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I'd like to work our way from the big picture down to the little picture so we put David in the bigger picture. The central motif of David, theologically, is that he's a revelation of what Messianic leadership looks like, and it stands in utter contrast to the world's idea of leadership. That's the big picture we're after.

So let's start this off by backing up to **Abraham**, ~2,000BC, this man is literally split off from the rest of humanity. That split reveals certain disruptive truths. We said God elects and God justifies those who have faith. He didn't have to do that, but He did. Therefore He's gracious. What He did that was so gracious was He preserved His revelation in a subset of the human race, He revealed His plan for history. The very fact He did that contrasts with the pagan view of history. In the pagan view of history you have chance, there's no plan for history. They have no personal sovereign God of history. So every unbelieving view of history at bottom, where they talk about gods and goddesses or this or that, ultimately they have no intelligent plan. History is not run intelligently, there is no rational plan; there is no rhyme or reason to history. But on the biblical side, He is there and He has a plan and nothing is going to stop Him from executing that plan, and when we come to Him in faith as fallen creatures He perfectly justifies us, because we can't be in covenant with Him unless we have His imputed righteousness.

After Abraham there was the **Exodus**, this was about 1500 BC, and at that point we have God revealing Himself as the One who judges and saves, the One who disturbs history. Every one of these things we've looked at is a disturbance relative to civilization at large. Every one of these disturbances cuts against the grain of society; they interfere with what man naturally wants to do. At this point, in 1500 BC we have a tremendous thing; this is the

only time in history that you ever had a revolution from top to bottom in a society and the deliverance of a remnant, a minority, without an army, devoid of all politics, devoid of all military. The Exodus is an amazing event, utterly without precedent; no military is involved, and it was purely a miraculous intervention by God. In contrast to that, what man tries to do is to build his Babels. He has a system of works; he has a system of some sort of governmental solution to the problem, or something else. That's the pagan view. In other words, we deal with chaos by trying to impose an order on the chaos.

After the Exodus we came to **Mt Sinai**, again 1500 BC, and we have there God revealing the source of law. Man doesn't make law, God makes law. When we study the three branches of the government in school, the executive, the judicial and the legislative, isn't it instructive to observe which of those three branches of government is missing in the OT? We have the executive branch, the elders of the nation. We have the judicial branch, the courts. Where's the legislature? This is a question we asked earlier, it's a significant question. Why is the legislative function of government missing in the Bible? The answer is because God made the law, man doesn't make the law. So this gives you insight into which of the three branches of government is most closely related to God Himself. Why is that? When we make a law, supposedly we're trying to make a law that's just, we're trying to run society in an orderly and just fashion. But in order to make a law, you have to have an idea in your head, an idea of the standard of right and wrong. Where do you get the standard from? That issue forces us back to where do the standards come from, and God reveals that He is the standard. Then over and against that concept we have man's law, man's attempt at inventing the standards of good and evil. This is the result of the Fall, because at the Fall what was the temptation? You shall be as gods knowing both good and evil. In other words, the temptation is to become the determiner of good and evil.

Having this sin problem we came to the **Conquest and Settlement** era which gives us a foreview of how that is dealt with. This lasted from 1500 BC on down to the time of the Judges, about 1050 BC, four to five centuries. The important point in this was the holy war. It's this section of the Bible that critics love to attack; they love to criticize the Christians, "How can you Christians believe in a God that would order the genocide of innocent people?" Sometimes Christians start apologizing for that. There's something

wrong if we have to apologize for something God did. Either we don't get it or we lack faith but something isn't right about apologizing for God.

What was the answer to that? The answer is that we take it back further; we say you have to go back to the problem of evil itself. There are only two views about good and evil. Either you have to believe that good and evil are inseparable, evil is normal and evil has always been and ever will be or good and evil are separable, evil is abnormal and evil is limited and will be separated out from evil. If you don't accept the Biblical view, where we have a point in time where there was a Fall and a beginning of evil, and you don't accept the fact that at the end there is going to be a Judgment and a separation of good and evil, such that evil is bracketed on the left and on the right side of the chart, then you have everlasting evil. Either evil is limited or it isn't.

So the justification for holy war and the extermination of a so-called innocent group of people, number one is they're not innocent. There never has been a group of innocent people, all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and all of us are intruders in God's universe. So, why we have holy war and genocide in the OT Conquest and Settlement period is that God is revealing on a micro-scale of the macro-scale what His final judgment is going to look like. That's our assurance of world peace. If you don't have that all you have is a sweet little dream of peace. If you reject the Bible you have no answer for evil, no end of evil forever and ever, a very distressing picture.

That's the background, and now we've come to the last of these events which is where God reveals what a Messianic leader looks like. This is about 1000 BC, and in this case we see David as a man of faith who operates by grace over against Saul and pagan kings who operate by the flesh, by works. That's why we quoted Esarhaddon so you could have a contrast between how they acted and how David acted. We came to the conclusion that David was given a covenant, 2 Sam 7, and during that period of time we have David settling down.

Let's look at the Davidic Covenant again, because this sets up the structure for the rest of the OT, and in fact prepares us for the NT. There are various covenants in Scripture. We've seen two principally: the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant, The Abrahamic Covenant is your unconditional

promise of a land, seed and worldwide blessing. The Mosaic Covenant was a conditional covenant given to the nation Israel on an if-then basis. The Davidic Covenant we introduced comes in under the Abrahamic, it's absolutely unconditional. The Covenant with David promises that his seed will be the Messianic King forever and ever, there never will be a time when the Davidic dynasty does not control not only planet earth but ultimately the universe. David's seed will reign. It's not the Martians that are going to take over. In fact, the universe is going to be run by David's seed. So, the Davidic Covenant is quite radical in that it defines the highest human office, the office of human king. Therefore, the Davidic Covenant shapes where history is going; and this is why David's covenant is eternal, it's an eternal dynasty, rooted in the very plan of God, and so Jesus traces His lineage to David.

All this is background to what we're going to go into in two weeks, all these stories with David are leading up to applicational truths in the area of Christian sanctification, spiritual growth, confession of sin, etc. that we're all involved in. But lest those things become abstract principles and you don't have any content in your mind to visualize, we want to go through some of these rich stories, hoping that as we go through these stories that our memories will become filled with them and in our moments of crisis and our moments of troubles we can sit down and recall, wait a minute, what did God do with David. Let me think through this, here I am and here's David, how did God deal in David's situation? How is He going to deal in my situation? Then the Holy Spirit can remind you of these stories and it'll all be connected.

The story begins in 2 Sam 7, that's where we left off with the covenant. After 2 Sam 7 you have a series of chapters that begin to give a record of David's reign, how he fared. These are the royal chronicles; God's interpretation of history. I said that history did not start with the Greeks like you always learned in school. History started with the Jews of the OT, it started with their writing prophets. Why did they write it? What was the motive behind the first history book? That's a good question. What was the motive, what was the driving force that made men write things down? Why Judges, why Samuel, why Chronicles? These are histories, theological histories, but they're histories. The answer is this: Because God made a covenant and we are measuring His behavior. The history is the unfolding of the behavior, and so these histories are organized materials, not everything that happened in David's life, but selected by God so that we can track who's being faithful to

the Davidic Covenant. What does God's promise look like in the ebb and flow of history?

2 Sam 8 is a lot of stories of military victories, etc. This is after the covenant, and it says in verse 1, "Now after this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them...." In chapter 10 you have some more of the wars that David had to fight. 2 Sam 10:19, "When all the kings, servants of Hadadezer, saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and served them. So the Arameans feared to help the sons of Ammon any more." David is solidifying his regal power, unifying his kingdom.

Trapped between chapter 8 and 10 is chapter 9 where there's a little note as to what was going on with the Davidic dynasty at this point. 2 Sam 9:1 is exceptional, "Then David said, 'Is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?'" How does this differ from what we read the last couple of times of Esarhaddon? What did Esarhaddon do to the rival people? He wiped them out, killed them all, slaughtered them. What is David doing? Is he wiping them all out? No, he made certain promises he would be gracious and these are men and women in a rival dynasty that in normal politics would have tried to assassinate him. But this man is so confident of the plan of God that he can relax and be gracious. Do you see the connection? People that act like Esarhaddon are insecure; they're so insecure they have to destroy everything that might bother them. David doesn't have to do that. David has the promise of God; God will take care of it. So David can really be, deep down in his soul, a lot more relaxed because he's trusting the sovereign promises of God and therefore because he is secure, he can show grace to others and he can love them. His security is a prerequisite for being relaxed enough and secure enough so that he can give to others; it comes about because of his rigid faith in the sovereign God of the Bible. That's always true; love can't be released out of insecurity. As long as I am insecure my first concern is me, not with you, not with anybody else, with me. After I'm secure, then we'll talk about you. That's the way it is. So David is secure. There's the whole story in chapter 9, a wonderful story of how he searches out the son of Jonathan who was crippled in his feet, Mephibosheth. He was dropped by his grandmother or something; he was crippled and David brings him into his house, gives him a place in the royal palace. A tremendous act of faith and grace.

Then we have the wars of chapter 10. In chapter 11 through chapter 20, this chronicle of David's reign is an interesting principle. There's a whole bunch of stories in here, and we want to look at the outline of these stories. 2 Sam 11 and 12 is the famous scandal that hit David's reign. David is always known for this scandal, his adultery with Bathsheba, but chapters 11 and 12 don't finish the story. Notice I said its chapter 11 through chapter 20, that whole section of Samuel teaches us something about a phrase that was embedded in the David contract. So let's go back to 2 Sam 7:14 to see a little clause embedded in the contract: "I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men." What does that say? Does that say that David's house is going to be history if he sins? No. Is his dynasty going to be continuously secure? Yes. But inside that state of security God is going to punish iniquity, so sin is going to be punished in the father-son relationship some way, he says "by the sons of men," i.e. there are going to be other people to act against David, or his son, Solomon, and anybody else in that line. So sin will not go unpunished in this story. Chapter 11 and 12 deal with the sin, chapters 13-20 deal with the outworking of this punishment. This whole clump of Scripture is to show 2 Sam 7:14 at work. That's what's happening. It's personal yes, it's David's life, but it's larger than that, it's the outworking of the Davidic Covenant, 2 Sam 7:14, that's the bigger picture, and from that bigger picture we want to draw some conclusions for the Christian life.

So there's going to be people killed, people raped, armies destroyed, people suffering, and social decay all through this section. But it is not social chaos in an ultimate sense. God is behind it all in that it's all an outworking of 2 Sam 7:14. That's the lesson to see here. The line of David is secure but there are consequences for rebellion. This is the way God runs His kingdom; if A happens, B is going to follow, it's predictable. That's what this whole section is, so let's look at some of the details of the section.

To get a running start, chapters 8 and 10, David's wars, right. Now, hold your place in Samuel and turn to Ps 5. We want to get an idea of David's lifestyle. David did certain things normally; it was his day to day operation. In Ps 5:3, what do you notice is normal about David in the morning? In the morning he's an early riser, he gets up and prays to the Lord, and he's ready to go. Flip back to 2 Sam 11:1. Normally in chapter 8 and 10 he was leading his armies in the battle, but now in verse 1, "Then it happened in the spring, 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 sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But..." says the Hebrew, "David stayed in Jerusalem." What's going on here? Why isn't he out there with his troops? He wasn't out there with his men who were in battle, he was at home. Then in verse 2, "Now when evening came David arose from his bed," does that look like the David of Ps 5? The guy who rose early in the morning to meet God? So right away in verse 1-2 something is going on, this is not the normal David, he looks more like an irresponsible teenager here.

What we're trying to get to is this: there's a big sin coming, but it didn't happen out of the clear blue. There's a pre-game warm up, and we all know this from our own life and our own experience, that big sins just don't happen. There's little sins that build up to the big sins, so the little stuff here and there goes on, and then finally boom, the big whammer. But the big whammer wasn't step one. Something has gone on here in vv 1-2. In verse 2 we want to make some more observations. "Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. ³So David sent and inquired about the woman." We know the story. But there are some things to observe about verse 2, some questions to ask. Besides the fact that he's supposed to be out leading his army, besides the fact he just got up in the evening, and now he's out looking down from the roof, here's this woman out here with her clothes off taking a bath in a pool. She's got to know there are roofs higher than the pool so people can look at her. This is not to avoid blaming David, but it's just to say that Bathsheba does not come across in Scripture as the smartest woman who ever lived. In fact, there are references elsewhere in Kings where she gets so screwed up in the politics of the palace that Nathan has to come to her and explain, "Honey if you don't act this way you're going to lose your son. Woo-hoo, are you there?" She's kind of slow. Most of the time it's very difficult to caricature these people. Christian artists have always had difficulty painting these guys and gals, so you have to pay attention to the subtleties in the text. There's very little evidence in the text of even what Jesus looks like. The only idea we have of what Jesus looks like is from a fresco that was in an early Christian catacomb of Jesus preaching that shows Him clean shaven and with short hair, not like Holman Hunt's picture of a hippie left over from the 60's.¹ It's almost unanimous in the first nine centuries of church history that Jesus was

clean shaven and had short hair, just like the Roman men.ⁱⁱ The reason the Roman men wore short hair and not long hair is because in battle someone can grab onto long hair and cut your throat, so it was for personal protection, you don't have a long tail to grab onto. And apparently Jesus did not have long hair. The fact of the matter was that the Jewish men who did have long hair were the Nazirites, and they did it as unto the Lord, it was unusual, not the norm. We know that but we don't know much else. The Scriptures just leave us kind of in the dark as to what these people look like. But there are subtleties, hints here and there.

So, in verse 2, the prophet who's writing the Scripture under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, when he injects this physical description, that's unusual. When you read the Bible and you run across a physical description of someone, take note because that is very rare. We saw it once before, when Saul comes on the scene there's a physical description of what he looks like, he's very tall, and that's used later on in the story to contrast with David. This is here to let us understand what's going on. David's not so much interested in who the woman is, he's interested in what she looks like without her clothes on. There's even intimations based on the text, and this is a debated point among scholars based on verse 4 "and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness," that her bath on the rooftop was the Levitical bath following menstruation. So she's ripe for conception at this point. It's not a good situation.

David sees her, he's out of it and has been for awhile, and he gets all hot and bothered and calls her up to the house. In verse 5, she was fertile at the point when he committed adultery, so she conceived. This is the amazing thing how God works. What our view of sin is, because it comes from rebellion, is that everything's a mess, and yet here's one of those ironies. Here this woman gets pregnant due to this adulterous act, and there are consequences to that, but one of the things that comes out of this is that one of the sons she has via David becomes part of the Messianic line. David has six or seven wives, but none of those other women bear a child in the Messianic line, not Abigail, not Michal, we know she's never going to bear anything, so all these women who could have borne the seed of the Messiah aren't, Bathsheba is the one... you say why does God do this in history? In fact, most of the women that show up in Jesus' genealogies and there's a debate about Bathsheba, are Gentiles in a Jewish Messiah's line. I wonder what God's saying there.

She gets pregnant, now he's got a problem with her husband. So in verse 6 he calls Uriah home from battle, he tries to get him to go home and have relations with his wife, so he'd be scot free but that doesn't work out because Uriah has integrity. So he knocks off Uriah. This is great, David's really scoring here. Here's a guy that built his army out of men who are losers, (remember the cave of Adullam), David carefully spent years building a tremendous officer corps. The thing people don't understand about military is that you don't build an army overnight, it takes years to build military leadership. The scary thing is you can lose them in a week. If the leaders say, "I've had it. I quit," which has happened in certain divisions, or they all get killed, then all the years of training to build a fine military leadership just vanishes. And David at this point is losing one of his finest officers, Uriah. So here's a guy, and this is what sin does to us, who wrecks one of his key military officers by giving a very stupid and deliberately sneaky order to the commander to put Uriah out in the heat of the battle so he can get him out of the picture.

We come to chapter 12, and this is one of the classic Bible passages on counseling, a very interesting approach. Here's the problem: God's a father to His son David, David's going one way, God is not, he should be going toward God but he's going away from God, he's been doing this for awhile, now he's committed the big whammy, he's committed another bigger whammy knocking Uriah off. The problem is how do you deal with that? We want to observe two things Nathan did. First, Nathan uses an approach called entrapment. This is what you do when the person on the other side is so deep in the muck and mire of sin you have to pull one over on them to wake them up. Notice how he tells a story, because if he narrowed his sights right on David, David's defenses would have been up. He would have come up with some excuse. People in this situation are slippery so you have to tie them down. So Nathan is going to tie David down. He tells the story about the ewe lamb, David buys it hook, line and sinker. Verse 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. ⁶And he must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.'" How many fold? Fourfold, and how many sons is David going to lose? He's going to lose four. Out of his mouth in his moment of anger he pronounces his own sentence. This is powerful drama; it is how carefully God

superintends every little detail. Verse 7 Nathan springs the trap, “Nathan then said to David, ‘You are the man!’ So Nathan uses the indirect approach of entrapment. Then he convicts him of what he did.

Second general observation about this text: in no other country on earth would you ever have had a lay person walk in and chew out the king, you never see this. Do you think some commoner is going to go into Pharaoh and say, “You sinned, Pharaoh, you’re a bad boy!” Yeah, and in two minutes your head is going to be severed from your body. In fact that happened in the NT with John the Baptist. Talk about boldness, John is a prophet after the model of the OT and he goes right in and starts criticizing the marital practices of the royal house of Rome. How did that little game play out? John the Baptists’ head on a platter at the birthday party. You didn’t have this in pagan cultures. Is someone going to walk into Esarhaddon with this? The Syrians had a nice way of killing you: they’d stake you down to the ground and they’d peel your skin off till you died. These were the nice guys of the ancient world. So here’s David, and Nathan walks in, “Hey buddy, you’re out to lunch,” what’s the difference, what made the difference? Is this disrespectful to the king? No it isn’t. Nathan can walk in because he’s a man under the umbrella of the word of God and David’s under the umbrella of the word of God, they both stand under the same absolute, and that provides the forum for discussion.

Verse 10, “Now therefore,” here’s the punishment, remember, 2 Sam 7:14, here it comes, “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. ¹¹Thus 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 shall lie with your wives in broad daylight. ¹²Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.” That’s the story of his harem being taken over by his sons. 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.” So son # one, in verse 19, “But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so David said to his servants, ‘Is the child dead?’ And they said, “He is dead.” So child # one is dead. We don’t know his name, he’s dead. That’s 2 Sam 12:19. Now let’s watch the drama unfold.

2 Sam 13:28, Amnon, one of David's sons by one of his wives, notice what starts it, the first child is the product of fornication. The second guy dies because he raped the sister of one of the other brothers. You see how it's kind of a pattern that repeats, sex and murder, sex and murder. God is teaching us. "And Absalom commanded his servants, saying, 'See now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon,' then put him to death. Do not fear; have not I myself commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant. ²⁹And the servants of Absalom did to Amnon just as Absalom had commanded." So number two dies, that's 13:28.

Let's go for number three, 2 Sam 18:9, "Now Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. For Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him kept going." There's something humorous and pathetic about these stories, scholars say that this is some of the most magnificent narrative ever written in human history, it's not just the intrigue of a dynasty but it has all these neat little events going on. You have to read the events, not like we usually learn them in Sunday School, as just isolated things, but you want to see the isolated things as part of this ongoing magnificent drama of the dynasty. So here he is hanging there in a tree, ¹⁰"When a certain man saw it, he told Joab and said, 'Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.'" Joab is the commander in chief of David's armies. ¹¹Then Joab said to the man who had told him, 'Now behold, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? And I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt.' ¹²And the man said to Joab, 'Even if I should receive a thousand pieces of silver in my hand, I would not put out my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Protect for me the young man Absalom!'" See, David was sentimental toward his sons, even though Absalom had run a revolution against him, and had taken over his harem. David was trying to exercise grace toward him. ¹³"Otherwise, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof.' ¹⁴Then Joab said, 'I will not waste time here with you.' So he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak." So number three dies. This is 2 Sam 18:14.

Number four, the fourth son. 1 Kgs 2:13, this is after David's death. By the way, this is also the chapter where Bathsheba shows up again in all of her glory. "Now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, 'Do you come peacefully?' And he said, 'Peacefully.'" ¹⁴Then he said, 'I have something to say to you.' And she said, 'Speak.' ¹⁵So he said, 'You know that the kingdom was mine and that all Israel expected me to be king; however, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the LORD.' ¹⁶'And now I am making one request of you; do not refuse me.' And she said to him, 'Speak.' ¹⁷Then he said, 'Please speak to Solomon the king, for he will not refuse you, that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as a wife.' ¹⁸And Bathsheba said, 'Very well; I will speak to the king for you.' ¹⁹So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king arose to meet her, bowed before her, and sat on his throne; then he had a throne set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right. ²⁰Then she said, 'I am making one small request of you' do not refuse me.' And the king said to her, 'Ask, my mother, for I will not refuse you.' ²¹So she said, 'Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as a wife.'"

This looks like it's a very innocent request, but Bathsheba, again she's not too quick on the draw. They say the way to a son is through his mother, it's an ancient idea, and what's happening here is this Adonijah wants a claim on the throne. The woman he wants to marry is part of the harem. So by asking for her hand, this is more than just a marriage deal going here, this is a political statement. And Bathsheba is just going along, she's ditzy, she doesn't think about what's going on. Verse 24, Solomon is not so ditzy, he sees this one a mile away, "Now therefore as the LORD lives, who has established me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has made me a house as He promised, surely Adonijah will be put to death today. ²⁵So King Solomon sent by Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him so that he died." So in 2 Kings 2:24 we have number four.

We have four sons that die, all listed in the fine print. What is the fine print that controls this under God's sovereign plan? God said "I will be a father to him and he will be a son," 2 Sam 7:14, "I will discipline this dynasty. I will preserve the dynasty, it will be eternally secure, but in that security I will be about discipline." This is loaded with all kinds of truth for Christian

sanctification. But today I just want you to get this picture of what's going on with this dynasty, and all this mess that's caused by David.

For a few minutes we want to ask how the Bible is unique over against the world, where's the real contrast going on. David confessed his sin, and here are the Psalms to remember, Psalm 32, 38 and 51. Those are three penitential Psalms and they were written by David during this time. Psalm 51 is THE classic penitential Psalm; it's been used down through church history for centuries. It's the song written about David's confession of his sin. David recognized that he had sinned, but let me show you briefly what the pagan world was doing:

“Nowhere else in the ancient world could the king be so censured—especially for a moral wrong—as David was, and certainly nowhere else in the world would it be so publicly condemned as in the royal record of 2 Samuel. Outside of Israel and her Law there was no developed sense of sin.” Note this very carefully, outside of Israel historically there was no developed sense of sin, which tells you then, what did Israel have that the Assyrians and the Egyptians didn't have in their national life? What do these nations not have? A personal sovereign God who gives law. Where does the sense of personal sin come from? The law. Does law have a function? You bet it does, and here's an illustration: “The Egyptian viewed his misdeeds not as sins, but as aberrations.... It is especially significant that the Egyptians never showed any trace of feeling unworthy of divine mercy. For he who errs is not a sinner but a fool, and his conversion to a better way of life does not require repentance but a better understanding....” That, by the way, is an ancient statement that is just as modern as it can be. What's always the problem with society? How do we fix modern aberrations in society? Education. All we need is a few more bits of data and we'll work our way into a righteous society. It's the same old story. For he who errs is not a sinner but a fool, and his conversion to a better way of life does not require repentance but a better understanding....The theme of God's wrath is practically unknown in Egyptian literature; for the Egyptian, in his aberrations, is not a sinner whom God rejects but an ignorant man who is disciplined and corrected.”

See the difference? We want to hone in on that difference. When God talks to David, “why have you despised Me?” It's ultimately with Me that you have an issue, it's not Bathsheba and Uriah ultimately, it's with Me, that's the nature

of sin. It's not with society, it's not the fine you're being slapped with, it's not what the court system is going to do, it's with God.

Let's conclude by going to Ps 51:7 that shows this. As David writes Ps 51, verse 1 by the way is not the Hebrew verse 1; the real Hebrew words of verse 1 are "For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba." That's verse 1. Verse 2 is our verse 1; unfortunately in our English translations we've kind of butchered the headings out, but the heading is a part of the Hebrew text; that was in the original. So here's David confessing his sin, he's talking ²"Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. ³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." Look at verse 4, how can you reconcile what he's saying here with what happened? Didn't he wrong Bathsheba? Didn't he do wrong against Uriah, murder him? But he comes out with this: ⁴"Against Thee, and Thee only, I have sinned, and done that which is evil in Thy sight." "Against Thee and Thee only," that's the essence of sin when we can see it, yes we have wronged other people, this is not to minimize that, believe me, this is not to minimize the wrongdoing of others. So why doesn't he mention them? Because chapters 11-20 mentioned them over and over and over. We don't have to be reminded of the tons of consequences that result from big whammers; everybody knows those. What we have to be reminded of is that it's between us and the Lord, that's the dimension that we have to be reminded of. "Against You, You only, have I sinned." Why have you despised Me after all that I've done for you? That's the issue when we sin. That's the dimension we have to focus on, as we'll see later, this thing called confession. Confession isn't going down in front of a big crowd or something, I did wrong. Everybody knows that, confession is to God for our rebellion against Him. That's where the confessing must finally be directed. That's one of the great truths which will emerge from this whole David story.

Finally, the last few chapters of 2 Samuel deal with a few summary stories that show after all, the Bible's final conclusion is that God's evaluation of David was that he 'was a man after God's own heart,' "he went fully after Yahweh," in spite of everything he did, the social repercussions happen. God has, in 1 Kgs 11 given His assessment of this man; he is a Messianic leader and he went wholly after Me. It doesn't mean sinlessness, but it means something else which we'll have to come to grips in coming weeks.

ⁱ http://new.rejesus.co.uk/images/area_uploads/faces/faces_holman_hunt.jpg

ⁱⁱ http://www.jesusplice.com/common_error.php?id=13

[Back To The Top](#)

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