



The Crown: Week 4

Enter The Unworthy King

Big Idea: Despite our biggest failures God offers forgiveness and restoration

Read the Bible:
2 Samuel 11-12

STUDY

*** Before interacting with this guide, all leaders should study the referenced texts using the HEAR Method. It's also important to encourage your group members to read the text using the HEAR Method. ***

H: Highlight, or take note of, things in the passage that stick out to you as you read.

E: Explain what the passage means by asking simple questions of the text:

- **Why was this written?**
- **To whom was it originally written?**
- **How does it fit with the verses before and after it?**
- **Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book?**
- **What is He intending to communicate through this text?**

A: Apply the text to your life. What does God want you to learn from this text?

R: Respond to God in prayer.



Summary

Wrong place. Wrong time. Wrong choice. Wrong response. The story of David and Bathsheba can be summed up in one word: wrong. The story starts with David in the wrong place at the wrong time. It was the spring of the year, the time when kings went out to make war. Yet, we find David in Jerusalem while his army fights his battle for him. Moreover, David is up late at night scanning the Jerusalem skyline. It becomes increasingly obvious that David is a bored man, and a bored man is a dangerous man.

This was the context when David comes across a major temptation, a beautiful woman bathing on her roof top. At this moment, David should have run. He should have reminded himself of God's design. He should have remembered God's word that forbids lust and adultery. Nevertheless, David moves from the wrong place and the wrong time headlong into a wrong choice. He sends inquiries about the beautiful woman. Her name is Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. The implication is clear: SHE IS NOT FOR YOU DAVID! But David cannot help himself, and things go from bad to worse when he calls for her and lies with her.

God's word promises what is done in the dark will be brought to the light. This was the case when David's horrible decision-making process results in Bathsheba being pregnant. Here David is faced with another choice. He can run to God. He can repent. He can turn from this sin. That's not what David does. David moves from a wrong choice to a wrong response. He brings Uriah home to try and cover his sin, but this endeavor proves fruitless as Uriah is a man of integrity. With his prospects dwindling, David does the unthinkable. David has Uriah killed.

Wrong place. Wrong time. Wrong choice. Wrong response. Yet, in this story that is full of failure we see the gospel shine bright in the darkness. Nathan the prophet rebukes David for his transgression. As David repents of his wickedness, we see some of the most beautiful and shocking words in all of scripture.

God has put your sin away. – 2 Samuel 12:13

In the midst of great failure and unimaginable sin. God's grace is greater than David's failure. God puts away his sin. This story of tragedy is actually a story of good news. Despite our greatest failures, God's grace is greater.



Major Lessons

1. Christians must always be on guard against temptation and indwelling sin.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer offers us a warning in his book on Temptation writing:

In our members (body) there is a slumbering inclination toward desire which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power, desire seizes mastery of the flesh. All at once, a secret smoldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames. In this moment, God is quite unreal to us. And Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with a forgetfulness of God. The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and the will in deepest darkness. It is here that everything in me rises up against the word of God. Therefore, the Bible teaches that in times of temptation to our flesh there is one command—flee. Flee youthful lust. Flee worldly temptation. If you're feeling under pressure and on the verge of something—an emotion is welling up within you—what does the Bible say? Run. No human being has within them the strength to resist such overpowering emotions. (Temptation, 116–17)

James 1:13-14

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

2. God's grace covers our biggest failures. There is no sin that is too big for the cross.

Psalm 103:12

as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

3. When Christians fail the right response is to repent, turn from sin and run to God.

Psalm 51:1-2



Have mercy on me,¹ O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

Leading Your Group

Community Time – Start group by asking for Prayer requests and checking in on everyone.

Bible Study

***Have everyone in your group read assigned scripture before meeting. ***

Start Group by Reading 2 Samuel 11:1-27 & 12: 1-14 (Split the Reading among the Group)

Discuss (The following questions are meant as suggested questions to guide conversation.)

1. What did this passage teach you about the danger of sin?
2. How do we see the gospel in this story?
3. Do you ever think that some sins are too big to be forgive? How does this story kill that lie?
4. After reading this story, what is your biggest take away.

Teaching

1. One of the major elements of this story is the power of indwelling sin and temptation. Spend ample time talking about how dangerous sin is. Incorporate other scripture passages such as James 1:12-14 to show how we cannot play with sin.



2. Be sure to celebrate the massive reality of God's grace in this story. God puts our sin away. Be sure to point out that eventually, God puts all our sin, including David's on Jesus. (Romans 3:23-25)

Resources & Commentaries

The Teacher's Bible Commentary

David's Sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:1–27)

The passage.—David's immorality began with the temptation of the eye. From the roof of the king's palace he saw Bathsheba bathing. She was very beautiful. It is not likely that his sin resulted from only one temptation. He probably entertained lustful thoughts from time to time. He may have gone to his roof on several occasions with the hope of satisfying his lustful curiosity. It could also be assumed that Bathsheba may have been aware of David's interest in her before he called for her to come over to the palace. The narrative in the Bible is necessarily brief. Much lengthy fiction has been written about this story.

David sent messengers to Bathsheba and invited her to come to his palace. Again it is not likely that she visited him only once. The adultery of David and Bathsheba resulted in her pregnancy. She sent word of her condition to David and he began to try to hide their sin.

His first attempt was to get Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, to return home and to appear to be the father of the baby. He sent for him from the battlefield. He inquired about the war with the Ammonites. He told him to go home to his wife. Uriah, either suspecting the problem, or trying to be fair with his men on the battlefield, would not go home. David then invited him to a feast and got him drunk. Still he would not go home to Bathsheba.

David then became a murderer. He sent a letter to Joab by Uriah himself, calling for his death to be arranged in battle. Uriah was to be placed in the hardest part of the fighting, and then the other men were to be withdrawn, leaving him to die. The deed was done. Word was sent to David of the death of Uriah. After a period of mourning, Bathsheba came to live with David in the palace. God was much displeased.



Truth for today.—We live in times of gross immorality. The stability of the institution of marriage is threatened on every hand. The sanctity of the unique relationship between husbands and wives is disregarded all too often.

Jesus spoke of the danger of the lust of the eyes. In Matthew 5:27–30 he called for purity of thought. Adultery, like other sin, begins with the entertainment of the idea in the mind. Jesus warned against the lustful look by saying, "... every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Sin almost never consists of one deed alone. One sin begets another. In an attempt to cover one sin, David committed almost all of the other sins. He set himself up as his own god. A woman became his idol. In the name of Jehovah he did the will of Satan. He dishonored motherhood and fatherhood. He murdered. He stole his neighbor's wife. He became a liar of the worst sort. His coveting was of the basest kind. In offending in one point he had broken all of God's law.

The Exposure of David's Sin (2 Sam. 12:1–31)

The passage.—The Lord sent Nathan, his prophet, to David to expose him as a sinner. He began with a parable. There were two men in a certain city. One was rich and the other poor. The poor man had only one little ewe lamb that had been like a member of his family. When the rich man had a guest to entertain, instead of killing one of his many sheep, he stole his poor neighbor's lamb and killed it for his feast. As David heard the story he became angry. "The man who had done this deserves to die," he said. Nathan replied, "You are the man."

Nathan reviewed God's blessings upon David and exposed his sin fully. He prophesied the consequences that would follow the sins. The sword would never depart from David's house. His own family would be openly immoral. The child conceived in sin would die.

One of the most moving passages in the Bible follows. David acknowledged his sin. He asked God to pardon him. Read Psalms 32 and 51 for an understanding of the repentance of this man after God's own heart who had so grievously sinned.

Bathsheba's baby became very sick, and although Nathan had told him the baby would die, David prayed for it to get well. He would not eat, but mourned and prayed continually. After a week the baby died. David's servants feared to tell him, but David could tell by their actions that death had come. He washed himself and went to the house of God to worship.

He explained his actions by saying, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead; why should I fast?... I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (vv. 22–23).



The birth of Solomon is recorded in verse 24. The history of Israel concerns itself with the struggle for the succession to the throne. The tracing of the various claims makes an interesting study.

The conquest of the city of Rabbah and the capture of the Ammonites is recorded in verses 26–31. David took the crown from the head of their king and put it upon his own head, thus symbolizing his rule over them. He made the Ammonites labor in the brick kilns and perform other difficult tasks as his slaves.

Special points.—It would seem that Bathsheba would have been punished for her part in the sins of David. While it does not appear that she was punished with the same severity as he was, it must be kept in mind that we do not have all of the record. The Bible is seeking primarily to show God’s dealing with Israel leading up to the coming of Jesus as the Savior of the world. Many of our questions must go with only partial answers. We may be sure that Bathsheba’s grief over the death of their baby was comparable to that of David.

Truth for today.—The overcoming grace of God in spite of the sin of man is seen in that God chose to use Solomon. Jesus was born of the line that came from David and Bathsheba. No one should ever feel that his background disqualifies him for useful service for God.

Sin does have severe consequences beyond the persons who are guilty. The social implications of sin should be taken into account. The death of Uriah and many others in the battle at Rabbah, the death of the infant, the immorality of the children of David, and the bloodshed for many years speak so loudly, “Be sure your sin will find you out.” What David did in secret has become the most widely known act of immorality in the history of the world.¹

Bible Panorama: Chapter by Chapter Guide

CHAPTER ELEVEN

V 1: INACTIVE David should be leading his army to battle but stays at home. **V 2–5: INIQUITY** David is tempted when he sees Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, bathing. He sends for her,

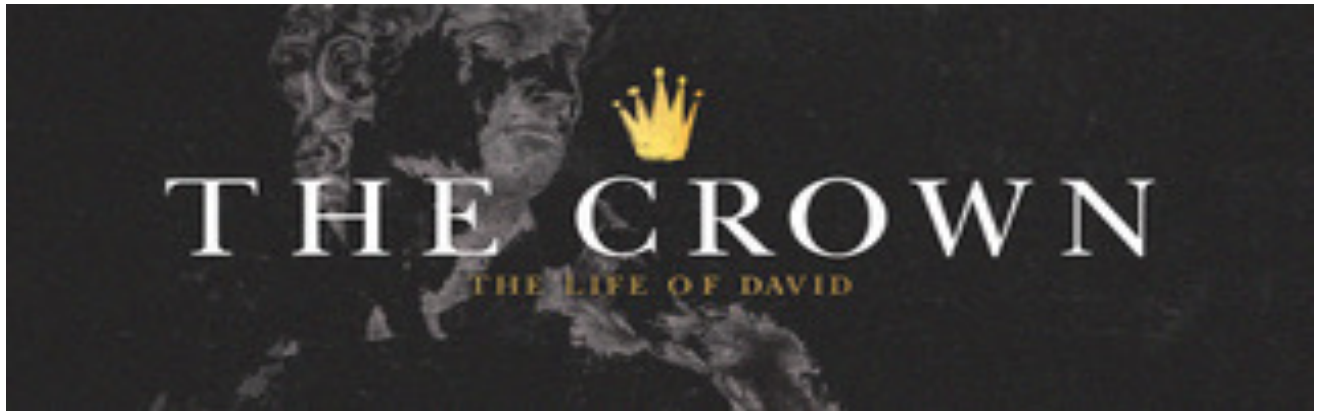
¹ Tatum, S. L. (1972). [2 Samuel](#). In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), *The teacher’s Bible commentary* (pp. 184–186). Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers.



commits adultery with her, and she becomes pregnant. **V 6–8: INFERENCE** Uriah, Bathsheba’s husband, is away fighting with the army. David recalls him to his palace under the pretext of asking how the battle is going. He releases Uriah to go home in the hope that the baby to be born will then be considered to be Uriah’s. This plan cannot work unless Uriah goes home and sleeps with his wife. **V 9–11: INVOLVEMENT** Uriah is so involved and identified with Israel and its battles, and with the ark of God, that he refuses to go and sleep in his house, but sleeps alongside his master’s servants. **V 12–13: INTOXICATION** David invites him to eat and drink with him, and gets him drunk. Even so, Uriah will not go home to his right and privilege of sleeping with his wife, but carries on in his identification with Israel by sleeping in the servants’ quarters. **V 14–17: INSTRUCTION** David decides that he will murder Uriah by the hand of the enemy, and writes to instruct Joab to put Uriah in the front line of the battle and then retreat. The plan works and Uriah is killed, along with others of David’s army. **V 18–25: INFORMATION** Joab sends a messenger to inform David of what has happened. David tells the messenger to encourage Joab, because this kind of thing happens in a war. **V 26–27: INDIGNATION** After a time of mourning, Bathsheba becomes David’s wife and bears his child. But God is displeased with David’s devious and sinful behaviour.

CHAPTER TWELVE

V 1–6: PROPHET Nathan the prophet tells David of a very rich man who killed the pet lamb of a very poor man, although he had many flocks and herds himself. Not recognising this as a parable, David is angry and says that this man must die. **V 7–10: POINTED** Nathan tells David that the parable refers to him. He has so much, yet he has stolen Uriah’s wife and killed Uriah. **V 11–13a: PENITENT** Although one wonders why David took so long to recognise his sin and to repent from it, he is truly penitent when Nathan confronts him. He now admits his sin against the LORD. **V 13b: PARDON** As soon as David repents and confesses his sin, Nathan tells him that God has put away his sin. He will not die. **V 14: PUNISHMENT** David is told, however, that his sin has caused God’s name to be blasphemed, and that God will punish him by not allowing his child by Bathsheba to live. **V 15–23: PURPOSE** The child dies despite David’s intense prayer and fasting for a week. His servants are surprised when David’s mood lightens after the death of the child. He gives the reason that he prayed for his son while he was ill, but now it is too late. He must now get on with his life and accept God’s purpose in all of this. **V 24–25: PREGNANT** Bathsheba becomes pregnant again, and Solomon is born to David and Bathsheba. **V 26–31:**



PRIZE Meanwhile, David joins Joab to win the battle against the Ammonite royal city of Rabbah. The conquered Ammonites are made to labour. David and all the people return to Jerusalem.²

² Chrispin, G. (2005). [*The Bible Panorama: Enjoying the Whole Bible with a Chapter-by-Chapter Guide*](#) (pp. 143–144). Leominster, UK: Day One Publications.