

KING DAVID FACING PROBLEMS

United Kingdom

2 Samuel 11 - 24; 1 Kings 1:1 - 2:12; 1 Chronicles 28:1 - 29

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: David, Bathsheba, Nathan, Absalom

Key-locations: Hebron, Jerusalem

Key-repetitions:

- Frustrations: one after the other following David's sin, both in the family and in the nation.
- David's sin: he sinned (2 Sm 11:1-15; 24:); confessed (12:13; 24:) and was punished (12:10-14; 24:1-17).
- Beautiful people: Bathsheba (2 Sm 11:2); Tamar (2 Sm 13:1); Absalom (14:25).
- David did not deal with his children's sin-problems: Amnon (2 Sm 13:21); Absalom (2 Sm 14:23, 28); Adonijah (1 Kin 1:6).
- David's sons entered into rebellion: Amnon (2 Sm 13:1-19); Absalom (2 Sm 13:23 -18:18) Adonijah (1 Kin 1:5-10).

Key-attitudes:

- Frustrations within David's family and within the nation.
- Conflict: war with enemies; within David's family and within the nation.
- The loyalty of Uriah to his leaders and army.
- The wisdom and courage of Nathan.
- Amnon's lust for Tamar.
- Absalom's hatred for Amnon.
- The arrogant pride and cunning of Absalom.

- The arrogant selfishness of David's sons: Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah.

Initial-situation:

After Saul's death, David became king over Judah and lived in Hebron. Ish-Bosheth, son of Saul, was made king over all Israel. After Ish-Bosheth's death, all the tribes of Israel anointed David king over Israel.

David captured Jerusalem and made his residence there. He constantly defeated the Philistines in battle.

David took the Ark of God to Jerusalem. God would not allow David to build the Temple, but promised that his son would. The Lord also promised to establish David's kingdom forever.

David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.

Initial-problem:

David's military became so strong it was not necessary for him to lead them. David dispatched Joab with the king's fighting men to attack the city of Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.

Final-situation:

David reigned as king 40 years over Israel. Before his death, David chose his son Solomon to succeed him as king.

BIBLE STORY

David: Guilty of Adultery and Murder

One spring, David dispatched Joab with the king's fighting men to destroy the Ammonites and attack the city of Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.

One afternoon, David got up from a nap and walked around on the flat roof of his palace. From the vantage point of the roof he saw Bathsheba, a beautiful woman, bathing. David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he went to bed with her. Then she returned home. Later, she sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, was fighting against the Ammonites. David sent word to Joab, the commander of the army, to send Uriah, Bathsheba's husband home. Uriah gave David information about the war, then David told Uriah, "Go to your house and have a good night's sleep." Uriah did not go home. He slept at the entrance to the palace with David's servants.

The next morning, David asked Uriah why he didn't go home.

Uriah answered, "The Ark of the Lord, and the men of Israel and Judah are staying in tents. My master Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open fields. How could I go home to eat, drink and sleep with my wife?"

David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. David wrote, "Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is most fierce. Let him be killed in battle."

Uriah was killed in battle. His wife Bathsheba, went through the time of mourning. Then she became David's wife and gave birth to his son. The Lord did not like what David had done (11:1-27).

The Lord sent Nathan to David. Nathan told David, "There were two men in the same town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had many sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little female lamb which he bought and raised. 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. Now a traveler stopped to visit the rich man, but the rich man was too stingy to take one of his own sheep or cattle to feed the traveler. Instead, he took the poor man's lamb and cooked it for his guest to eat."

David exploded with anger and told Nathan, "The man who did this deserves to die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, for his crime and his stinginess!"

Nathan told David, "You are the man! The Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'Why did you ignore the Lord's command and do this great evil? You murdered Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites and you took his wife as your wife. The sword will never depart from your house; murder and killing will continually plague your family. I will use one from your own family to bring calamity upon you.'"

David told Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Nathan replied, "The Lord forgives your sin. You are not going to die for it. Your sin made the enemies of the Lord lose all respect for him; therefore, the son born to you will die" (12:1-14).

Problems in David's Family

The Lord caused the son of David and Bathsheba, Uriah's widow, to become sick, and he died. Bathsheba became pregnant again and she had another son. They named him Solomon. The Lord loved the child (12:15-24).

David had two sons who were half-brothers, Absalom and Amnon. Absalom had a beautiful sister named Tamar. Amnon fell in love with his half-sister Tamar. Amnon devised a devious plan. He pretended to be sick. When Tamar visited him, he raped her.

King David heard the whole story; he was furious, but he didn't discipline Amnon. Absalom hated Amnon for violating his sister Tamar (13:1-22).

Two years later, Absalom ordered his men to kill Amnon.

Absalom fled and went to Geshur. After King David got over Amnon's death, he longed to have Absalom near him (13:23-39). After Absalom was in Geshur for three years, David allowed him to return to Jerusalem (14:1-33).

Absalom Leads a Revolution

Absalom began riding in a horse-drawn chariot with fifty men running ahead of him. He went early to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a case for the king to settle, Absalom would tell him, "Your claims are valid and proper, but the king has no one to listen to you. If only I were

appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a case could come to me and I would see that he gets justice."

People came near Absalom to bow down. He would reach out, take hold of the person and then give him a kiss. Absalom stole the hearts of everyone in Israel (15:1-6).

Four years after Absalom returned to Jerusalem, he went to Hebron and sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, shout, 'Absalom is king in Hebron!'" (15:7-12).

A messenger reported to David, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom." David, his officials and his entire household fled from Jerusalem (15:13-37).

Meanwhile, Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem (16:15 - 17:23).

David organized his forces and told the troops, "I myself will march with you."

But the men said, "No! The enemy won't care about us, they only want you. Stay in the city."

David answered, "I will do what you think is best."

David stood beside the gate while all the men marched out. David ordered each commander, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake." The whole army heard the king's orders concerning Absalom (18:1-5).

David's army went out to fight against Israel's army that was loyal to Absalom in the forest of Ephraim. David's army defeated Absalom's army. Twenty thousand men died. The forest claimed more lives that day than the sword.

Absalom rode his mule under the thick branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's long hair got caught in the tree. The mule ran away leaving Absalom dangling in midair.

Joab took three spears and stabbed Absalom in the heart. Joab then blew the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing the army of Israel. They took Absalom, threw him into a pit in the forest and piled up a large heap of rocks over him (18:6-18).

David heard that Absalom was dead. He went up to the room over the city gate and cried out, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you; o Absalom, my son, my son!"

Joab went to King David and rebuked him, "Today you have humiliated your men. They saved your life. You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. Today, you made it clear that commanders and soldiers mean nothing to you. You would be pleased if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead. Now go out and encourage your men. If you don't go to them, they will desert you; not a soldier will be left with you by nightfall. This will be the worst calamity you have ever faced!"

So the king got up and took his seat at the city gate and his soldiers presented themselves to the king (18:19 - 19:8).

David was restored as king; however, many of the men from the tribes of Israel were discontent (19:41-43).

David Chose Solomon as King

David made preparations for the building of the House of the Lord. David designated his son Solomon to be king. David charged Solomon to build a house for the Lord, the God of Israel. David ordered the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon build the temple (1 Chr 22:1-16).

Adonijah was David's oldest living son. He made a power play and said, "I will be king" (1 Kin 1:5-10).

David heard about Adonijah's power play and immediately ordered Nathan, the prophet, to anoint Solomon king over Israel. Trumpets were sounded and everyone shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" And all the people joined the celebration, playing flutes and rejoicing greatly (1 Kin 1:11-53).

When David's time to die drew near, he gave a charge to Solomon his son, "I am about to die. Be strong, and obey everything the Lord commands. If you and your descendants obey the Lord, you will always have a successor on Israel's throne (1 Kin 2:1-9).

Then David died and was buried in the City of David. He had reigned 40 years over Israel; seven years in Hebron and 33 in Jerusalem. So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established (1 Kin 2:10-12).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did David fall into sin?
2. Why was he unable to cover up his sins?
3. How did the results of David's sin bring frustrations for his family and the nation?
4. What problems did David face within his own family?
5. What was the second great mistake that David made?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. Even great people who try to follow God are susceptible to temptation and sin. David was the only person who God described as, "a man after my own heart" (1 Sm 13:14; Ac 13:22). David was tempted and committed sin when he saw Bathsheba taking a bath (2 Sm 11:2-4); and when he decided to take a census (2 Sm 24:1-3).
should receive it (2 Sm 7:5-7); give the message to the person who God targets to receive it (2 Sm 7:8-17); have courage to denounce sin (2 Sm 12:1-12); have mercy to proclaim divine pardon (2 Sm 12:13).
2. A person is unable to hide his sin from God. The Lord saw when David committed adultery with Bathsheba and when he planned to use the Ammonites to murder Uriah (2 Sm. 11:1-17; 12:9).
3. Nathan is an example of God's spokesperson. From Nathan, we can learn that God's spokesperson must be submissive to God in order to: receive God's message and to know who
4. Confessed sin is forgiven; however, its consequences will endure. The person who sows his wild oats and, at the time of harvest, prays for a crop failure will have his prayer denied by God. David confessed his sin and was forgiven; however, he suffered the consequences of his sin (2 Sm 12:10-14). The child that was the result of adultery died (2 Sm 12:14, 18); violence was experienced in David's family (2 Sm 12:10) when his son Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar (2 Sm 13:10-17) and Absalom killed his half-brother Amnon (13:23-29). God used David's own

household to bring calamity upon him (2 Sm 12:11) when David's son Absalom led a revolution (2 Sm 15:1-14) and was killed (2 Sm 18:14-15), and years later when another son Adonijah set himself up as king (1 Kin 1:5-10) and was killed (1 Kin 2:25). David committed adultery in secret, but his son would lie with his wives in broad daylight (2 Sm 12:11-12), this happened when a tent was pitched for Absalom on the flat roof, and he lay

with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel (2 Sm 16:22).

5. God's mercy is not separated from his justice. David confessed his sins of adultery and murder. He was forgiven, but suffered the consequences of his sin (2 Sm 12:10-14). David confessed his sin after the counting of the fighting men. However, God punished him by sending a plague on Israel (2 Sm 24:10-15).