



What if the Scripture is using with us the tactic that Nathan is using with David? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. 2Samuel 12:1–14 prepares us for the first of the two serial readings in the public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these fourteen verses of Sacred Scripture, we find that like David, we are quicker to condemn than to confess. And we find that the reasoning by which Yahweh declares the heinousness of David's sins would be valid reasoning for the aggravated/heightened heinousness of our sins as Christian believers.

Wednesday, April 28, 2021 • Read 2Samuel 12:1–15

Questions from the Scripture text: Who sent whom to whom (v1)? What did Nathan start telling David about? What did the rich man have (v2)? What did the poor man have (v3)? How does Nathan describe the specialness of the little ewe lamb? Who came to the rich man (v4)? How did David feel toward the rich man (v5)? What did he say should be done? How did he say it? What else did he say should happen (v6)? What does Nathan answer to this (v7)? With what does the word from Yahweh begin? What does Yahweh recount in vv7–8? What question follows in v9 (cf. Ps 51:4)? What is the penalty for what (v10)? What will Yahweh do to David (v11)? Who will see this (v12)? What does David say (v13)? How does Nathan answer him? Who will not die? Who will die (v14)? What does Nathan do in v15?

Nathan's approach works, because we are much readier to condemn sin in others than we are in ourselves. Bearing that in mind, we ought to prepare our hearts to find that the rest of the passage really does condemn us much more than we might at first think.

The logic of the Lord's accusation against David is that He has done so much for David (v7–8) that it makes it all the worse for David to have despised the commandment of the Lord (v9), and that committing such sin has “given great occasion to the enemies of Yahweh to blaspheme” (v14).

So, there is a sense in which the condemnation declared here is one that is only and especially for believers and their sins. We tend to be scandalized by how flashy the sin is. Murder! Adultery! And certainly there is a great heinousness in those particular actions.

But let us not miss that “despising the commandments of the One who has done so much for us” and “giving occasion for the blaspheming of Him Who has identified Himself with us” are two complicating/aggravating factors that apply to ever sin of a Christian believer. It is as if the Scripture comes to us in this passage, as we are ready to condemn David, and points the finger out at the Christian reader, saying “You are the man!”

Indeed, even we who are forgiven ought to fear greatly to sin. Although it is a great mercy and relief for us to hear in Christ's cross, “Yahweh has put away your sin; you shall not die,” we must face the sobering reality that there are very real and very intense consequences even for forgiven sin.

In this case, the entire nation would suffer as adversity arose against the house of the king from within it (v11a). And the wives/concubines would suffer dreadfully in the fulfillment of v11b–12 (cf. 2Sam 16:21–22). And the unborn child himself would die (v14), missing the opportunity to serve the Lord in this world/life.

So, both out of love for the Lord and for those who may be harmed by the consequences, even we who are forgiven—and especially we who are forgiven—ought greatly to fear and to hate sinning!

What makes your sins to be like David's sins? What has the Lord done for you? What can happen if you sin?

Suggested songs: ARP51A “God, Be Merciful to Me” or TPH180 “Kind and Merciful God, We Have Sinned”

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