

David's Son Dies

Call to Worship: Psalm 25:4-7

1st Scripture: Deuteronomy 34

2nd Scripture: 2 Samuel 12:15b-23

Hymn Insert- *Every Promise of Your Word*

Hymn Insert- *Speak O Lord*

Hymn Insert- *The Power of the Cross*

Introduction:

Indeed, God was gracious to David beyond measure, putting his sin away from him, and allowing him to live. But, as we saw a few weeks ago, unto the preservation of God's holiness, David would face severe, temporal consequences. By his gross sins, David had despised God and His commandments, and he had given opportunity for the enemies of the Lord, to blaspheme the true and living God. And so, God would hallow His own Name, in the chastising of His servant David.

We read of one of those severe chastisements in verses 13-15, "So David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord.' And Nathan said to David, 'The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, 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.*' Then Nathan departed to his house."

This morning, we will come to examine the unfolding of this consequence. David's new born son; the very precious product of his adultery, will die.

I. David's Son Dies

"And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill" (vs. 15b). And so, while we are not given all of the details, surrounding the nature of the child's illness, very clearly God had struck him with some form of a deadly disease. But, you will notice that He did not immediately (instantaneously) take the child's life. God could have very easily, just, in an instant, took the life of the child, but he allows the child to gradually succumb to the deadly grip of the illness, over the course of seven days. Now, one significant reason for this, is that we are able to ponder David's response throughout the course of those seven days, and I believe that God would have us learn something valuable from David, found in this process.

Notice what we are told, about the actions of David, after his child was struck with the deadly illness:

1) "David pleads with God for the child" (vs. 16a). Now, one might ask, "Why would David do this, when he has just heard from Nathan, that the child would die?" Well brethren, very clearly, this speaks of the understanding that David had of God's character. David knew that God is a gracious God, and that, at times, He relents of His *stated* decree. Now, this does not, for a moment, imply that God changes in any way, *from His perspective*. God does not change, in any sense at all, with respect to His *eternal* decrees. But rather, there are times that God will altar His *stated* decrees, in accordance with His hidden will, upon the requests of a humble and broken person/people.

You will find this with God's dealings with the people of Israel, during their wilderness wanderings. At times, because of their sin, God tells Moses to step aside, so that He might blot them out and destroy them, and start over again, with a new people, through Moses. And after Moses intercedes, God relents, and spares the people. You will find this with God's dealings with the people of Nineveh, during Jonah's day as well, won't you? Even Jonah did not want God to be merciful to the people, but he knew that God was a merciful and gracious God, and that He would relent of His decree of judgment upon them, if they had humbled themselves, and repented of their wickedness. And of course, that is exactly what had happened.

Does any of this mean that God is not a God of His Word? Of course not! It just means that God delights in being gracious, and at times, He will not give that which is deserved, so as to show Himself gracious. And He ordains to use even stated judgments, as a means of provoking humility and repentance, in those to whom He would design to be the objects of His grace. And so, from our standpoint, it would seem as if God has changed His mind, in some sense, but in reality, God is merely presenting a circumstance, where His judgment is warranted and stated, moving us to respond by humbly pleading for His grace, leading Him to be gracious, in accordance with His hidden will. And, in this sense, we can understand how a person can be *presently* condemned by God, because of his sin; indeed a child of "wrath," just like the rest of the world, only to be brought into a loving relationship with God; only to be eternally justified, by the grace of God in Christ!

And so, while David's plea here, will not be granted, it does further show that God bids sinners to come before Him, with pleas for grace, as He often delights to answer such pleas, in

accordance with the riches of His mercy! David presents us with a pattern, that is not fruitless or superfluous, because, at times, men will prevail with God...because God is gracious!

2) "[A]nd David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground" (vs. 16b). Here, we find that David's pleading, is accompanied by those expressions of deep mourning and humility, which were especially common for the Old Covenant people of God, at times, when they were fervently pursuing God. David denies himself all comfort; the comfort of feasting, the comfort of resting on his soft bed; he is afflicting himself, not as a means of meriting anything from God, but as a means of expressing his sorrow, and his fervent desire to pursue God, above all else. Even the basic comforts of life are denied, as his soul pursues God! It is the very opposite of what many of us, perhaps do, when we are distressed. We might run for food and for sleep, or to purchase some new item, that could give us some immediate sense of comfort, rather than cast ourselves uncomfortable and humbly before God.

There is a place for fasting, brethren. Again, it is never a meritorious labor, which seeks to obligate God, in some way, by means of our self denial. But rather, it is a viable means of expressing our heartfelt pursuit of God, especially during times of urgency. If a particular sin has overcome us, fasting may very well be appropriate, as we strive with God, pleading with Him both for forgiveness and victory over that particular sin. As we grieve over the condition of our country, as we wrestle through difficult trials (family matters, marital troubles, church trials and schisms); as we deal with persecution...etc, there can very well be appropriate times for fasting, and casting ourselves on the floor before God, pleading for His help, guidance and deliverance.

And so, as David would plead with God here, hoping that his child might be spared, he, the king, fasted, went in, and lay on the ground, the whole night.

3) At some point, the elders of David's house (those who exercised oversight, in ordering the affairs of David's home) grew concerned for David, and they attempted to lift him off of the ground, and to exhort him to come eat, but we are told that he refused to do so. David was persistent in pursuing the mercy of God, on behalf of the child's life. Again, in spite of the outcome, David's pursuit of God's mercy here is both exemplary and commendable.

4) David continues to remain in this humble state, earnestly pleading with God to spare the child, until finally, after seven days, the child dies. And brethren, is not David's persistence

here, a testimony to the value that he placed on the precious life, of even one child? And, in this case, what someone in his shoes, might consider to be a "child of inconvenience?"

Oh, how dull has our society become to the precious value of life, when we can turn off our consciences, and brutally dismember and murder some 50+ million unborn, precious souls, since Roe Vs. Wade! Even recently, a woman had intentionally went for an abortion, and recorded her reaction to it, trying to convey to the world that there is a certain joy, in the matter! How far down the hardness scale could we have fallen, brethren, when this is the way in which we can view the butchering of even our own children?! *King David* here fasts and refuses to get up off of the ground for seven days (and he would have kept going, had the child continued to live), all on behalf of a new born baby, who was the product of his adultery. Abortion was never an option for David! No, he fasted and prayed for the life of this child!

His servants were afraid to tell him what had happened, and so, they convened together to discuss how they would break this terrible news to him. How do you tell the king, who had refused to get up all of this time; who has refused to eat, all of this time; who is in a fixed state of pleading with God, on behalf of the child's life...How do you now tell him that his son is dead?! Will he not break down altogether or harm himself in some way, after hearing the news? If he afflicted himself so terribly, when the child was alive, what will he do, now that he is dead?

Finally, as they were whispering to one another, regarding what they should do, David looked over to them, and perceived, by the secret commotion, that his child had died. And so, he asks them, and they affirm that his son is indeed dead. And then, what we are told about David's actions in verse 20, provides us with the great treasure of this text.

5) David gets up, washes and anoints himself, changes his clothes (he puts off, all that represented his state of mourning), and we are told that, "he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped" (vs. 20a).

The child was gravely ill. David pled on behalf of the child's life for seven days. And God's answer was, "No David. I cannot extend to you this particular mercy. This consequence of your sin, must stand, unto the preservation of My own holiness." And the child died. And what does David do? "Lord, how could You do this? It was not the child's fault! Could You not extend to me, this one mercy? Why Lord! Why?" No, we are told that David got up, and prepared himself, first and foremost, to go and worship the Lord!

And by this action, brethren, David had humbly received the Lord's "No," didn't he? "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord!" Those were the words of Job, of course, who actually lost a lot more, and that, for no sin of his own. But the same idea of humbly submitting to the will of God, is portrayed in both places. David, the creature, embraced the fulfilled consequence, from the hand of the Lord.

We saw in our first Scripture reading, a similar reality, surrounding the life of Moses, didn't we? Moses could taste the sweetness of the Promised Land! It was right there, on the other side of the Jordan river. So much of his life was directed toward reaching this end. But he blew it! He had sinned against God, back when he struck the rock. And God had proclaimed back then, that because of that one act; because Moses had failed to hallow God, in the presence of the people, he would not step foot on the land. But, he had hoped by this point, that just perhaps, God might have a change of heart, as it were. And so, there at Mount Nebo, across the Jordan from Jericho, Moses pled with God, that He might yet, allow Moses to cross over the Jordan, into the Promised Land. But, while God allowed Moses to see the span, and the beauty of the land, from the top of Pisgah, atop Mount Nebo, He would not allow Moses to cross the Jordan. His loving answer was, "No." And Moses received this chastisement, at the hand of the Lord, and faithfully concluded the ministry, appointed him, by God. He "worshiped," as it were.

And brethren, let such examples; let these patterns of proper submission, be it, in the face of temporal consequences for our sins (as in the case of Moses and David) or simply in obedience to the providential will of God (as in the case of Job), guide our hearts, as we press on, in the service of our God. We can easily get so caught up, in the questioning of what God might do, in any given situation; putting him through the courtroom trial of our deliberating consciences, ready to accuse Him of some wrong, at any given turn, when the answer; when the right, proper and just answer, at ALL times, is always, "Even so Lord, do what is good in Your sight." "Lord, please take this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but Your will be done."

How appropriate it is, brethren, when we seek the Lord regarding a matter, that when He answers "yes" or "no," to go to the house of the Lord, and worship! It is our means of humbly submitting ourselves to the sovereign and perfect will of God. We will continue to see this type of a spirit, within David, in the remainder of 2 Samuel, brethren, and we ought to ponder and emulate it!

6) Following this, we are told that David, "went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate" (vs. 20b). The pleading and fasting are done, and now, having accepted God's righteous providence, David eats, and moves on with his life.

Now, this baffles his servants, as they cannot comprehend how David was so distraught, unwilling to eat or move, when the child *was alive*, only to now rise up and eat, when the child *has died*? In other words, you would think that David would move from bad to worse, *after* his son had died. But David's answer, given in verses 22-23, is, "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? 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.'"

David's main desire was to plead with God, for the life of his child. And, to that end, he was fervent in his pursuit, casting himself at the feet of God, with the hope that God might just extend grace to David, in this particular matter. But, once the child has died, the will of God was finalized, and it would be a fruitless endeavor, to continue fasting and lying on the ground, at this point. And so, David must now move on with his life. This is not to say that David would not continue to grieve, but rather, he obviously could no longer petition God, for the life of his, now deceased son. David would, one day, follow his son's path to the grave, but he could not bring his son back to him.

Conclusive Charge

Friends, if dear saints of God, like Moses and David would suffer such severe consequences for their sins, what are we to suppose will happen to those who have never been reconciled to God, through Jesus Christ? What will happen to the unredeemed; to those, who remain unconverted and outside of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Doesn't the holiness of God, fill your heart with even a residue of fear, that would move you to take action now, to seek the mercy and grace of God, in Christ, before it is too late? Is there not the slightest urge, to compel you, to get right with God, right now, this day, this moment, before you die, and stand before Him, in judgment? Don't you fear the God who

created you and all things, and who has the power to destroy both body and soul, in hell, forever? God's righteous jealousy for His own glory and holiness, brings Him to execute temporal judgments, on even His own children, at times, when they sin against Him. What does that mean for you, who are still under the Law, and bound to the consequences of your every sin? What does that mean for you, who are presently at enmity with this God, residing under the very heat of His fierce wrath, at this very moment? Well, He tells us, doesn't He? There is an eternal hell, reserved for you; a place of constant burning, weeping and gnashing of teeth; a place of unending torment and agony, where you will be the permanent object of God's righteous wrath...unless you repent now; unless you turn away from your sins now, and put every ounce of your hope and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone! For, He died as a substitute on behalf of sinners, having already bore the wrath of God on the cross, when He was crucified some 2000 years ago! And He rose again, the third day! And He has ascended to the right hand of God, enthroned on high, until He returns to gather His redeemed, and to bring judgment upon the wicked, the unbelieving and the unrepentant; upon all, who have not loved His appearing!

Amen!

The Lord's Supper!