

# THE RISE AND FALL OF A NATION



Lessons from Israel's first kings

# DAVID AND NATHAN

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FROM FAILURE TO  
FORGIVENESS



2 Samuel 12: 1 “The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, ‘There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. 2 The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, 3 but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb 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. 4 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.’”



It is easy to spot sin in others, but rarely  
do we see it in ourselves



5 “David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! 6 He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.’ 7 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. 8 I gave your master’s house to you, and your master’s wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more.’



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David wanted to impose the law on others, but didn't want to obey it himself



9 '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. 10 Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'



# The sword will never leave your household

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## Sin has consequences

- The baby died
- David's son Amnon raped David's Daughter Tamar
- Tamar's brother Absalom killed Amnon
- Absalom had sex with David's concubines on the patio of the palace.
- Joeb killed Absalom



David confesses and repents, and is forgiven,  
but sin often has lasting consequences



11 “This is what the Lord says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight.’ 12 You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’ 13 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. 14 But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord, the son born to you will die.’”



15 “After Nathan had gone home, the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he became ill. 16 David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. 17 The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them. 18 On the seventh day the child died. David’s attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, ‘While the child was still living, he wouldn’t listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate.’”



19 “David noticed that his attendants were whispering among themselves, and he realized the child was dead. ‘Is the child dead?’ he asked. ‘Yes,’ they replied, ‘he is dead.’ 20 Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate.

21 His attendants asked him, ‘Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!’”



22 “He answered, ‘While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live. 23 But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.’

24 Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and made love to her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved him; and because the Lord loved him, 25 he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.”



# The weight of unconfessed sin

Psalm 32:3 “When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.’ And you forgave the guilt of my sin.”



# Our forgiveness leads to testimony

Psalm 51:1 “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.” 4 “Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; 10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” 11 “Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.”

