

## **CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE- PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

### **DHW BIBLE CLASS LESSON 7B SECOND SAMUEL CHAPTER 12**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

God is no respecter of persons. This is an often neglected or forgotten truth. When a “great” servant of God falls into sin, he thinks that he has done so much for God or that he is so special in the sight of God that God will excuse him. What a warped sense of thinking. What a believer does for God is by God’s grace and must never be used as a justification for a lower standard of holiness.

David had sinned against God. He thought he had covered up his sin very neatly and nicely. Now that Bathsheba’s husband was dead and he had married her, his sin of adultery would not be found out. It must be noted here that David’s eight marriages did not constitute “adultery”. The women were single or widowed. In the days of the kings, it was an accepted cultural norm for a king to have many wives.

Bathsheba was married when David took her. In the days of the kings, no one could do anything if the king wanted to take a married woman but this was not acceptable for the king of Israel. God intervened dramatically and swiftly.

David’s “cover-up” was short-lived. He was rebuked openly and the

punishment was the death of his infant son who was conceived out of wed lock. God’s children will be punished for their sins. They are held to a higher moral standard since they bear the name of Christ.

The chapter is divided as follows: David’s sin rebuked (vv.1-12); David’s repentance (vv.13-14); David’s baby died (vv.15-25); and David’s military conquests (vv.26-31).

#### **COMMENTARY**

##### **David rebuked by Nathan—12:1-12**

The LORD sent His prophet, Nathan, to rebuke David. This opening statement revealed that the LORD was not a passive onlooker. David penned a psalm (whether before or after he had committed this sin, we are not sure) that the LORD “behold, His eyelids try, the children of men” and “the LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence His soul hateth” (11:4, 5). David was blinded by his lustful desire for a woman and despised the commandment of the LORD. He was guilty on three counts namely, covetousness, adultery and murder. In the previous chapter, David had thought that he was in control (in covering his sins) but in this chapter, we see that the LORD was in control.

The task of telling the king that he had sinned against God fell upon Nathan. It was a downright dangerous task. We have to commend Nathan for his courage and obedience to the LORD.

Nathan must have thought very carefully about how to carry out his mission. He went to David and told

him a parable. There was a rich man and a poor man. The rich man had many sheep and cattle while the poor man had only a little lamb which he and his children treated as part of the family. When a traveller came, the rich man took the poor man's lamb and cooked it for his guest instead of taking a lamb from his own flock. David reacted immediately with righteous anger and with vehemence. He could see the meanness and heartlessness of this rich man. How easy it was to judge others' evil deeds while being oblivious to our own. He said to Nathan: "This son of death, this evil deed" pronouncing that the man was worthy of death. He commanded that the poor man be compensated fourfold according to the Mosaic Law (Exodus 22:1; 12:5b, 6).

Nathan took this opportunity to charge David (v.7): "You are the man!" There was no mincing of words. Nathan continued: "Thus says the LORD God of Israel." The LORD reminded David of the many blessings that He had bestowed upon him. He had anointed him as king over Israel. He had delivered, protected and saved him from Saul. He had given him Saul's inheritance and wives. It was the custom then that the harem of the dead monarch would be inherited by his successor so David inherited Saul's wives. David had no excuse to take another man's wife. God had given him the kingship over Israel and Judah. He would have given him more if these gifts were too little (12:7, 8).

The **core of David's sin** was that he "despised the commandment of the LORD". He broke at least three of the 10 commandments: "Thou shall not commit adultery; thou shall not

murder; and thou shall not covet." The Hebrew text of verse 9 read thus: "**Uriah the Hittite** you killed; and **his wife** you took to be your wife; and **him** you killed with the sword of the sons of Ammon." The direct object of the verb was placed in the beginning which was not the usual sentence construction of the Hebrew language (usually has the verb at the beginning). In this case, it was to lay special stress on the direct object of the verb. It indicated that David had not only committed a sin but that he had destroyed the lives of these people. In short, he had sinned against the LORD and ruined others.

Nathan then delivered **God's judgment** upon David. For the rest of his life, David would witness violence and death in his own family. His wives would be taken by others for all to see. David's punishment befitted the crime that he had committed. His household would likewise be afflicted by lust and violence just as he had been guilty of adultery and murder.

### **David's Repentance and Chastisement—12:13-25**

David instantly confessed and repented (v.13): "I have sinned against the LORD". His confession was short and direct. He made no excuses. He did not try to rationalize. He did not blame Bathsheba for bathing in the open and tempting him. He did not complain about the punishment. He blamed no one but himself. This is the beginning of true repentance. Nathan replied "the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die" (v.13). The legal penalty for adultery was death (Leviticus 20:10). No one was above the Law, not even the king. Nathan told David that his sin had given the enemies of the LORD the opportunity

to blaspheme and despise the LORD's people of whom David was the visible king and earthly representative. The heathen and especially the unbelievers among the Israelites would scoff at the religion of the LORD (YAHWEH). The child who had been conceived would surely die. With this last note, Nathan left David.

It was a sad and yet comforting picture. The LORD was gracious to forgive David when he confessed and repented of his sin. However, he had to face the consequences of his sin, and be reminded of it for the rest of his life. The experience moulded him into a better person and he came to know the LORD more intimately but the cost was very high. There is a precious lesson for us here: there can be no restoration or reconciliation without confession and repentance. The LORD reveals that He is gracious and righteous to forgive our sins if we confess and repent.

The LORD struck the child whom Bathsheba bore for David with a terrible sickness. David pleaded with God for the life of the child. He went into his room, fasted and stretched himself on the floor praying for the mercy of God. His elders tried to persuade him to get up but he would not nor would he eat his food with them. Why did David pray so earnestly knowing that the child would surely die? David gave the answer (v.22): "Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?" David pleaded for God's mercy. He knew God better now. The LORD had forgiven and restored him and He might hear him and let him have the child. But God's chastisement stood.

Upon knowing that the child had died, David got up, washed up, applied oil on himself, changed his clothes and went into the Tabernacle to worship the LORD. After that, he returned to his palace and when they set food on his table, he ate. When his servants asked for an explanation of his unusual behaviour, he replied that while the child was yet alive, he fasted and prayed because God might hear his plea for mercy and let the child live. Now that the child was dead and he had no power to bring him back to life, there was no reason for him to fast. He said (v.23b): "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

This last statement is a comfort to believing parents whose children had died as infants. We believe that children who died before the age of accountability will go to be with the LORD. There is another valuable lesson here: when God does not answer our prayers, we should not be stumbled in our walk with Him. Like David, we should accept His will. If He gives a negative answer, we should accept it, continue our walk with Him, worship Him and serve Him. Life goes on, look ahead and do not dwell on the past.

David then comforted Bathsheba. She bore him another son whom David named "Solomon" meaning "peaceful." David expressed hope that there would be peace in his household and in the kingdom. The LORD loved the child signifying His continued blessing upon David. The LORD sent Nathan who gave the child another name, "Jedidiah" which meant "Beloved of the LORD." This strongly implied that he would be the chosen

one to succeed David as king over Israel.

**David Honoured By Joab**  
— 12:26-31

In the meantime, Joab was busy besieging the royal city Rabbah of Ammon. The city was on the verge of being taken. Joab sent word to David to come to the battle field and have the honour of taking the city. David responded and gathered his people to Rabbah. He took the city and the crown of the king of Rabbah and placed it on his own head. David subjugated the people and subjected them to cruelties, which was the rule of warfare in those days.

Adam Clarke commented correctly that “If this talent was only seven pounds, as Whiston says, David might have carried it on his head with little difficulty; but this weight, according to common computation, would amount to more than one hundred pounds! If, however, “*mishkalah*” be taken for the value, not the weight then all is plain as the worth of the crown will be about £5075 15s. 7d. sterling. Now this seemed to be true because of the description of the precious stones: the gold of the crown, and the jewels with which it was adorned were equal in value to a talent of gold.”

**PRACTICAL VALUE**

We learn the importance of confession and repentance. David confessed and repented and was restored to fellowship with the LORD. The LORD loved him and blessed him.

We must learn to accept what we cannot change and move on with our

lives. David prayed hard for the life of his child but he left it to the will of God.

God is aware of all that we do. David thought that he was in control and worked hard to cover up his sin. He was relieved when he learnt that Uriah had died but he could not deceive God. He had to face the consequences of his sin. God sent Nathan to charge him. God sees and hears. He cares.

AMEN

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**Monday:** 2 Samuel 12:1-14; 32:3-5; Hebrews 12:6-11.

**Tuesday:** 2 Samuel 12:15-131; Psalm 51:1-19.

**Wednesday:** 2 Samuel 12:1-31.

**Thursday:** 2 Samuel 12:1-31.

**Friday:** 2 Samuel 12:1-31.

**Analysis:**

Text	Practical Value
2 Samuel 12:1-14	
2 Samuel 12:15-25	
2 Samuel 12:26-31	

**Discussion Questions**

1. How was it that David could see the sin of others but not his own?

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2. What did Nathan do to David? What does his action teach us about serving God?

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3. In chapter 12:7-10, what did God remind David of? What specific sins did God charge David with? What was God's point?

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4. What may we learn from chapter 12 about repentance, forgiveness and chastening?

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7. In what way did David benefit from his wrongdoing? Was it permissible for him to take Bathsheba as his wife?

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5. What character trait of David was evident when he confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD (12:13)?"

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6. Was it fair for the infant son of David, who had done no wrong, to die?

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