

David and Bathsheba

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Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[0 : 00] Psalm 146 on page 191. And the tune is Stuttgart. We're going to sing from the beginning to the verse mark 8. That's the first five stanzas. Psalm number 146 in sing-salms from the beginning to the verse mark 8.

Praise the Lord my soul, O praise him. I'll extol him all my days while I live to God my saviour. From my heart I will sing praise. Do not put your trust in princes, mortal men who cannot save. All their plans will come to nothing when they perish in the grave. Psalm 146 from the beginning to the verse mark 8. The first five stanzas to the tune Stuttgart and we'll stand to sing.

Praise the Lord my soul, O praise him. I'll extol him all my days while I live to God my saviour. From my heart I will sing praise.

Praise the Lord my soul, O praise him. I'll extol him all my days while I live to God my days while I live to God my days while I live to God. Do not put your trust in princes, mortal men who cannot save. All their plans will come to nothing when they perish in the grave.

Be you. Blessed is the one who truly looks for help to Jacob's God.

[1 : 50] Blessed is the one who places all his hope upon the Lord.

He who makes the earth and heaven and the seas with all their score. He who keeps his every promise, who is faithful evermore.

He delivers from oppression and relieves the hungry's plight. He releases those in prison to the mind the Lord gives sight.

Amen. Let's bow our heads in prayer. Our Father remind us afresh this evening by the power of your spirit of the massive privilege that we have this evening to come together in your name and to meet with you, to listen to your word.

Our prayer this evening is that you will meet with us, unworthy as we are, to come face to face with the living and the true God.

[3 : 22] We do so in faith, conscious that we are, to come face with us, unworthy as we are, to come face with us, unworthy as we are, to come face with us.

That's your promise. We pray that we pray to lay hold on that promise this evening because we come in the name of Jesus, our Savior.

We cannot come by our own efforts or by our own merits because they amount to nothing. Even our righteousness is like filthy rags. We deserve only your wrath, your righteous anger, and your judgment, and your punishment.

But our Father, we thank you that in Jesus we have been made alive and that we've been raised again and we've been given a new beginning and a new heart, a new purpose.

We give thanks, O Lord, for the gift of everlasting life that you promise and give to all those who accept Jesus and who follow him.

[4 : 26] Our Father, we pray then that you will bless our worship. May our worship be true worship. We want to come in sincerity of heart, not hiding anything from you.

We confess, O Lord, our sinfulness before you. We want to confess the darkness of our hearts, the deceitfulness and the corruption of our hearts.

But we do so believing that as we confess our sins, you are faithful and just. And you will cleanse us and wash us from all our unrighteousness.

And so, Lord, bring about that cleansing in us, we pray, and bless our time together. We pray that our fellowship might be meaningful this evening. We pray that it will be good to see one another.

We ask, Lord, that you will bless our relationships with one another as brothers and sisters in the Lord. We ask that you will give us true joy in our hearts at seeing one another and enjoying fellowship in a place like this.

[5 : 28] And every opportunity that we have, whether formally or informally, we pray tonight that you will give us to treasure one another from the depths of our heart, believing and knowing that what Jesus has done for us, he has done for our brothers and sisters in the Lord as well.

We also ask, Lord, that if there's anyone this evening who hasn't yet come to commit themselves to Jesus, we pray that the gospel will be made clear to them. We ask, Lord, that as you work in their hearts, that you will persuade them of your reality and your power, persuade them of their own sinfulness and their own need to be forgiven.

And we pray that you will draw them and bring them into your kingdom by your power. Father, this is what we pray for our families and for our neighborhood and for our community.

We pray, Lord, that you will work mightily and richly in our community. And we ask that you will pour out your spirit upon us and bless our service this evening.

Those who are here and those who are not here. We're conscious of those who perhaps are confined to their homes and those who perhaps will never meet with your people in a church again.

[6 : 45] Because of old age or because of sickness or infirmity. We ask, Lord, that you will be with them where they are. We pray that you'll minister where they are. We pray, Lord, that whatever we are able to do by way of visitation and by way of the facilities that are available, the audio CDs that are available, and the DVDs we give thanks, Lord, that we live in a world full of resources where people can access the service as it takes place here.

We give thanks, Lord, that we're able to do that and to go and to give people and to share with them the resources that we have.

And we pray that as they make use of that, that it will be blessed to them. In Jesus' name. Amen.

We're going to read together from 2 Samuel chapter 11.

It's on page 314 in my edition of the ESV Bible. 2 Samuel chapter 11. Amen. Amen. In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel.

And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. It happened late one afternoon when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house that he saw from the roof a woman bathing.

[8 : 33] And the woman was very beautiful. And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

So David sent messengers and took her. And she came to him, and he lay with her. Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.

Then she returned to her house. And the woman conceived. And she sent and told David, I am pregnant. So David sent word to Joab, Send me Uriah the Hittite.

And Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked how Job was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, Go down to your house and wash your feet.

And Uriah went out of the king's house and there followed him a present from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord and did not go down to his house.

[9 : 40] When they told David, Uriah did not go down to his house, David said to Uriah, Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house? Uriah said to David, The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field.

Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and lie with my wife? As you live and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing. Then David said to Uriah, Remain here today also and tomorrow I will send you back.

So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. And David invited him and he ate in his presence and drank so that he made him drunk.

And in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

In the letter he wrote, Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, then draw back from him that he may be struck down and die.

[10 : 55] And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. And the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And some of the servants

of David among the people fell.

Uriah the Hittite also died. Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting. And he instructed the messenger, When you have finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, then if the king's anger rises and if he says to you, Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? Who killed Abimelech, the son of Jerobesheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died at Thebes?

Why did you go so near the wall? Then you shall say, Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell.

The messenger said to David, The men gained an advantage over us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall.

[12:04] Some of the king's servants are dead and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. David said to the messenger, Thus shall you say to Joab, Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another.

Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it and encourage him. When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah, her husband, was dead, she lamented over her husband.

And when the morning was over, David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife and bore him a son.

But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. Amen and may the Lord himself add his blessing to that reading of his word.

We're going to sing now in Psalm 119. It's a traditional version of the psalm. You'll find it on page 400 of the Sing Psalms books. page number 400.

[13:22] And we're going to sing from verse 9 down to verse 14. The tune is St. David. Possibly an ironic tune to choose.

Psalm 119 verse 9 is on page 400. By what means shall a young man learn his way to purify if he according to thy word thereto attentive be?

Unfeignedly thee have I sought with all my soul and heart. Oh, let me not from the right path of thy commands depart. Psalm 119. It's the traditional version of the psalm.

It's the second part of the psalms on page 400 verse 9 down to verse 14 and we're going to stand to sing once again. Why, what means shall a young man learn his way to purify if he according to thy word there to attend to be?

unfaithly thee have I sought with all my soul and heart.

[14:57] Oh, let me not from the right path of thy commanding heart.

I word I in my heart have it a title penalty.

O Lord the weather blessed are I sought to teach me.

What can't men so climb out each one my lips deep lay it down for joy thy destiny all each way and riches all me came.

today is a very special Sunday.

[16:17] It is the day in which we remember the Reformation. This is actually Reformation Sunday. The actual date on which Reformation is commemorated is believe it or not the 31st of October which can be a commemoration of all the wrong things but actually it can be a commemoration of all the right things as well because the Reformation was the greatest transformation and revolution that took place in the church's entire history.

And of course the man associated with the Reformation was a man called Martin Luther Luther who took his relationship with the Lord very seriously as a young man as he studied for the priesthood as a monk he just could not get his head around how he could be saved.

He tried his best if ever there was a man who tried his best to please God by his own efforts it was Martin Luther and he couldn't he knew he had no peace within his own soul until he came to see the gospel and until the light of the gospel finally dawned but then he discovered that what the church taught was very different from what he had come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and so he decided to take on the church which was no mean thing to do at all it wasn't a small thing at all and of course many people they supported him in that there were debates and arguments and there was danger and you can of course read about it in many books that there are about the reformation but what started at that moment was the what we now know as the protestant church it's not about

bigotry it's not about hatred or sectarianism it's about a rediscovery of what the gospel truly is Jesus alone the bible alone grace God's grace alone by faith alone and we stand in that tradition because that is what we preach and that is what we believe we believe that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ and him alone and so tonight we want to remember how God has led his church in that direction into that rediscovery and we want to hold to it and we want to stand by it our second reading this evening is found in James it's in the New Testament and the first chapter of James it's I have it on page 1215 of my ESV Bible and we're going to read a very short passage from verse 12 down to verse 18 the letter of

James in chapter 1 and verse 12 blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him let no one say when he is tempted I am being tempted by God for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death do not receive be deceived my beloved brothers every good gift and every perfect gift is from above coming down from the father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures amen and once again we ask that god will bless his own infallible word to each one of us and may he grant that we will receive it by faith let's bow our heads once again for a few moments and prayer our father in heaven we want to continue our worship in singing your praises and in reading your word and lord even what we've read already has made us tremble being so conscious of how close we all are to failure to sinfulness to allowing ourselves to be compelled by temptation our father in heaven we pray that as we read your word and as we consider it together that your holy spirit will create within us not only a repentance for all that we have done in the past but also a resolve to live by your word we ask lord that your word will take the central place in our lives whatever our feelings and whatever the distractions and attractions that surround us lord that you will give us the strength to resist temptation and that you will continue to lead us and guide us for your glory we pray oh lord that the glory of god in jesus christ will compel us to a life that is pure a life lord that is lived in obedience to you and we pray that you will shed your light in our hearts we thank you lord that once again that we are able to pray for one another we thank you for even what the intimations the information that even the intimations have given us about the activities that are connected with many of us in the congregation we ask lord for the forthcoming

[22 : 09] Gambia partnership trip that as they make preparation and as they go out to to support and to share your gospel with people there to support the church in Gambia we ask that you will bless them and bless their work and give them to know that their labor is not in vain in the lord we ask that you will bless the meeting on Wednesday at which our brother will speak about his work in Southeast Asia we pray that as he comes amongst us that he will know the support and the fellowship that we can give to him we ask that you will create within us a real burning interest in what you're doing in churches in parts of the world that we know so little about in areas and towns and villages where there are real people with real souls who need to hear the gospel our father we thank you that that you have sent men and women to these places to minister your word and to villages which are gripped under the power of witchcraft and animism and false religion religion that binds people and keeps them imprisoned our father we thank you that the gospel is the liberating message the power of god to salvation that sets people free from such bondage and we pray lord that as he and his colleagues go about preaching the gospel in these places we pray that you will be with them and that you will accompany them by your power so lord we pray that you will these are only some of the many prayers that we want to bring before you in the secret of our own hearts asking that you will bless your word and that you will continue to add to your church those who are being saved we thank you for the gospel and for the gospel which is grounded and never stray from that conviction that your word is the perfect infallible word that points us to

Jesus and tells us who he is and what he came to do in Jesus name amen we're going to sing again in psalm number 141 it's on page 436 and sing psalms 141 we're going to sing from verse 3 down to verse 5 that's four stanzas once again the tune is martyrdom psalm 141 and it's the scottish psalter version the tune is martyrdom and it's verse 3 verse 3 down to the end of verse 5 four stanzas we're going to stand to sing American how they need us to wonder

My heart in light, the rose of dew, he heals thy shoes abhor.

To practice wicked works with men, but for iniquity, a river hell if it's my taste, let thee not satisfy.

Let him, the righteous, his life, it shall a kindest deed.

[27 : 01] Let him, the true, I shall let ground a precious oil to thee.

Such mighty shall not break my head, for yet the time shall fall.

When I in the calamity, to God may for him shall.

We're going to turn together to the first of our readings, to 2 Samuel and chapter 11. Verse 27, the end of the chapter, verse 27.

And when the morning was over, David sent and brought Bathsheba to his house. And she became his wife and bore him a son.

[28 : 22] But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. I suppose that my first reaction to this passage has to be incredulity.

You read this passage, and this is one of the great advantages, of course, of doing a series like we've been doing in David.

You're able to trace the pattern, the story of David, all the way from the very beginning when he was anointed, and in the days of Saul when he was pursued by Saul, and how God had taken care of him, and how he had learned to trust in God for everything.

And you've traced him, you've watched him maturing over the years. And now this. You're actually wondering, is this the same person as we've been reading about?

Is this the same man? Have they got the name wrong? Have they got the kingdom wrong? Are we still talking about the same person as we were talking about earlier on?

[29 : 59] This was the man that God said was a man after his own heart. And now, up until now, there's every evidence of that very thing.

God has blessed him. He's given him the kingdom. He was the youngest in his family, the least likely to ever have become king. He was the shepherd. And yet, exactly what God had said would happen, did happen.

Even after that, God made his reign spectacularly successful. We read earlier on that in chapter 8, how he, and chapter 7, how he defeated Jerusalem, and made it the city of David.

And how battle after battle was won by God's help, specifically by God's help. The Lord gave him victory everywhere he went.

And now this. And what about the character of David? We've also seen how David was a kind man, an extraordinarily kind man.

[31 : 10] For example, we saw in chapter 9, how he expressed his kindness to a man who could easily have challenged his reign. This was the grandson of Saul, a man called Mephibosheth.

Mephibosheth. But instead of eliminating Mephibosheth, you remember how we saw that David wanted to show him kindness for the sake of his father, Jonathan. And how we saw that there was that special word, and we'll see it time and again, that word called Kezed, that David showed to Jonathan, rather Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son.

And he invited him to sit at his table, the very opposite from what you would have expected him to do. And the same was true for the king of Ammon, Hanan, his son, in chapter 10.

David wanted to show him kindness on the death of his father. So David is a kind man, wanting to show that kindness where you wouldn't expect him to.

But now this, where he arranges for one of his closest allies, someone who I believe actually was a friend of his, to be deliberately killed because of David's sexual indiscretion with his wife.

[32 : 35] The first, the second response must be one of fear. The first response was incredulity. Is this really the same man? It's really incredible how it could be the same man.

And what we're going to see is that this is the turning point in the fortunes of David. And that whilst David is forgiven by God when he repents, and by the way, we're going to take this in two parts.

Today, we're going to look at chapter 11 and how all of this took place. But next week, God willing, we'll look at how David is restored into a right relationship with the Lord.

In chapter 12, and in what this book doesn't tell us, but what the book of Psalms tells us, in Psalm 51, of how broken, how utterly devastated David became as a result of the guilt, of this sinfulness, being brought home to him by God's word.

We'll look at that, I hope, next week. I remember many years ago preaching on this in another place.

[33 : 53] And a dear old elder came to me. He knew I was going to preach on this chapter. And he said, make sure you leave room for mercy. And he was absolutely right.

We are going to leave room for mercy. We are going to talk about the mercy of God. It would be wrong not to, if we're going to follow all of this through, and not break at the end of chapter 11, because the story doesn't finish at the end of chapter 11.

God has the last word. And we'll see that God is a merciful God. But at the same time, on the outside, this actually was the turning point in the fortunes of David as a king.

This was the point at which things started to go wrong for him, which shows us that there are consequences to our actions. There are consequences to our actions.

And by the way, anything I say tonight is not going to be in any judgmental sense. Anything I say to you, I say to myself as well. We're all in this world together.

[35 : 02] We're all of the same sinful species. And that's why I say that the second thing that strikes me about this passage is fear.

This is a man after God's own heart, a man who is celebrated in the pages of the Bible for his righteousness and his faithfulness. After him, the kings who came after him, they were measured on the, on the, against David as being either like him or unlike him.

The kings that came after him, God said about them, they walked, they either walked in the ways of their father David, i.e. they did good or they did not walk in the ways of their father David.

So this man is a man after God's own heart. And yet, he fell spectacularly in this account.

This is the moment at which he falls. fear leads to recognition. It needs to recognition of myself in all of this.

[36 : 19] Nobody is immune to temptation. Temptation of the very worst kind. We are capable of any kind of sin.

I know that this is only one kind of sin. I were often told that. Oh, remember, remember that sexual sin is only one kind of sin. There are many kinds, but often that is, that is often said as a bit of an excuse, as a bit of a get out.

This is what we're told. And it's given to us in the detail here in order for us to recognize ourselves and how vulnerable we are.

That we are, whoever we are this evening, we are only one step away from disaster. The older I live in the Christian life, the more I go on in the Christian life, the more I'm aware of how utterly vulnerable I am.

One step, that's all, there is between me and disaster. There are things which I'm tempted by today that I wasn't tempted by in the past.

[37 : 32] Maybe you feel the same. Sometimes you think that when you're an older Christian, well, life will be a whole lot easier. That's not the case at all. Here David was now a maturing man.

And we saw many, many years ago when we're looking at the life of Solomon, how it was in his older age that he, that was the time when he fell. And it's interesting that he fell into exactly the same kind of sinful behavior or something that was very similar.

As an older man, there is never a moment that we can relax and say, well, that side of things is sorted. The New Testament tells us, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. if it can happen to David, it can happen to anyone.

And that is why our vulnerability is always, is always highlighted in the pages of the Bible. And that's why more than anything else, you and I need to hold fast to the Lord on a day-by-day basis.

[38 : 54] The third thing, the third impression that this passage makes on me is how ordinary things were at the very beginning of this day. Beware of the ordinary, beware of the mundane, beware of when things are going in their usual pattern.

Because that, to me, more than anything else, is what strikes me. If you had gone to David that morning when he got out of his bed and said to him, how are you doing, David?

What's doing today? The same kind of thing as we ask each other, what's doing today? What have you got planned for the day? David would have said, well, nothing much. It's an ordinary day. He had remained in his palace while Joab had gone off to war with the rest of the troops.

Now, I know what you're going to say. Ah, that's where it started. David should have been with the rest of the army. I used to believe that. In fact, I preached it that the reason that this all started was because David wasn't where he should have been.

I'm not so sure anymore. Because in chapter 10, David was also in Jerusalem. It appeared to be that the pattern of war was that David would send out Joab, his commanding officer, and the bulk of the army and they would fight the most part of the war until the victory was.

[40 : 25] And then David, with his chosen men, would then go out for the last part of the war. And I believe that that was happening here. That's what was happening here.

So we're not to read too much. What I'm saying is that there's enough in this. We don't need to read too much into it. There's enough to appall us. But what is very clear is that it was an ordinary day for David.

A day when they were at war, albeit they were at war, but a day when things were surprisingly mundanely normal for David.

You know what? That's the most dangerous moment in the life of the Christian when things are going just as usual because that is the moment when temptation strikes.

And remember that behind temptation we have an enemy who will use any means at his disposal to bring us down all the way through this passage. Can you not see him?

[41 : 23] He's invisible. No mention is made of him, but you can see him as sure as anything. He's working away in the background to create the conditions in David's heart and in his body and in his mind and to create the conditions so that David, and the problem is that David falls for it.

We too have that same enemy that seeks to destroy us and destroy our witness for the Lord Jesus. Up until now, we have seen how David points to Jesus, haven't we?

I've made a point of recognizing in every single chapter how the character of David points us to Jesus. not any longer.

I can't do that in this chapter. And that's of course what happens. That's the great tragedy when a Christian falls. You can no longer see how they witness for Jesus.

If we are consistent, if we live consistently godly Christian lives, I'm talking to myself, then people will see Jesus in us. They will see how we reflect the life that God has given us in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is a life that glorifies God.

[42 : 38] But if we don't, if we fail, and if we walk into sin, you know people talk about falling into sin. I know what they mean.

It can happen so quickly. It can also happen very slowly. When we allow sin to creep into our consciousness and into our hearts, perhaps before we even know it, and find ourselves drifting farther and farther and farther away from what we should do.

But when we become inconsistent, then Christ will no longer be glorified in our lives. And that's the greatest tragedy of all, that you can no longer recognize up until now.

We've been able to recognize he's not perfect. We've never pretended that he is perfect, and yet we've always been able to recognize Jesus in David.

Not so in chapter 11. What a tragedy. What a warning. How scary is this chapter?

[43 : 47] And that's why it's in the Bible. Because there's nothing wrong with healthy fear. There is nothing wrong with reading a chapter like this and being devastated by it, and being shown what we really are at root in ourselves.

Well, we've seen David, for David, this was an ordinary day. Joab had gone off to war. It happened late one afternoon when David rose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house. Now, he may have been idle, but he may also have been taking a legitimate rest in the heat of the day. You know, people read far too much into this, I think, sometimes.

I don't want to criticize someone who takes a different view of the passage, but sometimes I think we read things into the Bible that are not there.

I want to just confine ourselves to the evidence that's there. And I'll tell you what else is not there.

People say that Bathsheba was parading herself. There's no evidence of that whatsoever.

[44 : 52] she was just doing something normal. She was washing in the privacy of what she thought was the privacy of her own confines.

Unbeknown to her, of course, David was on the roof of his palace from where he could see her. So far, no problem until the seed of temptation began to grow in David's heart and in his mind, because that's always where it begins, in our heart and in our mind, in our imagination.

And until that first look became the second look, the prolonged look, the first look is not sinful. We can't help the first look.

You can't help the second look. And you can help the thoughts that emerge as our own sinful imagination grows and becomes convoluted and becomes a compulsion and becomes an obsession that in this case led to David taking further action.

His first action was to find out who she was. It was absolutely clear that she was a married woman. Not quite sure how right it would have been if she hadn't been a married woman.

[46 : 21] There's a whole thing in the Old Testament of polygamy, isn't there? It's quite clear that David had several wives already. That's one of the things that God said to him. Look at all the wives I've given you already and you want more.

You want someone that doesn't belong to you, someone who's loved by another man. that was one of God's indictments against him through Nathan the prophet. We'll read about that next week. As if God hadn't given him everything that he needed and everyone that he needed.

when the mind starts following a sinful path there is no limit and there is no end to where that mind can go.

And I say that and again I'm talking to myself to remind us of how important our thinking is. What are we giving our minds to?

What are we allowing to creep into our minds? What kind of imagination and fantasy do we give our minds to? Because that's where it all begins.

[47 : 32] In our hearts. The heart of man is desperately wicked and deceitful. We need to recognize that even as God's people. We need to recognize how badly we can go wrong and it starts here in our thinking.

But that wasn't the end of the story either because David went further because David was a powerful man. He was able to arrange things and that's what he did. He arranged for Bathsheba to come to him.

We don't know what took place. We don't know the conversation that took place. We're not given any other detail. All we know is that he sent for us. He came to him.

He slept with her. He sent her away. There's something actually quite cold and brutal in all of this isn't it? He took her. That's the way it's put it. He took her. Some people suggest that Bathsheba must be culpable in all of this.

Maybe she was but we're not told that. All the evidence in this chapter points to David as being the one who was to blame. It's quite clear that he used his influence. I'm not sure whether there was force involved or whatever.

[48 : 41] We're not told but one thing is for sure. He was the guy in charge. He was the man responsible for what took place that day. He was the man who God held accountable.

He'd sent her home again. Presumably there was some time between the event itself and her discovering that she was expecting a baby.

When she discovered that she sent word to David. I am pregnant and that was the moment. That was the bombshell. That was the moment in which panic set in.

What was he going to do? He could have denied it. Could have denied any knowledge of it. That would have meant that she would have been accused of adultery.

and she would have been put to death. So I suppose something has to be said that David didn't deny it.

[49 : 50] But of course I suppose he knew himself that she would have told her husband and her husband who was close. We'll see that in a few moments time what place that her husband had in the king's army in 2 Samuel chapter 23.

It tells us that he was part of David's SAS. there would have been the deepest of distrust between him and David and David couldn't afford for that to happen.

And so plan A was put into effect which was to call Uriah from the battlefield and to persuade him to take a night off so that he could pretend so that David could persuade him to go back to his house and have relations with his wife so that everybody would think that the baby was his.

But Uriah was having none of it because Uriah took his position seriously. It appears far more seriously than David was taking his position.

Uriah refused because out of a point of principle he made it clear to David even thank you very much for your kind offer your majesty but not tonight because I can't point my conscience won't allow me to go to my house and assume a normal life while all of my fellow soldiers are risking their lives in battle.

[51 : 16] I can't do it. I just can't do it. On a point of principle the Lord will hold me accountable if I'm not with the rest of my fellow soldiers. What a rebuke that must have been to David.

Here is a man acting on a point of principle out of conscience. Where was David's conscience? Where is ours?

When we act in a way that is inconsistent with what we believe and what we and what we profess. Our conscience is the voice that God has placed within us and conscience together with God's word needs to be our guiding force.

God's word controls our conscience but the conscience is there nonetheless. tragedy is that when our conscience screams at us we still take the opposite course of action.

How can that be? There's no logic to it whatsoever. There was no logic to what David did. This was sheer blind passion which took over David in a moment of madness and affected him for the rest of his days.

[52 : 29] once again David tried to get Uriah to persuade him to go back to his house to assume a normal life. He even made him drunk.

It looks as if David is prepared to go to any length to try and twist things to accomplish his own sordid plans but it's not going to work because God says be sure your sin will find you out.

That's what he says and that's why a life of sin is a dead end. Ultimately it's going to catch up with us. And if ever there was a chapter that demonstrated just that it's this awful experience in the life of David.

Plan A has therefore failed. He's not been able to persuade Uriah to go back to his house so plan B has to come into effect in which he sends a letter to Joab with Uriah and the letter says make sure that Uriah is put in the heat of the battle.

And then there's these chilling words in the letter he wrote this is just so unbelievable in the letter he wrote set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting and then have you ever noticed this and then draw back from him.

[53 : 53] what an act of treachery. Uriah was not just one of your foot soldiers.

He was amongst David's elite squad. He was in the SAS. If you want to know more about that you read the 23rd chapter of 2nd Samuel where 30 men who were the bravest the strongest the men who were prepared to go where others wouldn't go.

They were prepared to do what others were too scared to do. They were prepared to take risks that other people were just too fragile to take.

These men were hand picked. They were chosen men. They were a key element in the army of David. Now you can imagine that in any squad like that there would be a special bond between these men.

A special sense of brotherhood where one man would look out for the other one and where in the heat of battle the one thing you never did was to betray your brother soldier.

[55 : 02] It just went against all the instincts of warfare. If one man falls then you take the risk and you go and pick him up and you help him to get to safety again.

You support him. You reinforce him. You help him and you never leave him alone. That's what they did. This poor man is in the heat of this battle and all the best the most valiant the bravest this was the elite against the elite the elite of Israel against the elite of the Ammonites and so this was the mother of all battles and at a moment and it must have been pre-planned Joab says to his men retreat but he didn't say to Uriah pull back and Uriah looks around him and he sees that he's alone isn't that awful and all of this is orchestrated by a man after God's own heart there is nothing that we are incapable of doing trust me nothing don't ever ever say oh well

I would never do that we are capable of the greatest treachery the greatest betrayal we're capable of immorality we're capable of violence we're capable of deception we're capable of anything because the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked and of course you know what happened after that news came normally David would have been furious that his men got so close to the wall where they were fighting normally David would have blamed Joab for having made some ill-founded decisions and he would have held him accountable but Joab said when you tell him all of this all of these blunders that we've made in which some of our men have been lost then make sure you tell him that Uriah the Hittite is dead that will sort him out Joab knew fine well what was going on he knew and David had to go along with him he heard the message and he said to Joab well the war takes one man and another so be it we'll just have to live with our losses but inside there was a deep sense of nothingness and emptiness and solitude because whatever David did to try and patch up and to try and cover up what he had done he could never cover it from the Lord the thing that David did the original language tells us it was evil in the sight of God we'll see

next week how David copes with the guilt with the emptiness with the solitude how he first of all goes into denial acts as if business is normal puts everything out of his mind and it becomes as if nothing has happened but that's not good enough for

God God is going to seek him out and David is going to have to face himself because be sure your sins will find you out now like I say I'm not saying a word to you tonight that I'm not saying to myself everything applies to me it applies to elders members adherents we're all in this together and we've seen like I say how David in his life points us to the Lord Jesus and I think I said before in chapter 11 that all changes and we can't see anything of Jesus in this chapter well in a strange kind of way that is true but there is another way in which we can see Jesus in the opposite sense to what's happening here what we've been seeing in the life of

[59 : 55] David is how he in his character in so far as he lives up to a man after God's own heart he points us in the direction of Jesus that's what we've seen but here he is not acting as a man after God's own heart which means that we can't put our trust in any ordinary man no matter how good he is no matter how up until now he's been faithful to the Lord and he's been responsible for some of the most beautiful beautiful items of praise we sing them today Lord thee my God I'll praise with all my heart the Lord is my light and my salvation of whom shall I be afraid God is my shepherd the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want he makes me down to lie in pastures green he leadeth me the quiet waters by these were all written by the same man and yet his feet were clay we can't trust in David because he was only a man what we need tonight is David's son and I don't mean

Solomon I mean David's ultimate son David's final son the one who came into the world to seek and to save those who were lost and the Jesus who was the son of David and the son of God who was a man truly after God's own heart in so far as he fulfilled that character character but Jesus was always and perfectly and ultimately and supremely a man after God's own heart God could always at every moment in time say about

Jesus this is my son in whom I am well pleased this son of David will never go wrong he will never fall he will never let me down and he will never let you down either that's what qualifies him to be my savior and that's why there's no use saying that I can be right with God by following the example of the good men and the good women in the Bible I can't because they all fell at one point or another and but what Jesus says is come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest he promises us salvation in his death on the cross by which he paid the penalty for our sin and in his resurrection by which he promises us everlasting life so where David failed where David failed to resist the temptation and his compulsion his foolish foolish compulsion

Jesus succeeded when he was tempted in the wilderness he was victorious over the evil one and every time the evil one attempted to bring him down as he did Jesus was victorious over that temptation that's what qualifies him to be my savior and that's why I can go to him with confidence and ask him for the forgiveness that I need because of my sin and my failure in thoughts and words and deeds and I know that you can too because he came to bring us that forgiveness in which our sin is cleansed once and for all meanwhile we have a life to live in this world as God's people a life in which we have to be very careful a life in which we ask by what means shall a young man learn his way to purify what's the answer by living according to the word make sure the word the bible has the central place in your life make sure you stay close to the lord every day even when life is mundane and ordinary that's the day when in a moment's notice we could fall but there's nothing like being aware of the danger we're in to make sure that we don't fall let's bow our heads in prayer father in heaven we give thanks for the warning that the word gives and we pray that you will bless that word to each one of us we confess our sinfulness before you we confess oh lord that the seed lies in every single one of us and we ask that you will make us watchful and make us wary of what we are potentially capable of our father in heaven we pray that for where we have fallen we're conscious of having fallen in so many different ways and lord we want to confess our sinfulness before you and we ask lord that as david found the forgiveness that we are still to see we pray that we will find that same mercy in the lord jesus christ amen we're going to sing together in closing in psalm 66 and that's on page 84 it's the sing psalms version page number 66 and we're going to sing from 16 down to 20 the last three verses of the psalm the tune is denis psalm number 66 come all who fear our god i'll tell what he has done i cried out to him with my mouth his praise was on my tongue if i cherished sin the lord would not have heard but surely when i prayed to him god listened to my words 16 to the end of the psalm 66 on page 84 and we'll stand to sing from all who fear our god i'll tell what he has done i cried out to him with my love his praise was on my tongue if i had

cherished

sin the lord would not have heard but surely when i prayed to him god listen to my word forever god be praised who hears me from above he has not turned away my prayer forget from me here is love and now may the grace of our lord and saviour jesus christ the love of god the father and the communion and fellowship of the holy spirit rest on and abide with each one of us both now and always amen a peace you