

Accept What God Allows

Our Focus:

When God speaks to your situation, what do you do? When God acts on a problem, and His actions are not to your liking, what do you do? When you've done all that you can do, and God does what He wills, what do you do? The answer is simple: ***You accept what God allows!*** God is the Creator. He's omnipotent, omni-present, and omniscient. He's sovereign, and it's His providence. When God does something, He knows what He's doing. Whether He chooses to share His reasons with you, or whether He doesn't, you can only accept what He allows.

Scripture Setting

2 Samuel 12:15b-23 NKJV

15b. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill.
16. David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.

17. So the elders of his house arose and went to him, to raise him up from the ground. But he would not, nor did he eat food with them.

18. Then on the seventh day it came to pass that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, "Indeed, while the child was alive, we spoke to him and he would not heed our voice. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He may do some harm!"

19. When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead."

20. So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes, and he went into the house of the Lord and worshipped. Then he went to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate.

21. Then his servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food."

22. And he said, "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?'

23. But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”

Lesson Outline:

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Summary

Introduction

The account of David and Bathsheba is probably familiar to you. It is the story of a disastrous affair and its implications on the house of David. Some of the things that happened in David's family were the results of his actions with Bathsheba and Uriah. The prelude to our lesson's text is 2 Samuel 11:1 through 12:15a. This story has been repeated in the lives of many people since it happened. Men have sought for that which was forbidden to them, murdered to achieve it, and tried to cover up their actions in order to keep the truth from being discovered. It's the same old story of abuse of power, disobedience to God's word, and evil conspiracies. It is hoped that by learning from David's mistakes, they can be avoided in future lives. In this lesson, you will gain insights into the things which make you spiritually vulnerable. There is a way that seems right to men, but we know the end of those ways (Proverbs 14:12): death! Our lesson is not overly concerned with the wrong things David did. He repented of His ways and God forgave Him of his sin. Here, we are concerned with the right things he did in the midst of a grievous situation. Learn from them!

I. God's Actions

A. Displeasing God

When Uriah died in battle, David assumed a happy ending to his dilemma of Bathsheba's pregnancy by him. But it was the beginning of problems because "*the thing*

that David had done displeased the Lord" (2 Samuel 11:27). It's probably a sure bet that the gossip at the palace was that David had gotten away with his adulterous affair and arranged murder of Uriah. But God not only noticed David's actions, He took exception to them.

God sees all that you do, whether it is done in secret or in the open. How you live is of great concern for the Lord. No one can disobey God's laws with impunity and prosper. God has anointed and blessed you; He has prospered and saved you; He has forgiven your sin and has had mercy on you. You owe God much more than you can pay. You cannot abuse God's privileges and disregard His word as though you have a right to do so. There will be a penalty to pay.

It is good that David repented of his sin; still, there were consequences for his actions. Nathan told David, "*because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die*" (2 Samuel 12:14). By sinning, you give the enemies of God an occasion to speak evil of Him. They reason that if God were so good, why would His people sin as they do. God does not take your actions lightly. Even when you repent of your sins, and God forgives you; you must live with what the sin brought into existence. God is a God who cares so much about you that He comes up against your sins so that you can be brought back into a righteous relationship with Him.

B. Suffering For Other's Sake

"The Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill" (v.15b).

This statement causes a lot of problems for some readers. Punishing the child for what David did seems to be wrong. But look at it from Nathan and David's point of view. It is clear from reading the story that whatever the physical illness that afflicted the child, both Nathan and David saw it as connected with David's sin and did not question God about it as some of us have done.

Even in today's society, children suffer for what their parents do. The effects of your sins do not stop when you die, and the effects of your sins are not limited to just you. Parents who neglect or abuse their children can cause them great pain and suffering, and so the younger generation suffers for the sins of their parents. People who practice sin as a way of life can influence their children, their friends and neighbors, and those for whom, in some capacity, they are responsible. They, in turn, are influenced to do the same thing, thus committing the same sin and receiving the guilt that accompanies it. Spousal abuse is usually committed by those who were raised in families where the same thing occurred. Children who were abused usually abuse their children. Nations who build hatred against another nation's equivalent generation have their children fight battles against each other. Just look at the Middle East today. The younger generation suffers and dies for the sins of the older. Here, in the United States, one generation foolishly spends its resources, building a national debt, and another generation has to pay for it. One generation sets an evil moral tone by practicing racism, class distinctions, and corporate greed, and the next generation is affected by it. One generation rejects God, and the next generation is influenced by that disobedience, thereby, inheriting the wages of unrighteousness. So although God forbid the use of the "*sour grapes*" proverb (Ezekiel 18:2), your sins do affect others. David didn't complain that God was unfair to the child. Nathan didn't protest the child being struck with illness. They both, and you should too, realized that our sin does affect others.

II. David's Actions

A. Prayer

D*avid therefore pleaded with God for the child” (v.16).* David was a man who was used to praying to God. He knew that God answered prayers. He didn't try to rationalize his sin, he didn't blame his environment, his age, or Bathsheba. He acknowledged his actions and asked God for forgiveness. He was relieved that God had forgiven him for his sin: *“And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die’”* (2 Samuel 12:13b). Now the sense of guilt, that he was the possible cause of his son's illness, got to him. So he prayed, fasted, and wept.

When you realize you have done something that displeases the Lord, your only recourse is to ask for forgiveness, and upon receiving it, praise God for His mercy. God is a forgiving God, and He wants to forgive you. God is about restoration (Jeremiah 24:7; 35:15). He wants His children to be obedient to Him (Exodus 19:5; Psalm 18:44; Zechariah). But if any should sin, they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous” (1 John 2:1). Jesus will appear along side you and help you in your desire to repent. His blood has redeemed you, and He applies His blood to your sin, thereby, releasing your debt to the Father.

Prayer is vital to your relationship with God. You are to bring to God all the concerns that come up in your life. This is done by prayer. Whatever you request God to do for you, or anyone you know, just go to Him in prayer. He answers prayer: *“And this is the confidence we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him”* (1 John 5:14, 15). God does answer prayer. God answered David's prayer even though it was not the answer for which David had hoped.

B. Fasting, Weeping, Mourning

A*nd David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground” (v.16b).* David loved this child with his whole heart. He went into mourning and showed all the markings of self-abasement. He refused to eat, covered himself with sackcloth and ashes, and went to sleep on the floor. He did this as a prayer of intercession for the child, hoping the Lord would let the child live.

God's people fast to seek His favor or deliverance. These fasts are always accompanied by prayer and are intended to show the sincerity of the one praying. Fasting is seen as a means of strengthening prayer. When God's people turn to Him with fasting, they show the sincerity of their desire. They deny the body physical sustenance so as to strengthen the spirituality of the soul. To weep is to express remorse for misdeeds or sin. David was sorry for his sin (2 Samuel 12:13). His weeping was an audible grieving over the distress in which he found himself because of his sin. It was part of the act of repentance.

“Mourning” is an outward behavior. It includes the shedding of tears. Although God can see into your heart, the idea is the realization of the depths to which you have sunk in departure from Him. It symbolizes the sincere regret for the depths to which you have sunk, and is the open display of that regret. So it was with David.

III. David's Reaction

A. God May Be Gracious

And he said, *‘While the child was alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, ‘Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’’* (v. 22). God is sovereign. David recognized that God *“will be gracious to whom I will be gracious”* (Exodus 33:19). It was David’s hope that God would not only forgive his sin, but allow the child to live.

When you go to God in prayer, you have the assurance that He is a gracious and merciful God (2 Chronicles 30:9). If you have sinned, He will forgive you upon your confession and repentance. However, God will do what He will do. You must remember that sin bears consequences. That’s the reason the Bible teaches us to *“sin not”* (1 Corinthians 15:34; Ephesians 4:26; 1 John 2:1). Even though God will forgive sin, He may not abate the consequences of that sin.

B. Accept It and Turn It Loose

But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? (v.23). When David’s son died, David accepted it without complaint and went back to living. He washed, anointed himself, put on clean clothes, went to the House of the Lord to worship, and came home and ate (v.20).

Everyone will suffer a loss in their life. Everyone will experience hardship, disappointment, and grief in their life. Everyone will experience frustration, illness, and wrong in their life. So you need to learn the lesson that David showed us in this story. You must let go of what you cannot change. That is one of the most challenging lessons for modern day Christians to learn.

What we learn from David is that when we have done all that we can do, and it’s out of our hands; we must accept it as fact and turn it loose. Too often we further complicate situations because we don’t accept what God allows and move on. Whatever the situation, whatever the problem, whatever the desire, life goes on. When God has spoken, either by words, deeds, or non-action, it’s over. Whether He says yes, no, or wait, accept it and go on living. We must accept His will and move on.

Summary

In our lesson, we learned that sin has its consequences. It would be better for us not to sin, but being human, we sin. God, being the gracious and merciful God that He is, forgives us of our sin. Yet, we may have to face serious consequences for our sin.

When we’ve prayed, fasted, and mourned to the Lord, and His answer comes; no matter what form the answer comes in, it is His answer. We must accept the fact that God has spoken; and we must realize our inability to do anything further but to rejoin the living and to keep on serving God.

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