

Peace be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our last program, we saw how David became the King of Israel. David was a just and compassionate king who sincerely cherished the Word of God. Today, however, we are going to read **something about David which is not pleasant** to hear. David did something that was abominable in God's sight; he coveted his neighbor's wife, committed adultery with her, and then added sin to sin by attempting to cover it up. Some may ask, "Why is such an awful story found in the Holy Scriptures?" The Scripture answers this question when it says: *"Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us!" "These things...were written down as warnings for us...So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"* In the Holy Scriptures, God does not hide the sins of the prophets because God wants to teach us valuable lessons.

Now then, let us return to the second book of Samuel and see how David fell into sin. In chapter eleven, the Scripture says:

In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this Bathsheba...the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her...then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

Next, the Scriptures describe how David tried to cover up his sin. When David heard that Bathsheba was pregnant, he sent word to Joab, the leader of his army, and ordered him to send to him Uriah, Bathsheba's husband. Now Uriah was a mighty man in the army of Israel. And so Joab sent Uriah to David.

When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him. But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house. When David was told, "Uriah did not go home," he asked him, "Haven't you just come from a distance? Why didn't you go home?" Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open fields. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next... In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, "Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so that he will be struck down and die." So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were. When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died. Joab sent David a full account of the battle [...with the news:] "Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead."

*When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. **But the thing David had done displeased the Lord.***

*[Thus, one day] The Lord sent [a prophet by the name of] **Nathan** to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him."*

*[When David heard this story, he] burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, **the man who did this deserves to die!** He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity!" Then Nathan said to David, "**You are the man!** This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. ...I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you more. Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.' This is what the Lord says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel!'" Then David said to Nathan, "**I have sinned against the Lord!**" Nathan replied, "**The Lord has taken away your sin.***

You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the Lord show utter contempt, the son born to you will die." Nathan went home.

In the following chapters, the Scriptures show us how David's sin produced great trouble and many tragedies within his family. But the Word of God also says: *"Where **sin increased, grace increased all the more.**"* Thus, in the remaining time today, we will see how God showed David His **grace**, and forgave him all his **sins**.

Why did God forgive David of his sins? Did you hear how David responded when Nathan said to David, *"You are the man!"*? God's prophet, Nathan, had great courage to say such a thing to the great King of Israel. How did David answer Nathan? Did he lock Nathan in prison or even have him executed, as many kings might have done? No, he did not do this. Did David try to justify his sins by saying, "God willed it!" or "God is good, perhaps He will erase my evil deeds because of my good deeds!"? Did David answer Nathan like that? No, David did not! Then how did David respond? David said, *"I have sinned!" "I have sinned against the Lord!"*

To better understand how David confessed his sin before God, we need to read what David wrote in the Psalms after the prophet Nathan rebuked him for his sin with Bathsheba. In Psalm fifty-one, David said:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. **Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;**

wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise!

This is how David repented. David mourned greatly because of his sin. He had a broken and crushed heart before God. **David was not like those who have religion, but continue in sin every day.** Truly, David had fallen into the pit of sin, but he could not live in it, because David loved God, and knew that *"God is light; in him there is no darkness at all."*

So then, after David repented, what did God say to him through the mouth of the prophet Nathan? Did God tell him, "Go and do some good works and I will erase your sins!"? No, God did not say that! Nathan simply said to him, *"The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die!"*

After this, David wrote in the Psalms, describing the blessedness of the man whom **God has forgiven, apart from his own works.** He said: *"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit!"* Yes, God forgave David and judged him as righteous! That does not mean that God removed the tragedies that David's sin produced. What it means is that, in the Day of Judgment, God would not remember David's sins. He had **erased** them all from His book!

How could God do that? How could God forgive all the sins of David and yet remain a righteous judge? Could God simply forget, just like that, all the evil which David had done? No! God is a righteous judge, and He cannot merely close His eyes to the sins of the children of Adam. Well then, how could God forgive David, and still maintain His righteousness?

Do you remember what David prayed to God after he recognized his sin? He prayed, *"Wash away all my iniquity...Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow!"* God had commanded the Israelites to use the branch of the hyssop plant for sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices. The sprinkled blood illustrated the great sacrifice of **the coming Redeemer** who would willingly die, shedding His blood as a **payment** for sins.

God could forgive David his sins because David had **repented, turning** from his sin to God, and **believed** in God's power to cleanse him by the work of the coming Redeemer. David might have offered to God a prayer something like this: "Oh God, I am grieved over my sin and ask you to forgive me! I know that you can forgive me of my sins, because one day you will send the Redeemer, who has no sin, and He Himself will endure for me the punishment for my sin once and forever. Therefore Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner! Wash me in the blood of the holy Redeemer, and I shall be completely pure!"

Did God, in His grace, forgive David all his sins? Did God cleanse David's heart and judge him as righteous? Yes, He did! On what basis did God do this? God forgave David because he **confessed** his sinful condition before God, and **believed** what God had promised concerning the Redeemer, who would come and bear the punishment for sin. The faith he had in the promises of God is the reason David could rejoice, and write in the Psalms: *"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered! Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit!"*

Thank you for listening. In our next two lessons, God-willing, we will look into the holy book of Psalms to see what the prophet David testified concerning the Redeemer, who would bear our punishment, so that God could forgive us our sins forever....

God bless you as you think about this verse David wrote in the Psalms concerning one of God's greatest blessings:

"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered! Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit!"