

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this series about sharing from our quiet times you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. We are two teachers and every day during the past week we had a quiet time from 7 selected chapters from 2 SAMUEL in the Old Testament. Today's topic is A DISCIPLE SHARES WHAT HE LEARNS FROM 2 SAMUEL.

(S) **SHARING FROM SELECTED CHAPTERS FROM GENESIS.**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from 2 Samuel chapters 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, and 24. Now we will use our notes to share important truths and lessons from some of these chapters and discuss some difficult passages.

Sharing quiet times from 2 Samuel chapter 11.

(T) I would like to share from 2 Samuel 11:1-27 about **David's sin of adultery and murder**. While 2 Samuel chapters 5-9 described David at his peak, as the true theocratic king, chapters 10-20 describe David as a weak human being. During the time of war against the Ammonites, David did not go out with his army, but stayed at home. There might have been some good reason, but I get the impression that David stayed home because of his despicable love of ease. One day, towards the evening after his long afternoon nap, he got up and walked on the flat roof of his palace. From there he could see a woman bathing in the open court of a nearby house. She was Batsheba, the wife of Uriah, who was on the battle field fighting against the Ammonites. Her beauty awakened David's lust and he committed adultery with her. When she became pregnant, David committed even more sins trying to hide his first sin. From this history I learned several lessons with regard to the deceitfulness of the human heart. Jeremiah 17:9-10 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve."

Sometimes the human heart harbours secret desires. David saw the beauty of this woman and what his eyes saw awakened an evil desire in his heart. James 1:14-15 teaches that when an evil desire arises within the heart, it gives birth to the act of sin; and the act of sin produces death. Once the process of giving in to the evil desire is set in motion it takes over and continues inevitably to the end. The end is implicit in the beginning. Once we give room to enjoy an evil desire, we cannot stop it anymore and it will lead to the act of sin and this will lead to death. David saw her beauty and instead of resisting the evil desire in his heart, he enjoyed the evil desire. His evil desire led to adultery, murder and the death of three of his children.

Sometimes the human heart tries to hide the first sin by committing more sins. David did not want other people to find out that he had committed adultery with Batsheba. Therefore he devised an evil plan to make it appear as if Uriah had made her pregnant. But all David's plans to make Uriah go to sleep with his wife, failed. It was evident that God had already purposed to bring David's act of sin into the light. God's purpose would not be frustrated in spite of all David's refined plans to hinder it. Finally David caused Uriah to be killed in battle so that he would not find out David's sin. David was so occupied with hiding his sin that he forgot that "nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account" (Heb 4:13; Prov 5:21). Sins that are not immediately confessed lead to more sins!

Sharing quiet times from 2 Samuel chapter 12.

(S) I would like to share from 2 Samuel 12:1-14 about **the prophet Nathan's rebuke of David**. More than 9 months passed before the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to rebuke David for his sin with Batsheba (11:27). During this time, David must have experienced the twitches of a bad conscience and must have done a lot of soul-searching. In Psalm 32:3-5 David gives evidence of his struggle with guilt in his conscience. He says that when he kept silent about his sin, his health and spirit wasted away. He continually felt the heavy hand of God pressing on him, so that he lost all his strength. Although inwardly David was convicted of his sin, outwardly he tried to set it aside, but failed.

I have learned much from the way Nathan rebuked David. Nathan showed that he had knowledge of the heart of man and lots of wisdom how to speak to people. He did not rebuke David straight into his face, but told him a story. This story reminds me of the parables of Jesus. Nathan's story was as follows: "A very rich stock-farmer received a visit from a traveller. Custom demanded that he slaughter one of his own sheep or cattle for the feast to welcome the traveller. But this rich man was stingy and forcibly took the only lamb of a very poor man and slaughtered it for his guest." At this point of Nathan's story, David burned with anger against such injustice and said that *that* rich man should die. As judge, David pronounced the judgement that he should repay the poor man fourfold. At that point, Nathan said to David, "You are the man!" Nathan told the parable in order to bring David to realise the injustice of his own sin and even to pronounce judgement over himself. The word of God to David consisted of three rebukes:

God's first rebuke was that David despised God's many gifts to him. God had given to David the kingship in Israel, all the possessions of king Saul and the whole of Israel. And if this had been too little, he would have given him much more. Yet David despised the fact that God is the Giver of all things and he despised the fact that God had set limits to what he owned. David wanted to possess more than God gave him. David transgressed God's limits and sinned against God!

God's second rebuke was that David despised God's holy law. God said in the seventh commandment, "You shall not commit adultery" and in the tenth commandment, "You shall not covet your neighbour's wife." Although David knew God's commandments, he despised them and committed adultery with his neighbour's wife. David had sinned knowingly and deliberately against God and his neighbour.

God's third rebuke was that David despised God's sovereign ability to see everything. David had tried to hide his sin from God for a long time. He had committed his sins in secret. But God saw everything he did in secret. Therefore the prophet Nathan said that God was going to punish David's secret sins in broad daylight.

David quickly confessed his sin and said, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan quickly replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die" Although God *forgave* David, he still *chastised* David. David's sins could not remain without *serious consequences*. David had to experience that sin always has evil and bitter consequences. And the reason was that David's sin had caused the Lord's enemies to blaspheme his Name. Therefore the prophet Nathan prophesied that David's sin of sexual immorality and murder would not depart from his house (10-12). Later his son Amnon committed rape and his son Absalom committed murder.

Sharing quiet times from 2 Samuel chapter 13.

(T) I want to share from 2 Samuel 13:1-22 about **Amnon and Tamar**. Amnon was the oldest son of David and according to custom he would become the next king. He had a half brother and half sister called Absalom and Tamar. In the course of time, Amnon fell in love with Tamar. Falling in love with a person of the opposite sex may be something very beautiful, if it all happens within the limits of God's Word. But falling in love without self-control can be something very dangerous, both for the girl as for the man. I have learned the following lessons about the relationship between a man and a woman from what Amnon did to Tamar:

First. Amnon did not love Tamar. He was infatuated with her. There is a great difference between falling in love and infatuation. *Falling in love* is a feeling of attraction to a person of the opposite sex, *a feeling that wants to love that person in the sense of caring, protecting and serving that person*. *Infatuation* is also a feeling of attraction to a person of the opposite sex, but it is *a feeling that wants to use that person to satisfy his own evil desires*. Amnon was not really in love with Tamar. He was infatuated with her. He was pre-occupied with his feelings of lust for her. Instead of thinking of what would be best for Tamar, he only thought of how he could use her to satisfy his own sexual desire for her. His pre-occupation with his wrong feelings for Tamar and his knowledge that it was forbidden to have any close relationship with her, frustrated him to the point that he became sick.

Second. Amnon did not listen to God. He listened to evil advice. Amnon's cousin gave him evil advice, how he could use his father, king David, to order Tamar to come to him. In those days, the virgin daughters of the king lived in the palace of the women and were well protected. They also wore a special beautiful robe to show that they were virgins. God wants all women to remain virgins until they marry. This is also God's will for all men. They should remain pure and self-controlled with respect to all women. Amnon, however, did not think about Tamar's reputation. He also did not think about his own reputation. As a matter of fact, he did not think of any of the consequences of such evil deeds as *incest* or *rape*. He must have known the law of God in Leviticus 18:6,9 and 20:17, which says that it is forbidden to marry a close family member, and which says that a sexual relationships with a close family member (incest) is punishable with death. Also rape was punishable with death. But Amnon did not want to think of God's law. He was a fool who did not consider that one such an evil act could lead to his death.

Third. Amnon committed his crime without witnesses. As long as there were servants in the room, Amnon could not carry out his evil plan. So he misused his authority as the king's son and ordered all the servants out of the house. Then he requested Tamar to bring the food to his bedroom. Tamar should have been more careful and should not have stayed in the house alone with Amnon. Amnon did not want any witness to report what really happened. As a matter of fact, he even devised an evil plan to make it seem as if not he, but Tamar was the evil person! Crimes that involve sexual immorality occur most often when people are alone and when there are no witnesses. Therefore all men and women, who want to live in an honourable way, should best avoid being alone with a person of the opposite sex. And it is also the best never to enter the bedroom of a person of the opposite sex.

Fourth. Amnon pretended to love her, but really hated her. After Amnon had forcibly raped Tamar, he hated her with intense hatred. He hated her more than he loved her. He had misused her and now he wanted to reject her like an old

used rag. He ordered her out of the house. She refused, because that would then seem to the people that she was a bad woman, who had seduced Amnon. Then Amnon forcibly threw her out of his house and bolted the door behind her. Amnon proved to be a cold and heartless brute. Tamar did not want to leave the place quietly, because that would prove that she was guilty. She tore her beautiful robe, put ashes on her head and went away weeping aloud as she went. Deuteronomy 22:23-27 teaches that Tamar was not guilty, because she was raped against her will and nobody was present to hear her pleading and weeping.

Sharing quiet times from 2 Samuel chapter 24.

(S) We want to share from 2 Samuel 24:1-25 about **the counting of Israel's fighting men**. This chapter has some difficult questions that need to be answered.

The first question. Why was the counting of Israel's fighting men sinful? We must notice that the Lord is not only angry with David, but that the Lord was *again* angry with whole *Israel* (1). The first time the Lord was angry with whole Israel probably referred to 2 Samuel 21:1-14. Both chapter 21 and 24 speak of sin, punishment and atonement. And both chapters end with the same closing remark, "After that, God answered prayer in behalf of the land." God's severe punishment of Israel must have had a specific cause. The rejection of God's appointed and anointed king was equally a rejection of God and a breaking of God's covenant with Israel. Therefore, according to 2 Samuel 15, when the majority of the people of all the twelve tribes of Israel joined in the conspiracy of Absalom to declare Absalom king of Israel in Hebron, they broke God's covenant (15:6,10,13; 18:6-7). And therefore, according to 2 Samuel chapters 19-20, when a conflict broke out between the tribes of Israel and Judah and the tribes of Israel deserted king David, they broke God's covenant. There were thus very good reasons why God was angry with Israel as a whole and that he wanted to punish Israel. The immediate means to punish Israel was that God incited king David to count Israel's fighting men.

Now taking a census of Israel was in itself not sinful, because God had previously ordered such counting in Numbers 1:2 (cf. Ex 30:12). The real sin of David must have been *his hidden motive for conducting a census*. David did not conduct an ordinary *civil* census, but a *military* census. David wanted to know how powerful a nation he ruled and all the fighting men of Israel were counted. Just like the nations around him, David relied on Israel's army for his strength instead of relying on God. David forgot that God's grace had made him a great king. David's motive was probably representative of the attitude within the whole of Israel. This attitude was an un-theocratic attitude, an attitude that did not regard God as the real King of Israel; an attitude which regarded Israel as David's people rather than as God's people (Ex 19:5-6). The people of God may not serve to show David's greatness, but only God's greatness! That was why the counting of Israel's fighting men was regarded as sinful in God's eyes. The census revealed what was hidden in the hearts of people.

(T) The second question. How could God incite David against Israel by conducting this census? 2 Samuel 24:1 says that God incited David against Israel to conduct a census. If God was the One who incited David to do this, how could he later punish both David and Israel? This verse is an authoritative revelation from God, that *God sovereignly controls all people, even in their sinful and foolish actions*. This truth is taught in the whole Bible. For example, 2 Samuel 17:14 says, "The Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom." Isaiah 54:16 says that God created the destroyer to work havoc. Proverbs 16:4 teaches that God even uses the wicked people to accomplish his good purposes! Although the sinful pride in David and Israel's hearts was David and Israel's responsibility, God still used David's hidden sin in his heart to cause him to count Israel's fighting men. Although David was responsible for his own sin, God incited David to do something *that would bring his hidden sin into the open*. And when David's sin was brought into the open, God also punished his sin. *God has the sovereign authority and power to cause people to do thing that would bring their hidden sins into the open*. He wants these sins to be brought into the open so that the wicked nature of their sins may be revealed and so that he may punish their sins as an example for others (2 Chron 32:31). Israel was not just punished for David's sin, but also for their own sin of breaking God's covenant.

(S) The third question. Did God or Satan incite David to this sin? While 2 Samuel 24:1 says that God incited David, 1 Chronicles 21:1 says that it was Satan who incited David to conduct a census of Israel's fighting men. Both statements are true: Samuel mentions God as the first cause and Chronicles mentions Satan as the second cause. The Bible does not teach that Satan is so powerful that he is almost God's equal. Instead, the Bible teaches that God is the sovereign King of the whole universe, including King over Satan together with all his evil powers. *God uses Satan to accomplish his eternal plan and purposes. God controls Satan's will and actions. Satan is completely subject to God. Satan can only act with God's sovereign permission*. Of course, the question about the origin of evil is a mystery. God has not revealed this to us. God has not revealed to us why he uses Satan and other evil powers to accomplish his good and eternal purposes. But we may never conclude that God himself is directly or indirectly the author of evil in the universe. God has not revealed that answer to us and we should not speculate about it either.

(T) The fourth question. After David had confessed his sins, why did God still punish David and Israel? When David heard the number of fighting men in Israel and Judah, he was conscience-stricken. He felt guilty of what he had

done and immediately confessed his sin to God. The next day, God sent the prophet Gad to announce that God would punish David for his sin. David could choose from three punishments: three years of famine, three months of fleeing from his enemies or three days of plague. David did not want to flee before his enemies, but he did not want to choose between the other two. He left the decision in the hands of his sovereign God, who knew what would be the best for David and Israel. God sent the plague, but before the punishment was completed, God in his mercy spared Jerusalem.

But why did God still punish David and Israel after David had confessed his sin? God forgave David's guilt, but he still wanted to chastise David. *He wanted to teach David and us the lesson that sin always has evil consequences. The purpose of God's forgiveness was to take the guilt away. But the purpose of God's chastisement was to warn his people not to continue to sin, because sin always has evil consequences.*

(T) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Every day have a quiet time from one chapter from 1 and 2 Kings. The selected chapters are 1 Kings 3, 11, 18, and 2 Kings 5, 6, 17 and 25. Record the meditations of all your quiet times in a notebook. Once a week meet with a friend or with a house fellowship or discipleship group and share your discoveries, lessons and blessings.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and preach God's kingdom" and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".