POWER TO GIVE OR POWER TO TAKE?
2 SAMUEL 11

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. David at his best
   1. Saul's household grew weaker and weaker as David's had grown stronger and stronger until David finally became king over all of Israel, just as the Lord had promised
   2. Chapters 7 – 10 we've seen David at his best – reigning with justice (subduing Israel's enemies), and mercy (showing hessed – the loving kindness of God)
      a) All of that changes in chapter 11
      b) Becomes clear that David is not the final king that Israel is waiting for

B. What are some of David’s actions that foreshadowed the events of this chapter?
   1. Examples of deception in difficult situations
   2. Multiple wives – what God has provided is not enough

2 Samuel 11:1 It happened in the spring of the year, 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 people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

II. AT THE TIME WHEN KINGS GO OUT TO BATTLE

A. Spring - The season of war
   1. Winter months – not ideal for battle – now winter is over, the rainy season is over, it’s not time for harvest – perfect time for war
   2. Some commentators suggest that this was just a year after David sent comforters to Hanun that were rejected
      a) 2 Sam 10:17 When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in battle array against David and fought with him. 18 Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed seven hundred charioteers and forty thousand horsemen of the Syrians, and struck Shobach the commander of their army, who died there.
   3. Now David is staying home. Dangerous place to be when our community is in the middle of a battle
      a) Left David vulnerable to temptation
B. Complacency – why did David remain in Jerusalem?

1. 2 Chron 26:15 And he made devices in Jerusalem, invented by skillful men, to be on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and large stones. So his fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong.
   16 But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God by entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense.
   a) Is this the consequence of having a great name? Who can handle fame well?
   b) Possible that David began to believe what was said about him.
   c) Stark contrast to 1 Sam 7 – as he sat before the Lord and received his promise, “who am I, and what is my house? You are great, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides you.”

2. Describe David’s legacy – 1 Kings 15:4 Nevertheless for David’s sake the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; 5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.
   a) These circumstances that lead to a dark stain on David’s reign over Israel – hard to write off as simply a mistake

2 Sam 11:2 Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king’s house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. 3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” 4 Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house. 5 And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, “I am with child.”

III. THE PRIDE OF LIFE

A. David sent messengers

1. Carrying a far different message than they had in the past
2. Instead of instruments for righteousness they become instruments of unrighteousness

B. David saw, David desired, David took

1. Language of Genesis 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

C. Is this story primarily a warning about adultery?

1. What do we know about Bathsheba? – she was bathing, cleansing herself from her impurity
   a) She was abiding by the requirements of Jewish law, she was not pregnant
   b) We also know that she was a Canaanite woman married to a Canaanite man
2. David and Bathsheba were not equals - David was the most powerful person in all of Israel, Bathsheba was a woman, a Canaanite, and the wife of a Canaanite
3. Wicked kings take - this isn’t the same as Potiphar’s wife
   a) I’ve yet to hear someone accuse the apple of tempting Adam and Eve to eat of it – James says we are drawn away by our own desires and enticed

D. David is acting like a worldly king

1. Medieval Europe – it was the supposed right of a medieval feudal lord to have sleep with a vassal’s bride on her wedding night.
2. Corrupt men in positions of power take – God, who is all powerful gives – The King over all creation came as a servant and gave His life – Phil 2:5 CEB Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus, 6 who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited. 7 Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity. And when he had come as a man, 8 he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a cross.
   a) Viewed as people, the world must be loved. Viewed as an evil system, organized under the dominion of Satan and not of God, it is not to be loved. Another explanation is that it is the verb ‘to love’, not its object ‘the world’, which has a different shade of meaning. In the one it is ‘the holy love of Redemption’; in the other it is ‘the selfish love of participation’ (Alford). The first aims ‘to save the sinner; the second, ‘to share his sin’ (Ebrard).

E. What do we have to learn from David’s fall?

1. Lust lies - Satan's Device to Draw Us to Sin: "Presenting the bait and hiding the hook."
   a) The serpent lies – Eat of the tree and you will be like God, and you will not surely die
2. What is the lie behind the lie? God has not given me enough. I just need one more thing to satisfy me.
   a) I know better than God. Lust clouds our thinking. Seeing and wanting what we don’t have and believing that God is holding back His goodness from us
   b) Dangerous in our personal lives, extremely dangerous when it corrupts people of power and influence
3. The painful results of sex outside of God’s design – what should be a blessing becomes a problem – “I am pregnant” has a different ring to it than it should

2 Sam 11:6 Then David sent to Joab, saying, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” And Joab sent Uriah to David. 7 When Uriah had come to him, David asked how Joab was doing, and how the people were doing, and how the war prospered. 8 And David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.” So Uriah departed from the king’s house, and a gift of food from the king followed him. 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. 10 So when they told David, saying, “Uriah did not go down to his house,” David said to Uriah, “Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?” 11 And Uriah said to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.” 12 Then David said to Uriah, “Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. 13 Now when David called him, he ate and drank before him; and he made him drunk. And at evening he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.
IV. SIN CONCEALED

A. What similarities do we see with the story of the fall of man in Genesis?

1. Why did David try to conceal his sin if he was the king?
2. What are some of the unique dangers for those who are spiritual leaders and are respected in their communities?
   a) Protecting our image may stand in the way of necessary repentance and restoration
   b) We conceal and manage consequences instead of humbly coming before God and those we have hurt for forgiveness
   c) *Psalm 51:17* The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

B. Uriah – the Hittite – an outsider

1. Just like Rahab, just like the Centurion soldier – more in line with the heart of God than the people of God
   a) David – God is in a tent; I am in a palace. How can I bring God up to where I am?
   b) Uriah – God is in a tent, how could I possibly enter my home or yours? I can’t elevate myself above God – I WILL NOT DO THIS THING – that’s called conviction
2. Did Uriah know David’s secret? “Shall I then go to my house, to eat and … drink and to lie with my wife?” That is a targeted question, but we do not know the answer.
   a) What we do know is Uriah the Hittite, the outsider, shows far more loyalty to God and God’s people than David does
3. David’s plan fails so he gives it another shot the following night
   a) What do we learn? Someone once said “Uriah drunk has more integrity than David sober”

2 Sam 11:14 In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die.” 16 So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there were valiant men. 17 Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And some of the people of the servants of David fell; 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 you have finished telling the matters of the war to the king, 20 if it happens that the king’s wrath rises, and he says to you: ‘Why did you approach so near to the city when you fought? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? 21 Who struck Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman who cast a piece of a millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go near the wall?’—then you shall say, ‘Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.’” 22 So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent by him. 23 And the messenger said to David, “Surely the men prevailed against us and came out to us in the field; then we drove them back as far as the entrance of the gate. 24 The archers shot from the wall at your servants; and some of the king’s servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.” 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. Strengthen your attack against the city, and overthrow it.’ So encourage him.”
V. PLAN B – MURDER

A. Alistair Begg cleverly calls the section of scripture “Murder He Wrote’
   1. David makes Uriah carry his own death warrant, exploiting Uriah’s integrity – this is no longer the sin of lust, this is blinding, conscience numbing pride
   2. Think about how David’s messages have changed – the story he is telling
   3. This cover up becomes much more complicated and even more sinister
      a) This is humanity – ignoring the human cost of sin and the coverups that follow
      b) The hardening of our hearts – the deadening of our conscience – we get to a point where we know there is a hook, but we simply don’t care because we want the bait at any cost

B. What problem is David trying to solve?
   1. What will Uriah’s death ultimately solve?
      a) Silence Uriah – the only man who can deny that the child belongs to him
   2. David takes Bathsheba as his wife, what a righteous act that would be
      a) Satan’s Device to Draw Us to Sin: "Painting sin with virtue’s colors."
      b) See this is our culture today – sin is called a virtue, and virtue is called sin

2 Sam 11:26 When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. 27 And when her mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

C. David can silence Uriah, but he can’t silence God
   1. He can hide his sin from everyone, but he cannot hide it from the Lord
   2. That is why we suppress the truth of God for a lie. If we are going to sin, we don’t want to be held accountable for it. As Alistair Begg points out “We don’t want a God who knows about it”
   3. God sees all and knows all and that is why He sent Jesus
   4. Scripture isn’t full of stories of good men who did some bad things, it is full of stories of bad men who do some surprisingly good things that point to the perfect Man
      a) The one who steps into a world corrupted by sin and makes a way for us to be right with God