the sins of adultery and murder were both punishable by death with no way out for the guilty. David is an example of what all of us as fallen sinners deserve and have earned. Even if we have not committed the acts of adultery and murder, we have committed both in our thoughts (*Matt. 5:21-28*). Although we cannot be punished by the state for sinful thoughts, we can and must be punished unto death, either in ourselves or in the person of a proper substitute, by God Who always judges by truth (*Rom. 2:1-3*).

(2 Samuel 12:7-9) - Nathan said, *"THOU ART THE MAN,"* to the king of Israel. He spoke God's Word of conviction to the king. At that point the LORD reminded David of all that He had freely given to David. Nathan asked, *"Why have you despised and disregarded the commandment of the LORD, to do evil IN HIS SIGHT?"* God is omniscient. He knows and sees all that we think, say, and do. And although God does not impute the sins of His elect to them as they have all been imputed to Christ Who died for our sins (*Psa. 32:1-2; Rom. 8:33-34*), He does see our sins and sometimes deals with us in chastisements for our good (*Heb. 12:5-11*). When the Lord tells us that He will remember our sins and iniquities no more (*Jer. 31:34; Heb. 12:17*), this means that He will never hold our sins against us so as to condemn us for them. In God's court of justice, our sins have been blotted out of His record by the blood of Christ Who died to redeem us by paying our sin-debt to God's justice.

(2 Samuel 12:10-12) - The LORD told David that he would suffer in his kingdom and in his family because of his sins. Although David was not condemned to eternal death for his sins, there were consequences that he would suffer the rest of his life on earth. We know that in David's case, his sufferings were the chastisements of his heavenly Father for David's spiritual

and eternal good. Many claim that this means that “David had to pay for his sins,” but God’s true children are never dealt with by Him in the way of legal and judicial payment for sins. Chastening means to “to train up, to educate,” but this is never as a punishment in the punitive sense of equal justice. CHRIST PAID FOR OUR SINS IN FULL!

Even though we are told specifically here the sins for which David was chastised, God’s children are not always chastised for all our sins. If this were the case, we would not be able to lift up our heads. There are many times that we do not know of specific sin(s) for which we are chastised. Many times, we do not have the knowledge or insight into God’s purposes and our brethren’s lives to say, “God is dealing with them for particular sins.” And the LORD sometimes chastises His people without respect to any specific sins as with Job (*Job 2:3*). Our heavenly Father knows what we need for His glory and our good.

(2 Samuel 12:13-14) - David sinned against Uriah, but he confessed his sin “*against the LORD.*” All sin, ultimately, is against the LORD because all sin is transgression of God’s law (*1 John 3:4*). Notice Nathan’s word to David, “*The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.*” This is one of the many cases of God’s grace abounding to His people in and by the Lord Jesus Christ (*Rom. 5:20-21*). God’s prophet did not speak words of condemnation but words of peace and comfort, words of sins forgiven as they have been “*put away.*” David would be spared the penalty of death under the Law of Moses, and, because of his Savior and Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, God would not impute his sins to him or condemn him for them. David would eventually die physically, as we all will (*Heb. 9:27*), but he would not die the second death, which is eternal death. Remember that when God puts away sin, He does it on a just ground. Because of the blood of Christ, God has freely and fully forgiven His elect and cast their sins behind His back into the depth of the sea. This is salvation for sinners by God’s grace based on the merits of Christ’s obedience unto death as our Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer. Like all of God’s children, David was a sinner to whom the LORD had imputed Christ’s righteousness (*Rom. 4:6-8*).

A further consequence of David’s sins was the death of the child who was born from his and Bathsheba’s illicit and adulterous relationship. And God tells him that this was because of his sinful acts. The LORD specifically states that David had “*given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.*” This is one of the worst things that often comes when God’s true children follow their fleshly appetites and bring scandal upon themselves, the Gospel, and the church. Unbelievers, especially self-righteous religionists, will use this as an occasion to speak against our God, our Savior, and our Gospel. They will say that our claim of salvation totally by God’s free and sovereign grace is worthless and powerless. Let us all remember that David’s sins are not recorded in God’s Word to serve as our example to follow or to show what we can get away with because our salvation is totally by grace. They are recorded to show the sovereign mercy of God in Christ towards sinful people, that we all continually need a righteousness we cannot produce, and to serve as a warning against giving in to our fleshly appetites and losing the joy of salvation and our credibility as followers and witnesses of Christ.

A few final thoughts that we need to consider is that even though the first child of David and Bathsheba died, the LORD blessed them with another child, Solomon, the future king of Israel, and the one through whom the LORD would bring the Messiah through according to the flesh (*Matt. 1:6-7*). We see that this whole episode was well within God’s sovereign, predestinating purpose, even though God cannot be accused of sin. It also shows how God sovereignly overrules the sins of mankind to accomplish His purpose and will in the salvation of His people to the praise of the glory of His grace (*Eph. 1:3-11*). Also, take time to read *Psalms 51*, which is David’s psalm of repentance expressing true godly sorrow over his sins in light of God’s mercy and grace to him through the Lord Jesus Christ.