

## SESSION 7 - DEALING WITH THORNS

There's an old saying: "Sin will take you farther than you want to **go**, keep you **longer** than you intend to stay and **cost** you more than you ever intended to **pay**."

- Anonymous

- I. **Matthew 13:7,22 (NASB)** 7 "Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out...22 "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.
  - a. We are going to continue looking at David, the only man credited by God as having soil so fertile, that he was the only man God called "A man after My own heart".
    - i. **Genesis 4:7 (NASB)** "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."
      1. **Crouching** - idea of an animal waiting to kill its prey, typically of a lion.



2. *"The Hebrew word for crouching is rabbas. The word appears multiple times in the Old Testament. In Genesis 49:9 the word is used to refer to a lion crouching. We must notice that the context in this verse reveals the word for desire in Genesis 4:7 refers to a lust for control. Notice Cain was told that he "must master it." There was a struggle within Cain to*

*murder or not to murder his brother Abel. Sin wanted control. Sin wanted to murder Abel."*

- ii. There will never be a time when the enemy isn't trying to torment, choke and kill the believer's walk with Christ. No believer is immune not even the only believer to have been called a man after God's heart.
- iii. David ends up being involved in one of the most famous stories of sin in all of history:

1. **2 Samuel 11:1-27 (NLT)** 1 In the spring of the year, when kings normally go out to war, David sent Joab and the Israelite army to fight the Ammonites. They destroyed the Ammonite army and laid siege to the city of Rabbah. However, David stayed behind in Jerusalem. 2 Late one afternoon, after his midday rest, David got out of bed and was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. 3 He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." 4 Then David sent messengers to get her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her. She had just completed the purification rites after having her menstrual period. Then she returned home. 5 Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent David a message, saying, "I'm pregnant." 6 Then David sent word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent him to David. 7 When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab and the army were getting along and how the war was progressing. 8 Then he told Uriah, "Go on home and relax." David even sent a gift to Uriah after he had left the palace. 9 But Uriah didn't go home. He slept that night at the palace entrance with the king's palace guard. 10 When David heard that Uriah had not gone home, he summoned him and asked, "What's the matter? Why didn't you go home last night after being away for so long?" 11 Uriah replied, "The

Ark and the armies of Israel and Judah are living in tents, and Joab and my master's men are camping in the open fields. How could I go home to wine and dine and sleep with my wife? I swear that I would never do such a thing." 12 "Well, stay here today," David told him, "and tomorrow you may return to the army." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. 13 Then David invited him to dinner and got him drunk. But even then he couldn't get Uriah to go home to his wife. Again he slept at the palace entrance with the king's palace guard. 14 So the next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and gave it to Uriah to deliver. 15 The letter instructed Joab, "Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed." 16 So Joab assigned Uriah to a spot close to the city wall where he knew the enemy's strongest men were fighting. 17 And when the enemy soldiers came out of the city to fight, Uriah the Hittite was killed along with several other Israelite soldiers. 18 Then Joab sent a battle report to David. 19 He told his messenger, "Report all the news of the battle to the king. 20 But he might get angry and ask, 'Why did the troops go so close to the city? Didn't they know there would be shooting from the walls? 21 Wasn't Abimelech son of Gideon killed at Thebez by a woman who threw a millstone down on him from the wall? Why would you get so close to the wall?' Then tell him, 'Uriah the Hittite was killed, too.'" 22 So the messenger went to Jerusalem and gave a complete report to David. 23 "The enemy came out against us in the open fields," he said. "And as we chased them back to the city gate, 24 the archers on the wall shot arrows at us. Some of the king's men were killed, including Uriah the Hittite." 25 "Well, tell Joab not to be discouraged," David said. "The sword devours this one today and that one tomorrow! Fight harder next time, and conquer the city!" 26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. 27 When the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to the palace, and

she became one of his wives. Then she gave birth to a son.  
But the LORD was displeased with what David had done.

- b. Let's look at some difficult passages to process about this man David, the only man after God's heart:
- i. **1 In the spring of the year, when kings normally go out to war...However, David stayed behind in Jerusalem.**
    1. We get our first glimpse of something not being quite right here. David, a king who never shied away from battle with his men, didn't go to battle with his troops. He normally would have. What was going on with David?
  - ii. **2 Late one afternoon, after his midday rest, David got out of bed and was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath.**
    1. **Walking** – *“The Hebrew verb form of walked suggests that David paced back and forth on the roof. He was uneasy – uneasy because he wasn't where God wanted him to be.”*
  - iii. **3 He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.**
    1. Notice what the person who David sent to enquire says back. This is Bathsheba, she's married and she's someone's daughter.
      - a. **1 Chronicles 11:15,26,41 (NLT)** 15 Once when David was at the rock near the cave of Adullam, the Philistine army was camped in the valley of Rephaim. The Three (who were among the Thirty--an elite group among David's fighting men) went down to meet him there...26 David's mighty warriors also included:

Asahel, Joab's brother; Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem...<sup>41</sup> Uriah the Hittite; Zabad son of Ahlai;

2. It's almost as if this person is trying to **humanize** this woman that David is simply thinking of as an object for his own pleasure.
3. *"As I think of what happened, of this I am sure, that it did not happen all at once. This matter of Bathsheba was simply the climax of something that had been going on in his life for twenty years."*

iv. Remember what we learned about thorns? *"Thorns steal the essential elements from the soil that the plant needs to be healthy."*

## II. The Series of Events

- a. **David sends for Bathsheba and he sleeps with her.**
- b. **She returns home. In other words David gave into his lustful desires, uses Bathsheba and then sends her home.** (*4 Then David sent messengers to get her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her...Then she returned home.*)
- c. **She discovers she's pregnant and sends news to David** (*5 Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent David a message, saying, "I'm pregnant."*)
- d. **David now schemes for how to cover up his sin with Bathsheba. He has Uriah sent to him from the battlefield, makes small talk with him and then tells him to go home and take some time off. After thinking a little more about it David sends a gift to Uriah at his home after Uriah leaves talking with him.** (*6 Then David sent word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent him to David. 7 When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab and the army were getting along and how the war was progressing. 8 Then he told Uriah, "Go on home and relax." David even sent a gift to Uriah after he had left the palace.*)
- e. **Uriah doesn't go home though. He actually stays very close to the palace and sleeps beside the men assigned to guard the king!** (*9 But*

*Uriah didn't go home. He slept that night at the palace entrance with the king's palace guard.)*

- f. **David brings him back and wants to know why he didn't go home. Uriah tells David the following: "The Ark and the armies of Israel and Judah are living in tents, and Joab and my master's men are camping in the open fields. How could I go home to wine and dine and sleep with my wife? I swear that I would never do such a thing."** *(10 When David heard that Uriah had not gone home, he summoned him and asked, "What's the matter? Why didn't you go home last night after being away for so long?" 11 Uriah replied, "The Ark and the armies of Israel and Judah are living in tents, and Joab and my master's men are camping in the open fields. How could I go home to wine and dine and sleep with my wife? I swear that I would never do such a thing.")*
- g. **David tells him stay with him at the palace that day then and hang out. Then David would send him back to the battlefield the next day. David's intention though was simply to get Uriah drunk and have him go home after.** *(12 "Well, stay here today," David told him, "and tomorrow you may return to the army." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. 13 Then David invited him to dinner and got him drunk. But even then he couldn't get Uriah to go home to his wife. Again he slept at the palace entrance with the king's palace guard.)*
- h. **David, realizing he wasn't going to be able to get this guy to do what he wanted him to do decides he's going to have him killed. David decides that he will have him killed on the battlefield in a way that would appear routine. In order to do that though he would have to get word to the leader of his army, Joab, of his plan. The way David decides to get that plan to Joab is to write a letter letting him know of this plan. David decides to have this letter delivered by Uriah to Joab. How bullet proof had David thought himself to be? He gave a letter to the man he intends to have murdered. This letter contains the very plan of how he was going to be murdered, in the hopes that the man to be murdered would deliver it to the one assisting in his murder.** *(14 So the next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and gave it to Uriah to deliver. 15 The letter instructed Joab, "Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed." 16 So Joab assigned Uriah to a spot close to the city wall where*

*he knew the enemy's strongest men were fighting. 17 And when the enemy soldiers came out of the city to fight, Uriah the Hittite was killed along with several other Israelite soldiers. 18 Then Joab sent a battle report to David. 19 He told his messenger, "Report all the news of the battle to the king. 20 But he might get angry and ask, 'Why did the troops go so close to the city? Didn't they know there would be shooting from the walls? 21 Wasn't Abimelech son of Gideon killed at Thebez by a woman who threw a millstone down on him from the wall? Why would you get so close to the wall?' Then tell him, 'Uriah the Hittite was killed, too.'" 22 So the messenger went to Jerusalem and gave a complete report to David. 23 "The enemy came out against us in the open fields," he said. "And as we chased them back to the city gate, 24 the archers on the wall shot arrows at us. Some of the king's men were killed, including Uriah the Hittite.")*

- i. **This plan is to have Uriah placed on the front lines where the fighting is the most intense, then in that moment David wants Joab to have all of his men fall back but leave Uriah out in the open where he would be vulnerable and surely killed. This is exactly what Joab does and this is exactly what happens.**
- j. **David's response to the messenger that tells him that this happened.** (*25 "Well, tell Joab not to be discouraged," David said. "The sword devours this one today and that one tomorrow! Fight harder next time, and conquer the city!"*)
- k. **What did Bathsheba do when she heard that her husband was dead?** (*26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. 27 When the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to the palace, and she became one of his wives. Then she gave birth to a son.*)

### III. How did God view all of this?

- a. **2 Samuel 11:27 (NASB)** *...But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.*
  - i. **Matthew 1:6 (NASB95)** Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the

wife of Uriah.

b. When the Prophet Samuel went to David's father Jesse to have God point out him who God was going to pick of Jesse's boys to be king, God told Samuel this:

i. **1 Samuel 16:7 (NLT)** But the LORD said to Samuel...The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

1. *As a pastor, Christians often ask me how I can think so highly of them when, in many cases, I have counseled them through their times of sin and failure, and so I know their deepest shame. I always explain that it is their heart for the Lord that God looks at, and so I always try to do the same. I don't mean to say that those who **strive to serve the Lord** can do no wrong in my eyes, but this is very close to being so. So it is that while we should always strive to live our lives as perfectly as God sees us in Christ (Phil. 3:10-14), if you are beating yourself up about your past sins and failures, stop it. Remember that "man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7)*

<https://www.bereanbiblesociety.org/are-you-a-man-after-gods-own-heart/>

ii. **Matthew 13:13-15 (NASB)** 13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 "In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; 15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

1. Notice what was said of those Pharisees and religious



leaders concerning how they received His parables:

- a. **Matthew 21:45-46 (NASB)** 45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. 46 When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet.
- iii. God is going to send Nathan to confront David of His great sin. Let's look at that scene now:

1. **2 Samuel 12:1-14 (NASB)** 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. 2 "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. 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. 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." 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. 6 "He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." 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. 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! 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. 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.' 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. 12 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'" 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. 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."

iv. No excuses from David when confronted.

1. **Psalms 51:1-19 (NASB)** 1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 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. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. 7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean

heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise. 16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. 18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.

### David:

1. Owned his sin.
2. Understood the relationship that was first affected was the relationship with his First Love. It was after his heart wandered and fellowship was severed here that his sin began to multiply.
3. Acknowledged he carries a sinful thing inside of himself that's prone to wander and needs God's wisdom so that it can be corralled.
4. He confesses and delivers his sin to His Heavenly Father and is released of it through God's forgiveness.
  - a. **Proverbs 28:13 (NASB)** He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.
  - b. **1 John 1:9 (NASB)** 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
    - i. You wonder what fruitful things could have possibly come from David's sin?

5. **13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.**

- a. **Ephesians 2:10 (NASB)** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.