

## 2 Samuel 12

- We're studying the story of David's fall into sin with Bathsheba and Uriah
  - This story is the second installment in the section of the book devoted to chronicling David's failings, and it's easily David's lowest point
    - This moment comes relatively early in David's reign as king at a time while the nation was still battling the Ammonites
    - And as I've said before, as David goes, so goes the nation of Israel, so these circumstances also impact Israel tremendously
    - As we'll see today, the Lord's penalty against David is also a penalty against the nation
  - Last week we ended at the conclusion of Chapter 11, with David taking Bathsheba as his wife after having conspired with Abner to kill Uriah
    - This allowed pregnant Bathsheba to escape the penalty of adultery, which was death
    - And it protected David's reputation by concealing his affair...or so David thinks
    - But the Lord knows what happened, so eventually He brings it to light because the Lord won't allow sin to remain secret
  - That brings us to Chapter 12 and the climactic conclusion of these sad events
    - And with it comes a whole lot of lessons learned, both for David and for us

**2Sam. 12:1** Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said,  
"There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor.

**2Sam. 12:2** "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds.

**2Sam. 12:3** "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb

Which he bought and nourished;

And it grew up together with him and his children.

It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom,

And was like a daughter to him.

- This chapter opens immediately after we read about David's marriage to Bathsheba, but the details of this chapter tells us that much time has passed
  - Later in the chapter we will hear about the son that was born to Bathsheba and David
    - The Hebrew word used to described the boy is *yeled*, which is the word for a boy under the age of adulthood
    - But it is not the word for infant, which is the Hebrew word *yanaq*, so we're not talking about an infant
    - Chapter 12 is some number of years after David married Bathsheba, and it could be as much as ten years later
  - So David has enjoyed years with his son and has no doubt established a strong relationship with the boy as would any father
    - The young man is the heir apparent to the throne of Israel
    - And at the same time, David has undoubtedly tried to put his sin out of his mind and maybe he assumed he succeeded
  - On the other hand, we know that as a man of God, David would have been tormented by guilt from time to time
    - In fact, David wrote of that torment in one of the psalms

**Psa. 6:1** O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger,  
Nor chasten me in Your wrath.

**Psa. 6:2** Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am pining away;  
Heal me, O LORD, for my bones are dismayed.

**Psa. 6:3** And my soul is greatly dismayed;  
But You, O LORD – how long?

**Psa. 6:4** Return, O LORD, rescue my soul;  
Save me because of Your lovingkindness.

- David clearly felt the weight of his sin, and yet while he was willing to acknowledge his sin privately he would not publicly
- And so he felt the weight of it bearing down on him for some time

- David's words in this psalm remind us that he did nothing to confess it publicly
  - Elsewhere in another psalm, David writes this:

[Psa. 38:13](#) But I, like a deaf man, do not hear;

And I am like a mute man who does not open his mouth.

[Psa. 38:14](#) Yes, I am like a man who does not hear,

And in whose mouth are no arguments.

- Unconfessed sin is a burden we carry that has a detrimental effect on our hearts and our walk
- As long as we hold on to that sin we make it easier to sin again and we dare God to deal with it in a more dramatic fashion
- Unfortunately, David continued to hold on to his secret, so eventually God moves to remind David of his sin and expose it
  - God first reveals David's sin to Nathan, the prophet, who must have been shocked to learn of David's misadventures
    - Then the Lord tells Nathan to confront David about his sins and to do it in a particularly convicting manner
    - Nathan comes to David telling him a story about a man who wrongs another man in David's kingdom
  - This was a risky move on Nathan's part, because he couldn't be sure how David would respond
    - As king, David had conspired to kill Uriah to conceal his sin, so what might David do to the prophet?
    - There was a real possibility that David could have killed Nathan
    - But Nathan has been told by God to confront David, and that mission came regardless of the consequences
    - And it reminds us that if and when God calls us to confront someone in sin, we do so without regard to the consequences
  - So Nathan comes to David and confronts him with a parable that represents David's actions, yet Nathan tells it as if it's a true story

- In the story a powerful man uses his power to take advantage of an underprivileged man
- The rich man has a great many flocks while the poor man has but one little ewe lamb
- The poor man bought and nourished his one lamb and it grew up together with his family
- They ate with the lamb and even slept with the lamb and it became like a daughter to him
  - That may seem a bit over-the-top, but don't think of the lamb as a farm animal
  - Think of the lamb in this story the way we treat our pets, like dogs and cats, because a lamb was sometimes a pet in that time
- Of course, Nathan's story is a comparison between David's harem of beautiful women (his "flock") and Uriah's only wife, Bathsheba
  - David had his choice of wives, and he could have taken virtually any virgin in the nation as his wife if he wanted
    - Obviously, it was a sin for David to take multiple wives in the first place, but the point is he had an abundance in this area
    - Meanwhile, Uriah limited himself to only one wife, and Uriah prized his one wife like every man should
  - Uriah was close to Bathsheba in the way God intended for every husband, yet this was not the way David knew marriage
    - David seemed to collect wives like a hobby and quickly lost interest in the previous wives when the next one came along
    - In that sense, he was like a rich man with many flocks who took little notice of any particular sheep in his fold
- The start of Nathan's story is one of the most compelling arguments in all Scripture for the perils of seeking multiple wives
  - The command God gave in the beginning was for a man to leave his parents and take *a wife* and then to cling to her, to become one with her
    - That command set the expectation that marriage stops at one and that a husband and wife devote their hearts to each other

- But at a point in history sinful men perverted what God created by multiplying wives to themselves
- Then later, other men used that precedent to defend their choice to do the same, so one man's sin became excuse for more sin
- And in this story, we see the devastating consequences of taking multiple wives as it played out in David's heart
  - Because he could move from conquest to conquest, he had little incentive to invest in the relationship side of marriage
  - Each wife became little more than property and an objective of lust rather than of love
  - Man's ability to dominate women made the sin possible, and society's acceptance institutionalized the practice for a time
  - But the negative effects of this sin soon became evident and nevermore so than in this story
- How differently might David have acted when he spied Bathsheba from the roof if he been fully devoted to his first and only wife, Michal?
  - But because David had taken up the practice of multiple marriages, he saw every woman as a potential conquest
  - That gave opportunity for lust to turn into adultery through multiple marriages
  - And when the object of his lust happened to be married already, David simply graduated to murder
  - This entire account is God's clearest and most compelling argument against the sin of multiple marriages
- So Nathan sets up the story to provoke David's sense of justice against the rich man's presumption for the injustice done against the poor man

**2Sam. 12:4** "Now a traveler came to the rich man,  
 And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd,  
 To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him;  
 Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

**2Sam. 12:5** Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan,  
 "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die."

**2Sam. 12:6** “He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.”

- In v.4 Nathan brings the story to its point: the rich man wasn't satisfied with his riches...he wanted still more so he robs the poor man
  - Unwilling to take a lamb from his own flock for a feast in honor of a traveler, he takes the poor man's ewe and kills it
  - The poor man lost not only a valuable possession but a prized relationship and source of companionship
- The rich man steals from the poor man, which is made all the worse because his actions were so unnecessary
  - The rich man had an excess of lambs and yet he stole from a man who had almost nothing by comparison
  - And it was the rich man's callous indifference for the poor man's plight that made this story so outrageous
  - And Nathan tells it this way to provoke David's righteous anger and his instinct to give the poor man proper justice
- And David reacts as Nathan intended, with great anger against this rich man who would do such a cruel and selfish thing
  - David says surely this man deserves to die, which was hyperbole because stealing a lamb was not punishable by death
  - In fact, David quickly changes that to a fine of fourfold which was exactly what the Law required
  - But ironically, this was just a parable, and the actual sin in question was adultery, which was punishable by death
- So David unknowingly pronounced his own sentence, which was exactly what Nathan was hoping to achieve
  - Then Nathan lowers the hammer on David...

**2Sam. 12:7** Nathan then said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul.’”

[2Sam. 12:8](#) 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these!

[2Sam. 12:9](#) 'Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon.

[2Sam. 12:10](#) 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

[2Sam. 12:11](#) "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.

[2Sam. 12:12](#) 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'"

- Nathan says quite famously to David, you are the man, meaning David is the man who deserves that punishment, only in David's case he truly deserved death
  - And before David knows what to say to Nathan, the prophet goes on to explain what the Lord thinks of David's actions
    - The Lord reminds David of all the grace he had received from the Lord beginning with the Lord choosing David for king
    - Moreover, the Lord preserved David from Saul when David was under attack
    - And then the Lord delivered the entire nation to rule
  - Curiously, in v.8 the Lord also says that He gave David his master's house and wives, which sounds as if God gave David multiple wives
    - The "master" here is Saul, so the master's house refers to the household of male servants who worked for Saul and now David
    - And the master's wives can also be translated the master's women, which likely refer to the female servants of Saul
    - So the Lord isn't talking about wives at all...just the house of Saul and all his servants
  - So the point was that David had been incredibly blessed and so David couldn't use deprivation or want as an excuse for his actions

- On the contrary, David had been abundantly blessed by God in everything
- And God says if that hadn't been enough, David could have asked God for even more blessing
- That's an amazing statement all by itself...God says He wasn't necessarily finished blessing David if only David asked God
- Of course, God wasn't saying David could have asked for Bathsheba, and if so, God would have given her to David
  - God won't agree to requests when they are sin, but God is saying that He could have satisfied David's heart in other ways
  - If David's heart hadn't been satisfied in what he had, God has infinite ways to address the issue if only David had asked
- Remember that...your dissatisfaction in life is not beyond God's ability to remedy, but He will likely remedy it in different ways than you will
  - But that's good, because the ways we choose to remedy desire, loneliness, jealousy, fear, stress, emptiness etc. is usually wrong
  - But God can fill that hole in your heart in ways you never imagined if you only seek Him first
- But instead, David took matters into his own hands choosing to sin to gain something he wanted that he thought would make him happy
  - And God calls David's choice to sin "despising the word of the Lord"
    - The Lord was saying that when we go against God's commands, we show contempt for Him and His word
    - And we take for granted God's grace extended to us in the revelation of that word and the other blessings we receive
  - It's the same way we would feel if we had taken a desperate, hopeless person into our home
    - Given them everything they could have wanted and more, and done it without any expectation of repayment
    - The only thing we ask is that they follow the house rules and not put their feet on the table, etc.

- And then one day we discover they've been stealing from the house... we would ask the same question
  - We've given you everything and more than you could have expected or deserved, so why repay that kindness with harm?
  - Why despise the grace and abuse the relationship?
- That's how God sees His children when we sin... He sees us despising what we have in Him to something trivial in the world
  - We are no less His children and our sin will never be held against us...but there is still an impact when we sin
  - And the primary impact is inviting God's discipline in this life, and that's different than experiencing His judgment or wrath
- Notice God doesn't threaten David in a personal way nor does God display His wrath against David
  - But at the same time, God does not ignore David's sin either
  - God then shares with David what the consequences of this sin will be for him and for Israel
- In v.10 Nathan says that the sword shall never depart from David's house, which is a euphemism that means David's house will not know peace
  - There will be turmoil, conflict and trial in David's house because of this sin, and that turmoil would come in three specific ways
    - David's house will suffer three penalties, one for each of the ten commandments that David broke
    - First, David broke the tenth commandment not to covet a man's wife
    - So Nathan says members of David's own household will covet David's wives
  - Secondly, David broke the seventh commandment not to commit adultery
    - So Nathan says that some of David's household will lie with David's wives committing adultery with them
    - As we learn later, the men who will defile David's marriages are none other than his own sons, making the offense doubly tragic

- In v.12 the Lord adds that while David tried to commit his sins in secret, the Lord will perform His discipline in public to make an example
  - And that's the Lord's preferred method of restitution...bringing light to darkness, bringing our sins into the open
  - And the first step of that process is to lead us into a state of repentance, and sometimes that requires a shock to the system
- David had assumed that his sin was buried for good until this moment
  - Which is why Nathan's approach to telling his story was designed to shock David so it would lead David to repent
  - He constructs the story so David was in agreement that punishment was needed before he knew it was about him
  - He was trapped by his own words but then came the test... would David embrace the opportunity to repent?
- Moments like this are perhaps the supreme test of spiritual maturity and humility...how do we respond when confronted with our own sin?
  - If we are defensive or deny our actions or attack the messenger or run away, we are continuing in our sin
    - We are displaying spiritual immaturity and most importantly we're missing an important opportunity to grow
    - After all, the Lord brings moments like the one David has here precisely so we can rise above the sin entangling us
    - What a shame that we miss the benefits of the test and ultimately make it necessary for God to repeat the test
  - The real shame of it is that the moment of repentance is generally a short, simple and ultimately cathartic experience
    - And often, our confession is answered by forgiveness and opportunity for restitution – all good things
    - The main thing that suffers is our pride, and that's also a good outcome
  - Yet so many fight against repentance preferring the long, drawn out pain of broken relationships, self-righteous indignation and more sin

- It's another example of how the enemy lies to us, convincing us that standing our ground and denying the truth is better
- When the Lord brings our sin to light, repent, throw yourself on His mercy and see how the Lord uses your humility for good
- How does David respond? Even before Nathan is able to announce the third punishment, David interrupts Nathan to admit his fault

**2Sam. 12:13** Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

- David made no attempt to deny his sin...he admits to it right away, and that's a good thing certainly and what we would expect
  - This was David's first expression of repentance but David had many days and weeks and years to live out his repentance
  - In fact, the psalms reflect David's attitude as he confessed his sin to God for this episode

**Psa. 51:1** Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;  
According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

**Psa. 51:2** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity  
And cleanse me from my sin.

**Psa. 51:3** For I know my transgressions,  
And my sin is ever before me.

**Psa. 51:4** Against You, You only, I have sinned  
And done what is evil in Your sight,  
So that You are justified when You speak  
And blameless when You judge.

**Psa. 51:5** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
And in sin my mother conceived me.

**Psa. 51:6** Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being,  
And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.

**Psa. 51:7** Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**Psa. 51:8** Make me to hear joy and gladness,  
Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

**Psa. 51:9** Hide Your face from my sins

And blot out all my iniquities.

[Psa. 51:10](#) Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

[Psa. 51:11](#) Do not cast me away from Your presence  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

[Psa. 51:12](#) Restore to me the joy of Your salvation  
And sustain me with a willing spirit.

[Psa. 51:13](#) Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,  
And sinners will be converted to You.

- David felt the weight of his sin, and he calls to God for forgiveness
  - David acknowledges that he began life in sin and his sin was ever before God and therefore he needed God's forgiveness
  - And for that reason David needed God to clean him from the inside, to sanctify him
- Nathan immediately reassures David that his sins have not separated him from God, because the Lord had taken David's sins away
  - This is the reassurance for everyone who has placed their faith in God's Messiah, as David had done
  - As David said in v.10, the Lord created in David a clean heart, and one day David will live in a sinless body as well
  - And David says that when he's learned this lesson he would teach others not to transgress either
- That's the heart of repentance... to confess sin, to accept the discipline God may bring, and to look for how God will use our fall for His glory
  - In some ways, a repentant sinner offers a more powerful testimony of God's grace than a person who never seems to fall
  - In reality, both are sinners, but one is more useful to God in reaching those looking to rise above sin
  - When we project perfection, we aren't being honest with God nor are we giving the sinner encouragement to repent
- Later we'll see David dealing with some of the ramifications of God's discipline with humility

- And his godly approach to God's discipline is another great testimony to David's ability to follow after the Lord
  - For now his confession stops the bleeding, so to speak, and gives opportunity for the Lord to bring discipline to a close
  - But also notice, David's confession doesn't by itself stop the discipline
  - It's been said that you can remove the nail from wood, but you can't remove the hole
- Similarly, the Lord doesn't discipline us just to remove the sin from our life, though certainly He is working to that effect
  - It's also to turn a bad situation into a good testimony
  - By effecting discipline, the Lord shows the world that our sin was not approved and not desired
  - And it reminds God's children that sin displeases Him, so that our life can be a testimony one way or another
- So despite David's repentance, Nathan continues on with the final punishment for breaking the sixth commandment, not to murder

**2Sam. 12:14** "However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die."

- The final punishment is death for David's son, a life for a life because David took Uriah's life
  - By far this was the worst punishment for David, since it meant losing someone he loved
  - And remember, his son was not a new infant, though if he had been that wouldn't mean David would have loved him less
  - But humanly speaking, it can be even harder to lose an older child after you've come to know the child in deeper ways
- Notice in v.14 Nathan adds that David's sin has given opportunities for the Lord's enemies to blaspheme
  - The issue here is what Israel's enemies saw in Israel's God versus what they claimed about their own gods

- The leaders of Israel's enemies practiced things like prostitution and fornication and murder as part of normal life
- While Israel's God declared such things to be abominations and outlawed them in Israel
- So the question became what would the God of Israel do when Israel's leader practices the very same?
  - Now that the Lord is bringing this sin out into the open, it's important for the rest of the story to be told as well
  - The nations couldn't just learn of David's sin without also knowing the Lord's response so that the lesson could be learned
- So Nathan says the child must die so that Israel's enemies understand that God didn't approve of David's actions and that a price was paid
  - This price wasn't to obtain forgiveness for David but to obtain vindication for the Lord Himself
  - The Lord is using evil for a great good...to protect His glory before the nations
- This third punishment is the first the Lord brings to pass for David

**2Sam. 12:15** So Nathan went to his house. Then the LORD struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was very sick.

**2Sam. 12:16** David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground.

**2Sam. 12:17** The elders of his household stood beside him in order to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and would not eat food with them.

- We would expect the Lord to act immediately in the case of David's son since it's the only way to demonstrate that God's word is true
  - Everyone is going to die sooner or later, so when God connects someone's death to a specific set of circumstances, He must act quickly
    - If David's son died 40 years later, who would connect his death with this judgment?
    - The whole point is that he dies in such a way that the meaning of the boy's death is understood to be God's judgment

- But interestingly, the Lord doesn't choose to take the boy's life immediately like He did the first born of Egypt in the Exodus
  - Instead, the boy is struck with a sickness that lingers for a week
  - This choice seems intended to provoke a prayerful response from David as well as to teach him a lesson
- The delay prompts David to engage in prayer and fasting hoping he might change God's mind and spare his son's life
  - So David and the elders of his household join in a vigil around David as he lies at his son's feet praying for healing
  - The Lord had already said this must happen to protect His name
  - But until it played out to conclusion, David couldn't know for sure what God might be willing to do in response to his petitions
  - So he had nothing to lose in trying, and obviously he was desperate for his son to survive
- Secondly, the experience taught David a lesson about how his actions will impact the vulnerable in Israel
  - Obviously, his sin with Bathsheba had already taken the life of a powerless and defenseless man, Uriah
    - But David felt no remorse for Uriah's death at all, and a leader who can take life without remorse is a dangerous trait
    - So now the Lord teaches David the significance of the death of an innocent through a first-hand experience
    - David is given this time to contemplate how his actions impact others
  - For all that analysis, this is a tender moment, so if you're not careful your sympathies might align in the wrong way
    - We might be tempted to see David as the good guy here and God as the bad "guy" by His response
    - But the whole point of God's discipline is to provoke a godly response in David so that he returns to what he once knew
    - And we can see that response taking shape here, so don't cut it short by wishing for a different path

- We can see the impact of the Lord's discipline reflected in David's own commentary probably from that time

**Psa. 38:1** O LORD, rebuke me not in Your wrath,  
And chasten me not in Your burning anger.

**Psa. 38:2** For Your arrows have sunk deep into me,  
And Your hand has pressed down on me.

**Psa. 38:3** There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation;  
There is no health in my bones because of my sin.

**Psa. 38:4** For my iniquities are gone over my head;  
As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me.

**Psa. 38:5** My wounds grow foul and fester  
Because of my folly.

**Psa. 38:6** I am bent over and greatly bowed down;  
I go mourning all day long.

**Psa. 38:7** For my loins are filled with burning,  
And there is no soundness in my flesh.

**Psa. 38:8** I am benumbed and badly crushed;  
I groan because of the agitation of my heart.

- David made every appeal to the Lord that he could, and understandably so, and in the end the Lord's will was done

**2Sam. 12:18** Then it happened on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Behold, while the child was still alive, we spoke to him and he did not listen to our voice. How then can we tell him that the child is dead, since he might do himself harm!"

**2Sam. 12:19** But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead."

**2Sam. 12:20** So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate.

**2Sam. 12:21** Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food."

[2Sam. 12:22](#) He said, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who knows, the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live.’

[2Sam. 12:23](#) “But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”

- On the seventh day, the child dies while David is asleep on the floor somewhere in the room
  - And the servants are afraid to inform David of the child’s passing for fear that he will harm himself in grief
    - They say that when they tried to convince David to eat or drink earlier, David was in too much sorrow to listen
    - So what will David do now that the child is gone?
  - In their whispering they disturb David so he asks plainly has the child died, and they answer yes
    - Then in v.20 we’re told David simply rises up, washes himself, changes his clothes and goes to worship the Lord
    - Then David goes home and requests food and eats
    - It’s like a normal day, and David’s sudden return to a normal routine has everyone surprised and puzzled
  - In Jewish culture, mourning for a death was an elaborate and very ritualized process, so everyone expects David to follow that process
    - But David does not mourn at all, at least not in any public ritual
    - And so in v.21 the servants gain the courage to ask David why he wasn’t mourning his son’s death
    - They probably asked out of a concern that David’s calm demeanor was a sign he was cracking
- David answers in a matter-of-fact way: while the child is alive, prayers and other shows of piety and could be effective to persuade God
  - But after the child died, David had his answer and therefore it was no longer profitable
    - David asks, can I fast to bring him back from the dead?

- David isn't saying that he didn't believe in God's ability to resurrect a person
- We know David believes in resurrection because he wrote of it in the psalms
- But David knew that in this case, the boy's death wasn't going to lead to that outcome because the Lord had already announced the plan
  - So David made his best appeal while the boy was alive
  - And then once the boy died, David let him go and knew he would see him again one day to come
  - Meanwhile, David turned his attention to the life he had left, and worshiped the Lord even though his prayer wasn't answered
  - It's living with eyes for eternity in the face of God's discipline and the death of those we love and it's spiritual maturity
- David is modeling the perfect attitude toward death for every believer... death is coming for all of us one day and we can't stop it nor should we want to
  - We can pray for more days by asking for healing or better health or whatever comes to our minds, and maybe God will answer us yes
    - But one day the answer to our requests for longer life will be "no" and we will die as God intends
    - And like David, when that day comes for someone we love, we let them go because God's will has been revealed in the matter
  - And if the person is a believer, then we can confidently say what David says at the end of v.23: they can't return to us but we will go to them
    - David is stating the obvious: the plan of God is for all His children to enter into glory and we go there one at a time
    - It's not His plan for us to go and then return to this life now with those of us who have yet to be glorified
    - Our loved ones don't hear us after they die, and they aren't coming back to us here in any form, whether physically or as a spirit
  - Death is a one-way trip, and we will follow after them

- So why dwell on what can't be...better to look forward to what will be as God has promised
- That's what David was saying, and it shows a biblically mature point of view on death and the after life
- That leads to one final thought about the boy's death and David's reaction... what do we think about God commanding the boy to die?
  - Some have even objected to the notion that God is the One taking the child's life or causing this outcome, but the text is clear
    - In v.11 the Lord says He will raise up this evil against David...the Lord is the one bringing these things against David
    - And the Lord says in v.15 that the Lord struck the child with illness
    - The Lord is the giver of life and He takes it when and how it suits Him, and on this day He took the life of David's child
  - On the other hand, this is not a punishment against the child...the child was not to blame and God is not acting against the child
    - The child is collateral damage from David's sin
    - And yet we say the child is dying, which is not a good thing for the child, right?
  - In v.23 David clearly indicates that his son is going to be with the Lord, probably because David taught him of the Lord and knew his heart
    - If so, then how can we say the child is being punished by being brought into the presence of the Lord in glory?
    - Do we really think that this boy was unhappy with the outcome once he saw how it turned out?
    - Do we supposed he would have elected to return to earth?
- This too is a problem of perspective, and the godly perspective understands that death is never a criteria by which we can judge God
  - If everyone is going to die and justly so, and if every believer who dies enters into glory, then how can we hold any death against God?
    - If anything, we should say that keeping a believer alive a long time is more cruel than taking a young Christian home early

- It's all about perspective, and since God is the giver of life He can decide when and how anyone dies, and there is no way to judge
- We judge from a selfish, earthly perspective and that's no place from which to judge
- So this boy's death was a hardship for David, but it wasn't a hardship for the boy himself
  - And it reminds us to see our life here the way God does... something He can use to His glory and then it's over
  - Make the most of the days but don't hold on too tightly nor define your contentment or security by anything found here
- Finally, I want to make a quick point in passing about something that sometimes gets taught about v.23
  - Some argue that since David said his child was destined to enter Heaven, it means all infants automatically qualify for Heaven
    - First, the text never addresses that question here, so we can't read it into the text
    - Secondly, there's no indication that this boy was an infant, and the Hebrew words would suggest otherwise
  - More importantly, the concern of what God does with an infant death or anyone who lacks capacity to confess Christ must agree with Scripture
    - And Scripture makes clear that everyone comes into the world with sin, and David himself said that in Psalm 51
    - Furthermore, the Bible is abundantly clear that even one sin is enough to remove us from Heaven
    - So if all enter with sin then none are qualified to enter Heaven, not even infants
  - So all must be justified by faith if we are to receive God's righteousness by which we may see the Lord
    - Which leads us to the inevitable conclusion that if a child enters Heaven, it will be because God brings that child saving faith
    - And He can bring saving faith to anyone at any time according to the Bible

- David himself is the best example:

[Psa. 22:9](#) Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb;

You made me trust when upon my mother's breasts.

[Psa. 22:10](#) Upon You I was cast from birth;

You have been my God from my mother's womb.

- If David was "made to trust" in God while nursing, then we can hope for any infant or anyone lacking an ability to confess
- God brings faith, we don't find it on our own, and that's our confidence