

2 Samuel 10-11

- Last week we started into a new section of 2 Samuel where the writer details David's failings as king of Israel
 - Our new section runs from Chapter 9-20 and chronicles David's failures, which is considerably longer than the first section on David's successes
 - But that's not because David failed more often than he succeeded or even that his failures were more prominent
 - Rather, a deeper examination of David's failings are more instructive for us spiritually
 - David's successes are a reminder of the Lord's faithfulness to His children
 - But a study of David's failures gives opportunity to learn from David's mistakes so we can improve our own faithfulness
 - Last week we began this new section in Chapter 9 as David extended grace to Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son
 - The story is a heartwarming picture of God's grace to us
 - Just as Mephibosheth was crippled by a fall, so are we crippled spiritually by a fall into sin
 - Just as Mephibosheth couldn't stand in David's presence, neither can we stand in the presence of God by our own efforts
 - So when David showed Mephibosheth grace because of a covenant made with Jonathan, it pictures God showing us grace because of Jesus
 - When David looked at Mephibosheth, he saw his friend, Jonathan, and when the Father looks upon us, He sees Jesus
 - God shows us mercy because of a covenant made in Jesus' blood, and we receive it because the Father granted it to us
- So David's decision to seek this man out was not a problem in itself, but the problem was in how David used this man to appease the Benjamites
 - David gave Mephibosheth his grandfather's inheritance of land in the tribe of Benjamin, and this set the stage for future conflict

- David was mixing his desire to keep his word to Jonathan with his personal desire to be popular and accepted by his enemies
 - Later a man from Mephibosheth's household, Sheba, will rebel against David's dynasty
 - And that rebellion was made possible because of David's desire to placate the Benjamites
- This leads us into a three chapter section that centers on David's defeat of the Ammonites and David's fall into adultery
 - Back in Chapter 8 we heard a summary of David's successes on the battlefield at the end of his reign
 - And his victory over the Ammonites was mentioned only briefly

[2Sam. 8:11](#) King David also dedicated these to the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued:

[2Sam. 8:12](#) from Aram and Moab and the sons of Ammon and the Philistines and Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

- But now the writer goes back to that time to explain the circumstances that surrounded their defeat, which includes David's greatest personal failing

[2Sam. 10:1](#) Now it happened afterwards that the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun his son became king in his place.

[2Sam. 10:2](#) Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me." So David sent some of his servants to console him concerning his father. But when David's servants came to the land of the Ammonites,

[2Sam. 10:3](#) the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think that David is honoring your father because he has sent consolers to you? Has David not sent his servants to you in order to search the city, to spy it out and overthrow it?"

[2Sam. 10:4](#) So Hanun took David's servants and shaved off half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle as far as their hips, and sent them away.

- There are several details in this chapter that tell us this event happened relatively early in David's rule
 - First, the king of Ammon who dies is King Nahash, who ruled during Saul's entire reign as king

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- We read about Saul's conflict with this man in 1 Samuel 11, when Nahash tried to take Jabesh-gilead from Saul
- Saul responded with a stunning victory over the Ammonites, which led to Saul's anointing as king over Israel
- Now the king of the Ammonites has died, which means this must have been early in David's reign because Nahash couldn't reign much longer
 - And now his son Hanun is ready to assume power in his father's place, and he is ready to challenge David probably for revenge
 - And that leads to our second reason to know this must be earlier in David's reign
 - Certainly, no one would have thought to challenge David at the end of his reign after his power was well known and respected
- But David is willing to seek some kind of peace with the new king, so he sends representatives to Hanun
 - The new king decides to respond in spite by challenging David's rule
 - Jews didn't shave their beards or heads because the Law prohibited such things
 - The Ammonite king probably knew this, so he has their heads and beards shaved to humiliate them among their people
 - He also cuts their garments to the point that they are barely clothed, another embarrassment
- Clearly the new Ammonite king wants to send David a message that he will not be afraid of David, but again this is early in David's reign
 - In time, men like Hanun learned not to challenge David and instead they sought peace agreements and paid tribute
 - But those lessons had to be learned through experience, and Hanun was one of those early examples
- So these men return to David humiliated and David reassures them

2Sam. 10:5 When they told it to David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. And the king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards grow, and then return."

2Sam. 10:6 Now when the sons of Ammon saw that they had become odious to David, the sons of Ammon sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob with 12,000 men.

- David deals sensitively with his men telling them they can stay out of sight at Jericho until their beards grow back, which would be some months
 - Jericho had never been rebuilt since Joshua's day, so it was the perfect hiding place for these men
 - Meanwhile, the word gets back to Ammon that David is none too pleased with their treatment of his men
 - So the Ammonites prepare for the inevitable war that their king invited by seeking allies from the surrounding nations
- Primarily, the Ammonites seek help from the Arameans along with Zobah, Tob and others
 - These are the men that we heard David defeated in Chapter 8's summary of David's victories
 - So now we learn that these nations were targeted by David because they had become allies against Israel
- The king's actions were a clear provocation intended to test David's new leadership and Israel's strength
 - So David has little choice except to respond
 - David orders his forces into battle against the Ammonites

2Sam. 10:7 When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army, the mighty men.

2Sam. 10:8 The sons of Ammon came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the city, while the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the field.

2Sam. 10:9 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him in front and in the rear, he selected from all the choice men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Arameans.

2Sam. 10:10 But the remainder of the people he placed in the hand of Abishai his brother, and he arrayed them against the sons of Ammon.

[2Sam. 10:11](#) He said, “If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me, but if the sons of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will come to help you.

[2Sam. 10:12](#) “Be strong, and let us show ourselves courageous for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what is good in His sight.”

- David’s commander Joab and “all the army” are sent to fight the Ammonites
 - But notice that we don’t see David consulting the Lord before going to war as he once did, and that’s a bad sign
 - So often when we’re new in our walk with the Lord or weak in the face of our challenges, we turn to Him and ask Him for help
 - But as we mature and strengthen or as our battles lessen, we ease off that dependency
 - When our maturity should be driving us deeper into a relationship, it can lead us to say to God, “I’ve got this...”
 - So, David has committed his entire army to this battle and in the first engagement they meet at Medeba (1 Chronicles 19)
 - The first encounter was led by Joab and his brother Abishai, who move Jewish forces across the Jordan from Judah
 - The Arameans have agreed to fight with Ammon and have joined the battle coming down from the north
 - While the Ammonites have come from the east and south to form a pincer movement against Joab’s forces
 - So in v.9 Joab sees that he will have to fight on two fronts simultaneously, so he divides his forces and gives half to his brother
 - Abishai will take the Ammonite front and Joab will take the Aramean front
 - And then they agree that whoever falters first will receive help from the other force
 - In this initial conflict David has not joined in the battle himself
 - Finally, Joab commendably encourages his men to be courageous knowing the Lord is in control and trusting Him

10-11-1

[2Sam. 10:13](#) So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to the battle against the Arameans, and they fled before him.

[2Sam. 10:14](#) When the sons of Ammon saw that the Arameans fled, they also fled before Abishai and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the sons of Ammon and came to Jerusalem.

- The battle isn't described in much detail, but it's clear enough that the Lord brings Israel the victory
 - Joab and Abishai engaged on two fronts against two greater forces and yet both run fleeing from the battle with hardly a fight
 - After seeing his adversaries run off so easily, Joab declines to chase them down
 - Instead, he returns to Jerusalem which means the battle isn't over

[2Sam. 10:15](#) When the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together.

[2Sam. 10:16](#) And Hadadezer sent and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the River, and they came to Helam; and Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer led them.

- The Arameans retreated into a city stronghold called Rabbah, while the Arameans fall back across the Euphrates river in the north
 - Nearby was the king of Zobah, Hadadezer, who sees opportunity to strengthen his own rivalry with David
 - So he offers his commander and army to join with the Arameans against David
 - This conflict is widening and sucking in more of Israel's enemies

[2Sam. 10:17](#) Now when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Arameans arrayed themselves to meet David and fought against him.

[2Sam. 10:18](#) But the Arameans fled before Israel, and David killed 700 charioteers of the Arameans and 40,000 horsemen and struck down Shobach the commander of their army, and he died there.

10-11-2

2Sam. 10:19 When all the kings, servants of Hadadezer, saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and served them. So the Arameans feared to help the sons of Ammon anymore.

- David sees Joab return with the job unfinished against the Ammonites and hears that the Arameans are regathering, and he takes charge
 - David brings all of Israel's army and heads north to put down the Arameans and Hadadezer's army
 - With the Lord's help, David destroys the army of Shobach, and destroys their ability to wage war
 - And now the king of Zobah has no choice but to become a vessel of David and pay tribute to Israel
 - This was the victory that we heard about briefly in Chapter 8
- Now the Ammonites have lost a powerful ally, which makes them a much less powerful threat to David, but he's not done fighting them
 - Having shown his commander how to vanquish an enemy, David returns to Jerusalem and allows his commander to take charge again

2Sam. 11:1 Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.

- This verse has a measure of foreshadowing by suggesting that David was wrong to remain in Jerusalem
- When he commands the army, his wisdom leads the people and the Lord blesses the outcome
- But when David sits back and allows others like Joab and Abishai to fight these battles, the results are less conclusive
 - The sense we get is that the Lord intended David to lead, which is why the Lord anointed him and gave him the role of king
 - David wasn't a figurehead or an administrator behind a desk
- David was to be a hands-on leader who set an example for the people
 - So when David steps away from this role, bad things happen

- And that's the sense we get from the opening verse of the chapter, as David sends others to lead and fight his battles
- God raises up leaders for a spiritual purpose, and that purpose can't be delegated
 - A man or woman raised up and gifted to lead can't delegate that leadership to others
 - No more than a prophet or teacher can delegate the giving or prophecy or the teaching of God's word
 - Obviously, a leader can delegate the performance of many tasks to others, for that is part of being a good leader
 - But the essence of a person's call from God cannot be delegated to another
 - A man who has the gift to lead or pastor must remain in a position to oversee all the leadership or pastoring duties
 - Or a woman with a gift to teach or encourage others shouldn't step back from teaching to managing a staff of teachers
 - Let someone with the gift to lead manage while those with the gift to teach continue in the study and teaching of God's word
 - Remember what the apostles said when someone suggested that they should "move up" to a management position?

Acts 6:2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

- We remember they said "it is not desirable" to neglect teaching
- Who wouldn't desire it? God, the One Who gifted them to teach
- And if they had moved to other duties, they would have been neglecting what God called them to do, they said
- When we delegate our role to others, we are neglecting our gift and abdicating our responsibility to serve God in our calling
 - And those God intended to serve through us receive less than the Lord intended

- David delegated his God-given role as the leader of Israel in battle which was abdicating his responsibility
- And it resulted in Israel receiving less than God intended
- God does not desire we hand off our area of ministry to someone else so we can climb a ladder of personal success
 - It never feels that way in the moment because we tell ourselves we've taken on other responsibilities that are more important
 - And a man or woman raised up to a certain purpose shouldn't turn that responsibility over to another
 - And ministry shouldn't be viewed as a career nor is serving God a means to climbing a ladder
 - We receive a gift and a calling, and the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable
- So because David delegates his battlefield leadership again and stays in Jerusalem, it opens opportunity for the idle king to get into trouble

2Sam. 11:2 Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.

2Sam. 11:3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

2Sam. 11:4 David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.

- The story of David and Bathsheba is one of the best known from the Old Testament and it is certainly his weakest moment
 - What starts as lust becomes adultery and eventually leads to murder
 - It may be the second most notorious sin in the whole Bible after the Fall of the Garden
- It's a classic example of how sin works in a person's heart when it's allowed to mature and progress

- Augustine once wrote that David's fall with Bathsheba was a warning to all who haven't fallen that they should be on guard
- And it's an encouragement to save from despair all those who have fallen
- The story spans Chapters 11 and 12, and it's organized in a chiasmic structure with the turning point of the chiasm between chapters
 - It starts with David sending Joab to Rabbah and it ends with Joab sending David to Rabbah
 - It starts with David sleeping with Bathsheba, Bathsheba getting pregnant, and then her husband dying
 - It ends with David's son dying, followed by David sleeping with Bathsheba and Bathsheba getting pregnant with Solomon
- This chiasmic structure reminds us these events happen according to a plan of God to accomplish a good purpose in David and Israel
 - And like most stories of this kind, it starts innocently enough with David taking a nighttime stroll on the roof of his palace
 - The roofs of homes in that day were a living space where families gathered in the evenings
 - Daytime heat was absorbed by the clay and stone walls of homes, so families cooled off on the roof at night
 - David is having trouble sleeping one night, perhaps because it was hot, and he ends up on his roof overlooking the city
 - And from that vantage point, he sees a young woman bathing, perhaps through a window or in the courtyard around her home
 - At seeing Bathsheba bathing, David is instantly taken by her beauty, and he has servants inquire about the woman
 - David is told her name is Bathsheba, which means "maiden of an oath"
 - After learning her name, David sends for her, and of course she must respond to the king's request for an audience
 - And in v.4 the text simply says David lay with her and after she purified herself ritually and returned home

- And just like that, David commits adultery as does Bathsheba
- David has committed adultery through additional marriages, which was culturally acceptable in that day
- But now he has take the step of adultery without even the pretense of a marriage because the woman was already married
- So what do we make of what David and Bathsheba did? For example, is this just David's sin?
 - Most assume Bathsheba never intended to be seen bathing, yet Jerusalem was not a very large place and she lived very near the palace
 - So she must have known she was in sight of David's roof while she bathed, which suggests she was toying with the king
 - That doesn't mean she was seeking to sleep with David, of course, and the text never explicitly blames Bathsheba
 - But there is also no evidence that she ever tried to resist David's advances in the way Joseph resisted Potiphar's wife
 - So Bathsheba seems to have played with fire and been burned
 - Nevertheless, David deserves the bulk of blame, both because he was king, but also because he knew the importance of keeping a covenant
 - His problems began in the way that sin often starts: with the lust of the eyes
 - Humanity's sin began when the Woman saw that the fruit was good, and her lustful sight led her down a self-destructive path
 - James describes that path this way

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

James 1:15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

- We are carried away and enticed (or lured) into sin by a lust or fleshly desire

- The flesh is programmed from birth to want for the wrong things, and that desire can carry us away
 - We are carried away from sanity, from sensibility, from reasonable thinking, from what we know to be true
 - And as we're carried away, it's like a magnet...the closer we get to that thing we desire, the stronger the pull
- That lustful desire just keeps growing until it conceives and gives birth to a sinful act
 - And when that sinful act is accomplished it will bring forth death, James says
 - Ultimately, he's talking about the death that we all experience because we all have sin
 - But it's also an allusion to the small deaths that we die every time we sin
 - The sins we commit in chasing after lust kill relationships, ruin fortunes, destroy peace, and wreck families and careers
- In David's case the pattern fits literally, as David sees a naked woman, is drawn in by his lust, conceives a child and that leads to two deaths
 - And it all starts with eyes lusting for something
 - Spying a naked woman naturally incites lust in any man's heart, and the same is true for women of course
 - David knew that he was experiencing lust, and it should have caused him to avert his eyes to stop lust from carrying him away
 - Then David could have sent messengers to Bathsheba ordering her to bathe inside out of sight in the future
 - Instead David allowed his gaze to linger, and once aroused he felt compelled to act on his lust by ordering her to his side
- Scriptures' command to all of us is to guard our eyes, erect barriers against things that entrap us and lead us away from godliness
 - These "fork in the road" moments exist in every journey toward sin and we need to learn how to recognize them

- Sight leads to lust leads to conceiving plans to sin leads to birth of sin and the resulting death of something we love
- It's also interesting that Bathsheba makes a point of engaging in a ritual cleansing in one of David's *mikvahs* (or ritual baths)
 - She was concerned about keeping the law's requirements for ritual purity, but she appears willing to violate the Law's demand for purity
 - This is a classic example of how God's people live in rebellion
 - We sin on Saturday, we go to church on Sunday
 - It's not fooling anyone, especially not God
 - God wanted her to observe the Laws on ritual cleansing and to observe the Law concerning marital purity
 - But she used one against the other...she committed adultery but then used ritual cleansing to "offset" the sin
 - It's like when we choose to sin but then excuse it to ourselves by giving more to the church or saying additional prayers
 - You can't ignore one of God's commands and then offset it by doubling down on another of His commands
 - God doesn't play those games and He doesn't credit us when we try to do it
 - He wants us to obey without exception, and the fact that we are forgiven for all sin shouldn't give us comfort when we sin
- In this case, the mention of ritual washing is also a clue of the consequences that were soon to follow, because it means she was menstruating
 - And that can only mean one thing...there are consequences for sin, and in David's case, the Lord visits severe consequences on David

2Sam. 11:5 The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant."

- Bathsheba informs David that she is pregnant...she knows the baby belongs to David since her husband is away fighting the war with the Ammonites
 - This is the consequence that the Lord has brought to David, and the question is how did the Lord expect David to respond at this point?

- The Law in Leviticus 20:10 demanded death both for David and Bathsheba, which is probably why she came to David
- Her pregnancy would become known soon, and when it was people would know she had committed adultery
- And although David's role in the matter might be concealed, she knew she would surely be put to death
- So the proper thing for David to do would have been to confess his sin to Bathsheba's husband and ask his forgiveness
 - And in addition David could have thrown himself on the mercy of God, asking the Lord to spare his life and Bathsheba's life
 - We can logically assume the Lord would have granted David mercy especially since his heir hadn't yet been born
 - Perhaps the Lord would have spared Bathsheba too
- But David never considers that option it seems...he proves James true by following the path of sin that James described
 - David is carried away by sin going deeper and deeper into the trap he set for himself
 - David hatches a plan to conceal his sin by bringing Bathsheba's husband back from the front

[2Sam. 11:6](#) Then David sent to Joab, saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David.

[2Sam. 11:7](#) When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war.

[2Sam. 11:8](#) Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him.

[2Sam. 11:9](#) But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.

- David sends word to Joab to return Uriah from the battlefield
 - When Uriah arrives, David plays his request off as nothing more than a desire to receive a report from the battlefield

- Uriah reports as required, and then David sends Uriah home on a bit of R&R from the war
- David also sends Uriah with extra food and drink rations as a gift to encourage a celebration at home that evening
- Of course, David's intended purpose was to ensure Uriah spent a night with his wife, which would then explain her baby
- But Uriah is a man of honor and integrity, so much so that he declines the opportunity to have relations with his wife that night
 - Instead, the man chooses to sleep with the servants in David's house, frustrating David's plan
 - When David hears, he confronts Uriah:

2Sam. 11:10 Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

2Sam. 11:11 Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing."

2Sam. 11:12 Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next.

- Incredulously, David asks Uriah why he didn't go to his wife?
 - Uriah answers that he couldn't bring himself to enjoy things that others couldn't enjoy under the circumstances
 - He says if the ark isn't in a proper home, and his commander and comrades are living in a field, then he can't do better for himself
 - He wants solidarity with those making sacrifices for God, so Uriah swears he won't enjoy an advantage
- Nothing convicts a person living in sin more than another person refusing to join them in sin for righteous reasons
 - Those moments either become opportunity to repent or they harden hearts
 - David chose the latter and doubled down on his path of sin

- In v.12 David tells Uriah to stay in Jerusalem a little longer, because David has another plan to get the man to sleep with his wife before leaving

2Sam. 11:13 Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house.

- David calls Uriah to a feast and gets the man to drink so much he becomes drunk
 - Of course, David hopes that as he drinks too much he will lose his inhibition and succumb to a desire for his wife
 - This is such classic sin behavior it should be a law of the universe
- When we sin, we expect others to join us in that sin, and in fact we encourage others to do so
 - It's an instinctive response and we see it at work even in the very first sin of the Garden
 - What did Woman do immediately after she ate the fruit and sinned?

Gen. 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

- The instinct to share our sin with others is universal, and in this case David invites Uriah into the sin of drunkenness to cover his own sin
 - But Uriah's integrity can't be taken from him that easily, so we're told in v.13 that Uriah still refuses to see his wife
 - A drunk Uriah had more integrity than a sober David, as Wiersbe once observed
- You get the sense at this point that the Lord has prevented David from getting what he wants because He's working to expose him
 - And this is another classic pattern of sin...when we try to hide it, we may succeed for a time or even forever
 - But the Lord is always capable of exposing our sin when it suits Him, and sometimes He does, and other times He waits

- But just because we get away with something for a time doesn't mean He doesn't care
- And if you test Him long enough, He will eventually let our mistakes come to light to encourage us to repent
- When you have the king of Israel and a man in the line of the Messiah engaging in adultery and fathering illegitimate children, the stakes couldn't be higher
 - So the Lord will not turn a blind eye to this situation, and so as David tries to make it go away, the Lord stops his plans at every turn
 - You wonder when David was going to wake up and recognize that the Lord was trying to tell him something
 - But it takes one more sin and one more consequence before David gets the point

2Sam. 11:14 Now in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

2Sam. 11:15 He had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die."

2Sam. 11:16 So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there were valiant men.

2Sam. 11:17 The men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died.

2Sam. 11:18 Then Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war.

2Sam. 11:19 He charged the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling all the events of the war to the king,

2Sam. 11:20 and if it happens that the king's wrath rises and he says to you, 'Why did you go so near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?

2Sam. 11:21 'Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' – then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

- David knew he could depend on his commander to do as he ordered and to do it discreetly, so David devises a plan to have Uriah killed in battle
 - Once Uriah was dead, David could quickly marry Bathsheba and then the child could be his and no one would be the wiser

- So David sends Joab a letter with Uriah asking that Uriah be placed at the front so he can die in battle
- In fact, to ensure his death, Joab was to order that the rest of the men retreat during the fight leaving Uriah alone to die
- This is a plot to murder Uriah, pure and simple, yet to have it happen in such a way that no one would know David's part
- Joab places Uriah in the place of strongest resistance at Rabbah, and when the battle ensued, as expected, Uriah was killed
 - But did you notice that others also died unnecessarily as part of Joab's plot, which means David is also guilty of their murder
 - All this bloodshed is on David's head
- Then Joab finishes the conspiracy by informing his messenger how to break the news to David about Uriah's death
 - If Joab had sent a messenger with a word saying Uriah is dead, it would have been obvious that David had ordered his death
 - For there would have been no other reason why a king would have taken interest in an ordinary soldier's death
- So Joab creatively decides to send a report of a bad loss on the battlefield, knowing that it would incite David's legitimate anger
 - So when David reacted as expected by second guessing the commander's choice to attack so foolishly, he could sneak in the news
 - The messenger would respond that Uriah was also dead, and Joab knew this would accomplish two purposes
 - It would calm David's anger because David would instantly understand why Joab pursued such a foolish maneuver
 - Secondly, it would make the announcement of Uriah's death seem natural and unassociated from David
 - So Joab is complicit in the death of Uriah and the messenger goes to report as ordered

2Sam. 11:22 So the messenger departed and came and reported to David all that Joab had sent him to tell.

[2Sam. 11:23](#) The messenger said to David, “The men prevailed against us and came out against us in the field, but we pressed them as far as the entrance of the gate.

[2Sam. 11:24](#) “Moreover, the archers shot at your servants from the wall; so some of the king’s servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead.”

[2Sam. 11:25](#) Then David said to the messenger, “Thus you shall say to Joab, ‘Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another; make your battle against the city stronger and overthrow it’; and so encourage him.”

- The messenger reports what Joab said, more or less, and that Uriah is dead
- David is clearly pleased and tells the messenger to report back to Joab that the message has been received
- And David encourages Joab by saying he will not hold Joab accountable for the stinging loss in battle
 - He says don’t let this “displease” you, but in Hebrew it literally means don’t see this as evil
 - David is telling Joab that what is clearly evil is not actually evil
 - David tries to explain it away to soften his own guilt and Joab’s guilt
- This is a first-rate conspiracy and corruption of leadership resulting in many deaths to conceal an act of adultery
 - David’s actions have gone from bad to worse at each step and it’s a warning sign for anyone who would play with sin
 - If you think you can keep it under control, then you are a bigger fool than you even know
- With David’s plan having succeeded, all that remains is to marry Bathsheba

[2Sam. 11:26](#) Now when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

[2Sam. 11:27](#) When the time of mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.

- Soon Bathsheba hears that her husband has died in battle, and we can only assume she wasn't stupid, so she knows David had a part in it
 - And so she mourns for her husband, which seems to be a genuine response on her part
 - Obviously, when she elected to bath outdoors that night, she never imagined how that moment would impact her life
- Few if anyone imagines the ramifications of a single poor decision, much less a series of such decisions
 - But the chain of events unfolds eventually and sin has the power to carry us away into places we never imagined we would go
 - Had someone asked Bathsheba if she was willing to participate in the murder of her husband, she would have said no instantly
 - If someone had asked her if she wanted to commit adultery on her husband, she no doubt would have sworn "never"
 - But when she thought it might be fun to give the king a thrill on bath night, she started down that path
- And when David looked down on a naked woman and allowed his eyes to take it in, he never considered that one day he would commit murder
 - Had someone suggested the king would get another man's wife pregnant, he would have had that person killed for slander
 - And had David's commander suggested they kill a righteous man to protect David's reputation, David would remove him
 - Yet here David was at the end of a chain of events, because that's always how sin works...one link at a time
- Never give the devil a ride...he'll want to drive...and that's what's happened to our good king, a man after God's own heart
 - In these chapters, David has left that heart behind for a time and followed after his own corrupt heart
 - After Bathsheba's appointed time of mourning, David takes her as his wife, which must have raised a few eyebrows
 - And certainly when Solomon was born so soon after, it may have raised suspicions

- Regardless of what people thought, the Lord knew the whole story and in v.27 we're told the Lord saw it as evil in His sight
 - That verse uses language similar to David with Joab, saying the Lord saw this as evil even if David thought they shouldn't
 - And this verse is the turning point in the chiasm and therefore it's the point of the chiasm
- The Lord knew this was evil from front to back, and though He gave David opportunity to repent and cease in the sin, David persisted
 - And now that lust has given birth to sin and to death, the Lord will respond to David in the strongest possible terms
 - He does so to discipline David and to ensure we don't see God as complicit in David's actions
 - And it's a reminder that God disciplines those He loves...but we would do better not to give reason for such discipline