



# FEED MY SHEEP

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## David Murders & Covers-up

Last month, we saw how David's coveting his neighbor's wife led him to commit fornication with her. Recall that she was married to Uriah, one of David's chief warriors—one of the elites known as the "mighty men." David knew him well. He also knew Bathsheba very well since she was not only his neighbor, but she was the daughter of another of his elite commandos.

Now, as David sends a messenger to his "chairman of the joints chiefs of staff," General Joab, to have Uriah sent back to the White House, David's palace, notice David's ruse, his pretence, his deceit.

**2 Samuel 11:7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.**

Whoa! Put yourself in Uriah's place. You would wonder... why would the king send for me just to ask me these simple questions which any regular messenger from the war front could have answered. These were superfluous and frivolous questions. You wouldn't call me home just to ask me these questions. Uriah is puzzled.

But now supposing that after Uriah leaves the king's presence, that some of the messengers mentioned in verse 4 either tell Uriah outright or let it slip out that his wife, Bathsheba, had been summoned to David's palace just a few weeks ago, or perhaps had been seen there on a regular basis for a number of weeks or months.

I believe Uriah began to get suspicious. Which

explains his subsequent actions here in the next few verses. Being a loyal, dutiful and gung-ho military man, Uriah had come straight from the battlefield to the king's house. He had *not* stopped by his own home first. He had not even cleaned the mud off his boots, so to speak. And thus...

**8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king.**

**9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.**

Of course, David's purpose was to have Uriah go home and sleep with Bathsheba so that everyone—including Uriah—would think that the baby was his. David, in his efforts to try to get Uriah to sleep with Bathsheba, had his cooks prepare a very substantial gift of food. But Uriah, now being quite certain why he had been called home from the front, decided not to cooperate in David's deception. He chose to bunk with the guards which had separate chambers at the entrances to the king's house.

If David thought he was under stress previously, he is now getting extremely uptight when he learns that Uriah did not go home.

**10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house?**

**11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.**

It is possible, of course, that Uriah is blissfully ignorant of anything going on between his wife and David. It is possible that simply out of his loyalty and sense of duty to God and country that he made the statements in verse 11.

But we're going to expound it from the angle that Uriah had learned from the gossipers what the truth was, and so verse 11 was his very clever answer to David's deception. Such an answer would lead David to think that Uriah was unaware of David's treachery. David was disappointed, but he had another trick up his sleeve to try to get Uriah to sleep with his wife.

**12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.**

**13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.**

You can imagine the scene: David invites Uriah for dinner. They have a drink before dinner. You don't refuse when the king offers you a drink. As they eat their meal together, David begins to reminisce about the days of years gone by—

...remember that time when Saul's men were chasing us and we had to scramble up and over mount such and such? And remember when we fought the Philistines a few years ago, and...

...David would have waxed eloquent for as long as it took to get Uriah drunk enough to hopefully head back to his wife's bed. But Uriah, having a resolute will in this matter, and perhaps feeling no desire for his wife after learning of her betrayal, went out and bunked with the boys again...to David's serious disappointment.

And so all night long, David, being somewhat

loosened by the alcohol himself, began to hatch a terrible scheme which his then-demented mind told him would solve the problem.

**14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.**

**15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.**

Of course, this was a most cruel twist in itself: to send Uriah's death warrant in the care of Uriah himself. If Uriah was suspicious, why didn't he open the letter? Simply, because it was sealed with a wax seal, and it was probably a death penalty offense for any unauthorized person to open the king's letter.

But now General Joab is brought into the conspiracy. But at this point, all Joab knows is that somehow Uriah has displeased the king in a very grave way and the king has very directly ordered his general to make sure that Uriah is killed in a battle.

We have noted in previous lectures how Joab is both an amoral man, and that he has some kind of mysterious power over his uncle David, so that David was never able to control him.

While Joab may or may not have been saddened to see the loss of his fellow mighty man, Joab realizes that his own part in the conspiracy affords him knowledge of David's crime which he figures will serve him in good stead at some time in the future. In other words, Joab is thinking of possibly using this knowledge as leverage, as blackmail.

**16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.**

...that is, Joab checked out the city walls and determined where the best warriors of Rahhab were situated; those with the best chance of killing Uriah.

**17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.**

**18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;**

**19 And charged the messenger, saying, When**

thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,

**20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?**

**21 Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.**

This is fairly easy to understand: Joab is expecting that when David hears the news that some good warriors have fallen, David will be angry thinking that Joab made a blunder in judgment in getting so close to the city wall.

Joab foresees that David may even refer to Israel's history in the matter of Abimelech and the millstone, as if to say to Joab: "You idiot, every Israelite schoolboy knows that you just don't get so darn close to enemy walls that they can fire upon you."

The reference is to an incident in the book of Judges where Abimelech, the son of Gideon, approaches right up to the wall of a high tower in Thebez, and is killed when a woman on the tower crashes a part of a millstone down on his head. (Judges 9, if you want to read it later.) In any event, Joab tells the messenger that if David explodes in anger, just tell him Uriah was killed, also.

**22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.**

**23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.**

**24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.**

**25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.**

David's reply is almost nonchalant, isn't it? As if to say to Joab: "Well, don't get depressed over the

losses; you just never know who is going to die in battle, do you? Too bad about our ol' buddy, Uriah." Again, the treachery of David here is nauseating to read and it was certainly a stench in the nostrils of God. Incidentally, notice that David is therefore responsible not only for Uriah's death, but for those of the other men killed in the foolish approach to the wall.

**26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.**

The period of mourning was seven days. I really wonder: over the course of the next few decades until his death, do you suppose David ever told Bathsheba about what he had done, how he had arranged for Uriah's death? Personally, I doubt it.

**27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased YHWH.**

Well, the young lady is pregnant and so David took her for his wife just as soon as possible so that the baby would appear to be his legitimately. But the thing that David had done displeased Yahweh. Those are ominous words! ...and they set the stage for the next chapter.

Do you remember how we have mentioned that the five giants represent our five senses? When David was a youth of only 17, he was possessed of such spiritual communion with God, and he had such great faith that he was empowered to confront the giant Goliath and slay him with a stone in the forehead.

Now David is king of all Israel. He is probably in his 50's now. He has consolidated power and established good government over all Israel. But then comes an even greater test. This is the test of the giants within. Through touch, taste, and sight, smell and sound, David was attacked spiritually.

In this very dark chapter, we have seen David, one of the Bible's greatest spiritual giants, cut down and mortally wounded by the giants within himself. All the great virtues we have seen displayed in his life until now have been sublimated, pushed out of the way, and replaced with the wicked vices of lust, covetousness, fornication, ingratitude, meanness, injus-

tice, murder, deceit, lying, drunkenness—or at least leading another to drunkenness, and finally theft (theft of a wife). Oh, how the mighty have fallen!

David is lying in the spiritual gutter, his former virtues having been discarded so that he might enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. But as I am sure we all know from our own sad experiences, the pleasures of sin—of whatever kind—do not satisfy. They only cause that raging, internal conflict between the old man and the new, between the Adamic nature and the Christ nature, two natures which war against each other in our members for supremacy. As long as the sins remain unconfessed and the sinner in an unrepentant mode, his conscience will trouble him.

The learned McCosh remarked that “An evil conscience is the concealed root of bitterness, from which spring a thousand poisonous plants to shed their baleful influence upon [both] the possessor [himself] and upon society at large.”

David was a man of great passions, and when he had achieved a time of continued prosperity and had some leisure time, when his passions were not being predominantly directed towards *external* enemies of Israel, he found himself succumbing to the *internal* enemies of lust and covetousness in the areas of sensuality.

But our God is David’s God, and His mercy endures forever. Nevertheless, God left David to be tormented by the consciousness of his sins, unforgiven for a season. Then, when the time was right, our merciful Father sent a messenger to call David back to that sweet and intimate communion with Him, a communion which had been severed during David’s headlong fall into rebellion against God.

**2 Samuel 12:1 And YHWH sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.**

There are several Nathans in the Bible. David and Bathsheba had a son which they named Nathan, and I would suspect they named him after this man, the prophet Nathan. We came across this Nathan for the first time just a few chapters back when he was the one whom God had called to tell David of the Second Promised Land, the appointed place, from which the children of Israel would move no more. (See FMS

#83: *Perusing a Pivotal Prophecy*.) To carry that message to the king must have been a rather *pleasant* job for Nathan. Now, however, he is called upon to perform a very *unpleasant* task. Indeed, it was a *dangerous* assignment. He is called to confront the king, the absolute ruler in the land, and to confront him with his sins of adultery and murder.

A thousand years later, another prophet, a man by the name of John the Baptist, also confronted the king with similar charges. But Herod did not react like David did. John the Baptist was beheaded within days of calling the king on the carpet for his adultery.

We can be certain that Nathan gave very careful consideration to his perilous task. It probably took him a number of months to piece together the evidence in his own mind of David’s fornication and murders—unless of course, God dumped the whole story into his mind by direct, instantaneous revelation.

But now here is King David, who has remained unrepentant and obstinate in his sin and rebellion for probably close to a year now. We know it was that long because verse 14 tells us that Bathsheba had delivered a child by the time Nathan comes to confront David.

Dear Christian, after you came to know the Lord and had enjoyed sweet communion with Jesus, have you ever been in a state of rebellion like David? A period of time when you lied to yourself? Telling yourself that all was well with you spiritually? As we proceed with this story next month, we will find that David is totally oblivious to the fact that Nathan is speaking of him and his sins.

Has God sent you a Nathan? Did you recognize Nathan when he came? Did you repent? If not, do so now and regain that sweet unity with our Father’s Holy Spirit Who lives within you, but Who has been quenched into an ember by rebellion. Ask Father to rekindle the fire and restore unto you His salvation.

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