

(2 Samuel) a Not-So-Sudden Fall

by David Guzik

David's failure to follow God's plan for marriage and his lack of romantic restraint led to his downfall and adultery.

Duration: 33:43

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:1

Topics: "Moral Accountability", "Spiritual Vigilance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the tragic events described in Second Samuel chapter 11. He emphasizes the importance of learning from God's word rather than from bitter experiences. The preacher warns against adultery and sexual immorality, urging those involved to stop immediately and seek God's mercy. He also encourages believers to be vigilant and avoid indulging in ungodly passions. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the congregation to be obedient to God's word and to walk in the Spirit.

Transcript

Second Samuel chapter 11, we come to what may sadly be the most well-known chapter in the book because it describes the greatest tragedy in the book. G. Campbell Morgan, the great Bible teacher of a hundred years ago, he said, in the whole of the Old Testament literature, there is no chapter more tragic or full of solemn and searching warning than this. We're only going to take a look at the first five verses of this chapter this morning, but believe me, there's plenty in these first five verses to instruct us and to warn us.

There's a lot of different ways you can learn things in life. And when it comes to the Christian life, you can read God's word, understand his counsels, take them seriously and learn from that. Or you can learn from bitter experience, the wisdom and the ways of God.

May I tell you that it's better to listen to the word of the Lord and not learn through bitter experience. Verse one, it happened in the spring of the year 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 people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

In second Samuel chapter 10, the king of the Ammonites died. And when the son of the former king rose to power, David felt a sympathy towards this man because his father had just died. And so David sent emissaries, ambassadors from the kingdom of Israel over to the kingdom of the Ammonites to bring a

message of comfort and cheer to this young king who had just had his father pass away.

Well, under the wicked advice from ungodly men surrounding him, the new king of the Ammonites thought that David sent spies to search out his land, and he treated these Israelite ambassadors disgracefully and sent them back to the kingdom of Israel. And everybody knew the Ammonites knew it. David knew it.

Everybody knew it, that this was a horrible slap in the face to Israel was really a declaration of war. And so they readied themselves for war. And David didn't go out to battle against the Ammonites.

He sent Joab and the army of the mighty men. And we saw last week how God preserved Joab and the army of the mighty men because a great mercenary army from Syria came against them and God delivered them. But Joab and the army of the mighty men did not win a decisive victory.

David led the army of Israel against that mercenary army from Syria, and David and his army defeated the Syrian mercenaries. But what about the Ammonites? They had not been defeated. So here in chapter 11, David sends out Joab, doesn't say the army of the mighty men, but we would assume that's who it was.

And they went to go to battle, but David stayed behind. He shouldn't have. It was the time of year when the kings go out to war, but David stayed behind.

He should have been out at the battle, but he wasn't. You know, God was trying to tell David in second Samuel, chapter 10, you need to be at the battle when Joab and the army of the mighty men went out to battle without David. They were preserved, but they didn't win a decisive victory.

The victory only came when David led the army. Do you hear God telling David you need to be out of battle, David didn't listen. And he stayed behind.

Of course, this is going to set the stage for this great tragedy of adultery in David's life. You know, the principle from Galatians 5:16 really rings true here. It says walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Isn't it amazing that when you're doing what you should be doing, you just don't have time to do what you shouldn't be doing? And for many of us, that's our great problem. We're not employed in advancing God's kingdom. We're not busy about our father's business.

And when you're not busy about your father's business, it's amazing how easily you can slip into doing the devil's business. You know, Joab and the army of Israel were laying siege to the city of Rabba. Satan was laying siege to the heart of David.

And it's sad to tell you that David would fall before the city of the Ammonites did. Nevertheless. It's wrong to think that all this trouble in David's life began when he failed to go out to battle, when he should have.

I want you to know that the trouble began before that long before that. You see, this was not the beginning of the events that ended up in adultery and murder. It began when David showed his disregard for God's plan for marriage many years before this.

When did David show his disregard for God's plan for marriage? When he started taking many wives. Now, David, at this point, had four or five, six wives. I'm sorry, I didn't get an exact count for you this morning.

Let's say at least four, maybe as many as six. That practice of adding wives showed two things. It showed, number one, a lack of romantic restraint.

Number two, it showed an indulgence of his passions that seed germinated within David for 20, 25 years, and now it's about to bear bitter fruit. David didn't squash out that seed within him. He didn't keep diligent, watch over it and eliminate it.

And I want you to see that staying home from battle merely provided an opportunity for this long standing lack of romantic restraint and indulgence of passion to display itself. There may be no other interest in your life that you might get involved in an adulterous relationship with. There may be nothing like that right now, but I'm telling you now in the name of the Lord.

That if there is a lack of romantic restraint in your life. And if you continually indulge your passions, you'll find yourself there before long. Do you know what I mean by a lack of romantic restraint? Friends, at some time in your life, either it has happened or it will happen, but I would virtually guarantee it.

At some time in your life, you will be romantically attracted to somebody that you have no business being romantically attracted to. And you know what you have to do? You have to restrain that. You just do period.

David didn't. He just kept marrying women. It also shows an indulgence of passions.

Friends, God has an arena where you don't have to have any kind of romantic restraint. God has an arena where you can indulge your passions. That's called marriage outside of marriage.

You restrict your romantic, you restrain your romantic interest outside of marriage. You do not indulge your passions. That's what David didn't get through in his head.

Well, let's look at how it developed here in verse two. Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof, he saw a woman bathing and the woman was very beautiful to behold.

Well, it's actually afternoon time. I know that in our new King James version, it says evening. Think of afternoon or late afternoon.

David was taking a nap. There's two reasons why people do that. First of all, in that part of the world, and it's sometimes common in warmer climates that people take a nap in the afternoon.

Secondly, you know, sometimes an afternoon nap just feels so good, doesn't it? For some of you, that's your Sunday practice after church. You go home and you take a nap and man, a Sunday afternoon nap. Just wait till after service to begin your nap is my only request for you.

The David is just taking one of those afternoon naps and. It gets up and he's walking along, it says on the roof, we would think of it as a balcony, the balcony was kind of on the roof, but he's walking around and what does he see? He sees a woman bathing. Now, there's little doubt that this woman who later we know by the name Bathsheba, she was acting immodestly.

Ladies, you tell me. Did Bathsheba know that her bath could be seen from the king's balcony? Absolutely, she knew. You don't have to be a Bible scholar to know that.

Just ask any woman. She knew. She knew that her bath could be seen from the king's balcony.

And yet she did this. Maybe she didn't know that the king would be out there, probably not, but she certainly knew it was a possibility. Now, let me make it plain, any immodesty on Bathsheba's part did not excuse Davidson.

But still, she's responsible for what she did wrong. And let me just make it brief and to the point. Ladies, when you dressed immodestly, it can be an occasion for sin.

It's sin on your part, and it can be an occasion for sin in somebody else. Ladies, you need to dress modestly. First Timothy 2.9 says that the women should adorn themselves in modest apparel with propriety and moderation.

Oh, well, pastor, what are you talking? We should all dress like the Amish. No, I don't know every detail of what modesty is and isn't in women. Let me give you an easy solution.

Do you want to know if you dress immodestly? Why don't you ask some other women? Don't ask men. Don't be stupid about this. You go find some godly women that you respect and you ask them, do I dress immodestly? They'll tell you.

So women need to dress modestly, just as the scriptures say. But David saw Bathsheba in the midst of her immodest appearance. It says right there in verse two that he saw a woman bathing.

Let me make this very clear that David's sin was not in seeing Bathsheba. I don't think he was expecting to see her. I don't think he planned to see her.

The sin was not in seeing an immodest woman. You know how it is in our day and age. You can't look very far without seeing an immodest thing in front of you without seeing an alluring image.

The issue is, what are you going to do with it when you see it? David's sin was in choosing to keep his eyes on an alluring image after the sight came before his eyes. If something is before your eyes, you can choose to either set your eyes upon it or take your eyes and your mind off of it. And Christians, men especially, but not only restricted to men, of course, Christians must learn to never let their eyes or their mind rest on an alluring image, except for what belongs to them in their marriage.

And I say belongs not in some inappropriate possessive sense. I mean, in the sense that the scriptures talk about it. You know, the scripture says that in the Christian marriage, that the husband belongs to the wife and the wife belongs to the husband.

That's an alluring image that God says that's for you. Everything else is not for you. And so you do not let your eyes rest on any other alluring image.

I like how one author put it. He said your eyes have to bounce off of that alluring image. You just don't let your eyes rest on it.

You just it just you just don't rest it on it. You just you look at something else. You put your mind on something else.

David did not do it. And this was a source of ruin to him. Now, this is to say nothing about how a Christian should never seek out alluring images.

That's that's beyond question. And if your Christian life is in bondage to this, you need victory. You need to get together with other godly men in our church who are finding victory over such things.

And you need to stop excusing it or stop saying, well, you know, everybody does it or this or that. No, you need to get real about this and say that it's wrecking not only your marriage, but your walk with God and God can give you great victory over it. There's not a single person in in the great to say to say there's not a single person in this room who has to be in bondage to sin.

Not a single person. That Jesus Christ has given us power and strength to live in victory. Now, we need help.

And there are other godly men in this church who will help you to do that. So David is looking at Bathsheba and you know what he's doing in his heart. He's lusting after her.

He's lusting. You say, David, how are you lusting? David, you've got five or six wives. Lust after any of them.

Why are you lusting after her? Isn't it sobering to consider that David's many wives did not satisfy his lust? Do you know why? Because you can't satisfy these lusts of the flesh. They're insatiable. You know, it's like a bottomless pit that never gets filled up.

They're primarily rebellious assertions of self. You see, it wasn't so much that David wanted Bathsheba. It's that he could not be satisfied with what God gave him.

And let me lay it right out on the line. If you're not satisfied with what God has given you. Husbands, wives.

If you're not satisfied with what God has given you, that's your problem. Don't you go around saying that it's your spouse's problem. So you, you think that your wife isn't compassionate enough.

And so, you know, I, you know, I, I should have somebody more compassionate. Isn't that what God wants for me? And so you leave your wife and you find, you know, person A and they're more compassionate. Well, what don't you think that somebody else isn't going to come along? Who's even more compassionate than person A. Is that how we do marriage? Well, when there's a quality that's insufficient in our spouse, we just go find it.

But then, well, when that isn't good enough, then we just trade out again. Here's the principle, folks. If one wife isn't enough, then a thousand won't be enough because the problems with you.

I have absolute scriptural foundation for saying that because it tragically worked out that way in the life of David's son, Solomon. Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Enough is enough.

Huh? Do you think Solomon was still satisfied with all that? Not on your life. Do you think after the first hundred, you'd be satisfied? No. Friends, if one isn't enough, a thousand won't be enough because the problems with you.

It's not with your spouse. You know, in general, and not to get too far off the field, in general, this is the greatest problem that my wife and I see when we counsel other couples. The absolute greatest problem to marriages.

The greatest problem in marriages is thinking that the problem is with your spouse. In life, I've seen so many times in marriage counseling where you get a couple together and all they're doing is pointing fingers at each other. We know we can't do anything for that couple.

Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Nothing will change in your marriage until you say the problems with me.

If your prayer is God bless me and change my spouse, nothing is going to change in your marriage until you turn that around. Lord, change me and bless my spouse. It says also there in verse two that the woman was very beautiful to behold.

I don't doubt it. The Bible does not understate these things. You can count on it.

Bathsheba was a knockout. But don't think for a moment that that is why David fell. That wasn't it, folks.

You know, when your heart is turned towards the Lord. It doesn't mean that, you know, some great temptation will come along and that will make you fall. The problem is your heart isn't turned towards the Lord.

David's heart had been prepared to stumble at this very point. The strength of the temptation isn't so much in how alluring the object is. The strength of the temptation is in the condition of your own heart.

And for example, who is tempted more severely, Joseph or David? I think Joseph was tempted more severely than this. But Joseph resisted. Why? Well, the temptation was greater, but his heart was more passionate after God at this point.

You see, David looked at Bathsheba and he said beauty. God looked at this whole situation, he said it was ugly. You know, the pleasures of sin, they deceive us.

They deceive us like bait obscures the hook. And so, wow, that's nice looking bait. No, it's a hook.

Can't you see it? You see, we've got to call it what God calls. He calls it sin. We want to say affair.

God says adultery. We want to say love. God says lust.

We want to say sexy. God says sin. We want to say romantic.

But God says ruin. We want to say destiny. God says destruction.

That's how it lays out, folks. So look at what David does in verse three. So David sent and inquired about the woman and someone said, is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And this was another dangerous step in David's downward progression.

It was wrong for him to keep his eyes on Bathsheba. It was wrong for him to lust after her in his heart. But when he actually did something to pursue the temptation that puts it into a whole nother arena, he could have ended this whole temptation by leaving the scene at that time, even after entertaining the temptation of well, but instead he put himself into a more tempting situation.

But even in this, God was merciful to David. Do you see the mercy of God in verse three? David hears what this is Bathsheba. First of all, it's the daughter of Eliam.

Well, who's Eliam? Eliam was one of David's mighty men, a trusted friend and associate of David. David, you're not just sinning against Bathsheba. You would sin against this trusted and valued associate of yours.

How can you do such a thing? Bathsheba was the granddaughter of Ahithophel, one of David's trusted counselors and associates. The guy worked on David's own staff. Are you going to do this against the granddaughter of Ahithophel? Come on, David.

Now, not that it wouldn't have been wrong for David to do it against any woman, but how much worse it is against the daughter of a trusted man who would lay down his life for you. How much worse is it against the granddaughter of your own associate, your own counselor? And then they say even more mercifully, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Uriah the Hittite was one of David's mighty men.

David, this man would lay down his life for you. He's out on the field of battle right now for your sake. And you know what David did instead of taking this warning from the Lord, instead of, oh, how could I sin in such a way? Look at who this woman is.

Now, instead of doing that, Uriah the Hittite, he's away at battle. I can get away with this. What a horrible, horrible thought that is from the devil.

I can get away from this. I can get away with this, I should say. He should have received the news of the woman's identity as a warning, but instead he pursued it even more sinfully.

Man, her husband's gone away on a long business trip. Wow, this is great. Nobody will ever know.

One more thing before we look at verse four, David committed adultery in his heart up on the roof. Now he knows that he has the opportunity to commit adultery in practice and friends. Adultery in the heart is bad.

It's sin. But make no mistake about it. Adultery in practice is far worse.

And I say this because sometimes the devil wants to deceive people at this very point. They remember Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount about the phenomenon of adultery in the heart and how bad it is and where the devil deceives people is to say, and maybe you've had this whispered in your ear. Well, you know, you've already committed adultery in your heart.

Why not just go ahead? Friends, that is a lie from the devil because yes, adultery in the heart is bad. Adultery in practice is far worse. And now David was going to follow up on that sin, which we see in verse four.

Then David sent messengers and took her and she came to him and he lay with her for she was cleansed from her impurity and she returned to her house. You know, I think probably the first the first feeling that David and Bathsheba both had was, well, we got away with it. They didn't get away with anything.

I can almost not believe those four words in verse four. He lay with her. He actually committed adultery.

What, David, didn't you know this was wrong? How many of you think that David didn't know this was wrong? Of course he knew it was wrong. He said, well, David, what were you thinking? Friends, here's the problem. He wasn't thinking.

He was acting purely on feeling purely on impulse, and that will get each and every one of us into trouble. We must think if David would have thought about all this, he would have seen that the cost was so much greater than than what he might have considered at the time. You know, if David would have thought about what that illicit pursuit of pleasure would directly or indirectly result in, you know what came of it? An unwanted pregnancy, the murder of a trusted friend, a dead baby, his daughter raped by his son, one son murdering another son, a civil war led by one of his sons and a son who imitated David's lack of self-control and led himself and much of Israel away from God.

Well, I hope that was a great afternoon, David. So you think, what are you thinking? Well, that's the problem. He wasn't thinking.

Maybe as much as anything, that's the message to us. Won't you think about this? Won't you say for a moment, I am not going to go on feelings. I'm not going to go on impulse.

I'm going to think about this. You know, all that ruin that happened in David's life, the same kind of ruin from adultery comes today. You know, just last week, our nation commemorated the one year anniversary of those horrible attacks that came in our nation on September 11th, 2001.

And you're probably like me when that happened, September 11th, 2001. One of the immediate things that struck me so tragically was this thought. Did you think the same thing? The thought of how many children in how many homes that daddy wasn't coming home that night.

And he goes to work in the morning and he's just not coming home that night. I mean, what a tragedy. How horrible that is.

And our indignation gets it. Nobody should take that away from us. I want you to think about it for a moment.

How many homes in our nation does daddy not come home to the kids because of adultery? It's a lot more than what happened on September 11th. I'll tell you that that is a national tragedy. That is a horrible price to pay for our sin.

Well, they thought they got away with it, but you know, you only think that way. When you're not thinking, I got away with it, got away with what? The fish bites down on the hook. And in that immediate moment, when all they can taste is the bait, but not the hook before the fisherman sets the hook, I think I got away with it.

Man, that's a free meal. You didn't get away with anything. What do you think that sin is something good that a mean old God wants you to stay away from that? Really, this adulterous relationship is really good for you.

Oh, man, it's great for you. But mean old God, he doesn't want you to have that good thing. Why is God commanded you not to commit adultery? Because it will ruin your life and countless lives around you.

You won't get away with it. You know, even if it's never discovered. You won't get away with anything.

The bitterness of that sin will weigh down heavy on your soul until you get it right with God and others. Verse five, and the woman conceived. So she sent and told David and said, I am with child.

Oh, you know, now, now it's not working out according to the plan. After that one great afternoon, it's just not working out. And you know what? Everybody knows Uriah is away.

There's no way that you can you can pass this one over. And, you know, David sent messengers to Bathsheba, didn't it? You know, it's going to be found out. What do we do about it now? Well, that's for us to consider next time.

Friends, here's the issue. Are you going to learn from what God tells you in his word? Or do you demand to learn through bitter experience? You know what? The word of the Lord is true. God's commandments are just and good and holy.

Don't mess around with this. Perhaps the greatest problem in David's life or in our lives. Is that we just don't take this seriously.

So let me apply this to a few different groups. First of all, as I look out among even this many people here today, I would just say, statistically speaking, somebody here is involved in adultery or sexual immorality. Haven't you heard the word of the Lord to you this morning? Stop.

Stop now. You say, look, man, I'm already in it. No, every hour you continue in that it adds to the horror and guilt and destruction of what you've done.

Stop it now. And maybe God will extend his mercy. Stop it now.

And maybe something can be salvaged. I would just say, statistically speaking, undoubtedly, there's some here this morning. You're not in an adulterous relationship, but you're thinking about it.

Run, flee. Take it seriously this morning. Listen to the word of the Lord.

Realize that there's a hook underneath that bait. And then there's others here, maybe most of us. You know, you're doing good.

You're not in an adulterous or sexually immoral relationship. You're not even toying with it at this time. Friends, I almost want to speak most passionately to you.

Don't say it couldn't happen to me. Be vigilant. Watch unrestrained romantic attentions in your life and watch for the indulgence of ungodly passion.

Those things will bring you to ruin, if not now, down the road. You know, Satan started working this and David about 20 years before this time. Let's be on guard.

I think that when the prayer team comes up now, as I pray and conclude service, there should be a lot of business with the prayer team this morning. Take it seriously, folks. Let's pray together.

Father, how we long to not just be hearers of your word, but doers also. Lord, I know that your word is true. I know that every word you speak is faithful.

I know that every warning you give is something that I must obey. But Father, it's true for everyone here too. So now do now with power by your Holy Spirit everything I couldn't do with words this morning.

Pour out your spirit among us, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10702.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-guzik/2-samuel-a-not-so-sudden-fall/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net