

# What a Plot Cannot

2 Samuel 11:12 - 25

Nutshell: Plans to hide ourselves from the consequences of our sins only expose us to worse consequences.

I. Context: David's adultery and attempted coverup.

II. Text

2 Sam 11:12 And David said to Uriah, Remain in this *area* today also, and tomorrow I will send you away. And Uriah remained in Jerusalem on that day, and into the next day.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

## Review

- A. The Book of Kingdoms, our 1 & 2 Sam + 1 & 2 Kings, is the story of Israel's kings, beginning with the prophet Samuel, who anointed both of the first two kings, Saul and David
  1. Samuel warned Israel vs. having a king, 1 Sam 10:19, Hos 13:11
  2. **Saul** was apostate *man's* version of king. God previewed *His* version via **David**, 1 Sam 13:14
- ✿ B. 1 Kings 15:5 tells us that David kept God's commands *except* in the Bathsheba incident. This dramatically shapes our approach to each incident in David's life.
- C. The chronicler presents David as God's chosen king, a *picture* of Messiah, but *not* the Messiah; a *reference point* for all subsequent kings of Judah, e.g., 2 Kings 14:3; 2 Chron 34:2
- D. David was anointed king over **Judah**, 2 Sam 2, then **Israel**, 5:1- 5. Trouble between the two begins in 2 Sam 2:12-32.
- E. DAVID'S WAITING BUSINESS AS KING\*
  1. David finally vanquished Jebus (Jerusalem), 2 Sam 5:6-10, where he had taken Goliath's head, 1 Sam 17:54
  2. David retrieved the Ark from its 'wanderings', 6:1-19; first, ignoring God's instructions, leading to a death,

- then properly, with great joy
3. Now David wants to build a permanent form for the Tabernacle. His son Solomon will build Temple.
  - ★ 4. God chose *Abraham* to bless all nations. Now He chose *David's* line to bring forth the King of all nations
  5. David fulfilled his oath to Jonathan through his son Mephibosheth, 9:1-13. \*ALL OBLIGATIONS CAUGHT UP.
- F. The Ammonites incited war, but Israel won, 10:1-19.
- G. In 2 Sam 11, the battle with Ammon was resumed
1. David stayed in Jerusalem, as he did in 10:7.
  2. There, at nightfall, from his roof, he saw beautiful Bathsheba washing herself, presumably in her courtyard
  3. He inquired concerning her. God gave him warnings to leave her alone. She was married to one of his chief military officers, daughter of another of them.
- H. David committed adultery with Bathsheba
1. The chronicler used priestly language of Bathsheba, probably indicating that she, like David, had been holy and blameless up to this point
  2. Bathsheba conceived and sent word to David. He instinctively sought to cover his tracks.
  3. He fetched Uriah from the battlefield, hoping he'd go home and lay with his wife, 'absolving' David
  4. Uriah categorically refused the comforts of home, since his comrades slept on the field of battle. God was shutting the door on David's coverup.
    - a. Can we ever get away with sin?
    - b. What's the worst possible situation? When it seems like we *are* getting away with it.

**Kid-speak:** David is trying to get away with his sin. Do you think he'll be able to do that?

Outline:

- I. We are all 'kings' who shape reality, even by words, v 12-13
- II. Plans are vehicles to establish *someone's* reign, v 14-15  
(Even for David, it should have been God's reign)
- III. Evil plans necessitate rationales, v 16-24
- IV. Evil plans desire self-satisfaction, v 25

- I. 2 Sam 11:12, the conversation continues
  - 1. Uriah is obviously anxious to be back with his comrades-in-arms. David gives him a return date: tomorrow. David has plans for tonight.
  - 2. Uriah refused David's offer to sleep at home, but he had no stubborn spirit. He stays home at the king's command.

**2 Sam 11:13** Then David called for him, and he ate in his presence, and he drank. And he made him drunk. Then he went out in the evening to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

- J. Since we have David "calling" for Uriah here, perhaps the previous verse is David speaking to Uriah via messenger
- K. David's plan now was to get Uriah drunk so he would forget his principles and spend the night at home
  - 1. Of course, he doesn't put a bottle to his lips. It begins with a regular meal.
  - 2. We don't know how David made Uriah drunk, but the responsibility is put on David: "he made him drunk."
    - a. Therefore, David may have 'invigorated' Uriah's wine with a potion
    - b. Or David may have said 'x' wine was actually 'y' wine, making Uriah 'z' drunk fellow
    - c. Or he may have simply made it a jovial fellowship, equating their comradery with their many drinks
  - 3. In any case, David did very wrongly, Hab 2:15
- L. But Uriah's heart, though merry with wine, did not forget its core beliefs. David had laid aside his core beliefs for nothing.

**Kid-speak:** David tried one more thing to get Uriah to go home and sleep with Bathsheba. What was that? Make him drunk. Did it work? No.

**2 Sam 11:14** So it was, in the morning, David then wrote a letter to Joab and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah;

- M. Plan B didn't work. On to Plan C: kill the guy.
  - 1. Uriah's implicit trustworthiness is clear
    - a. David is willing to send Uriah's death warrant in his own hand

- b. It's addressed to Joab. Uriah won't read it. (Probably sealed anyway.)
- 2. In terms of Being Led Into Temptation, David's adultery has now invited murder. **S**in is either abandoned or it gains strength. (We knew this about love of money, 1 Tim 6:10.)
- 3. The sinner (David in this case) might as well be in a cage as far as determining his own outcome
  - a. David can do further damage, but God won't let the situation go away
  - b. Until David confesses and turns from his sin, **sin** plots David's course. ♦ God limits David to it. That's being led into temptation.
  - c. God doesn't invent the sin. He just 'shut us in the room' with it.
  - d. Most people love living in sin. They'd never *really* pray not to be led into temptation.

2 Sam 11:15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah toward the front line [faces] of the fiercest battle, and withdraw from him that he is struck, so *that* he will die."

- N. David makes it plain to Joab that Uriah is to die
  - 1. However, he also makes it plain that they are using the battle to cover the deed
  - 2. Joab can only assume that Uriah has committed some crime worthy of death

**Kid-speak:** Since David couldn't make Uriah think that Bathsheba was pregnant from Uriah, what did David plan to do? Have Uriah killed!

- O. Joab is to plan an attack where the fighting will be fierce, presumably giving Uriah the lead there. Then Joab was to signal their pullback, leaving Uriah to cover the retreat.
  - 1. David doesn't leave Joab to plan this. He provides all the necessary details. (It didn't work out so exactly, though.)
  - ↓ 2. When we are working against God, we instinctively overcontrol
  - 3. Being made in God's image means that we *can* convince ourselves that we can outwit God
    - a. Why? We were made to interact with God, not be His

- robots. Interacting implies parity on some level.
- b. But a God-like being deserves a God-like sentence for rebellion
- c. Yet God is going to bring David back from that place

**2 Sam 11:16** And it happened, from Joab's reconnaissance of the city, that he deployed Uriah to the place where he knew that mighty men *were* there.

- P. Joab sets about to obey David
1. He confirmed where the best Ammonite soldiers were stationed and deployed Uriah there, probably in the lead
  2. Again, with no evidence to the contrary, Joab has to assume that Uriah has acted traitorously or the like. Maybe his Hittite nativity lent toward this conclusion.

**Kid-speak:** Did Uriah think that David and Joab were planning to kill him? Probably not.

**2 Sam 11:17** And the menfolk of the city went out and fought [fed upon] Joab, and *some* of the people of David's servants fell. And Uriah the Hittite also died.

- Q. Notice the names given. They fought Joab. These were Joab's troops. David's servants fell. These were David's people.
1. The chronicler is highlighting David's abuse of power. He could move Joab, and Joab could move the troops.
  2. He also underlines what we all know. We are all pawns of those in governing positions.
    - a. Because of sin, it is not the norm in history for leaders to lead with a prevailing concern for those under them
    - b. With David, it should have been different.
- R. Joab chose a spot where a sortie was likely from the city, and it indeed occurred
1. Whether the expected "men of strength" came or not, the desired result was achieved. Uriah died.
  2. Other men had to fall as part of this plan. This compounded David's wickedness.

**2 Sam 11:18** And Joab sent and told David all the matters of the war. **19** And *he* commanded the messenger, saying,

“At your completion *of* all the matters of the war, as *you* speak to the king, 20 it will also be *that* if the king's fury rises, and he says to you, ‘Why did you draw near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from upon the wall? 21 Who struck Abimelech the son of Jerub-besheth? Did not a woman throw a piece of a millstone on him from upon the wall, and he died in Thebez? Why did you draw near to the wall?’ Then you shall say, ‘Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead as well.’”

- S. Joab sent his usual report- “all the matters of the war,” but he puts in a special note. The message would be spoken (probably the norm).
- T. Just as David ‘took command’ of the situation in his own interest, Joab feels he has to ‘take command’ to protect himself
  - 1. Showing us that he had made a patently bad move tactically
  - 2. Joab, however, may also be protecting his messenger, since the messenger would bear the brunt of any anger in order to convey it successfully by return message
  - 3. Joab protected his messenger, just the opposite of David’s treatment of Joab
- U. Joab knows what David’s response *should* be militarily. This was Tactical Blunders 101.
  - 1. He can already put words in David’s mouth. All Israeli military planners knew about the Abimelech Blunder.
  - 2. Even a civilian can hoist a rock and kill someone attacking too close to the wall of a city: Date/Time/Details. (Recorded for us in Jdg 9:45-54.)

**Kid-speak:** Did Joab know why David wanted Uriah dead? No. He figured David must have a good reason. But did he? No.

- V. The chronicler goes into **detail** to show the levels of minutiae necessary to cover sin
  - 1. AND YET all of it together times 10 cannot get around God’s omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence
  - 2. The wise will surely conclude: “I can never sin and get away with it. *Why sin?*”
- W. Special note: SIN would never have let David out of this cage. God had to send (Nathan) to retrieve him.
  - 1. What if David concluded, “Well, it seems I can sin and God will just fetch me back!”?
  - 2. Presuming upon God’s mercy is an especially dangerous

undertaking, Heb 10:26-31. Scriptures don't back up the idea that God is always just 1 step back from sin.

3. So if God *does* provide a door of grace, **run** through it and close yourself in!

**2 Sam 11:22** And the messenger went and entered and laid before David all that which Joab had sent him *for*. **23** And the messenger said to David, "Surely the men prevailed against us, and they came out to us *into* the field. Yet we were on them to the entrance of the gate. **24** But those shooting shot at your servants from upon the wall, and *some* of the king's servants died. And also your servant Uriah the Hittite died."

- X. Another reason the chronicler went into detail in Joab's report was to show us the way the messenger digested and delivered it
1. Clearly, the messenger understood the key information to be Uriah's death, so he didn't wait for David to ask about the tactical blunder
  2. Also, the messenger was kinder to Joab than Joab was to himself
    - a. The messenger had Israel prevailing, justifying pressing the Ammonites back to the gate
    - b. In that case, the archers on the wall were a calculated risk
  3. Again, Joab *and* the messenger were both considerate where David was calloused. They were *servicing* David's heartlessness (and assuming they were serving justice).

**Kid-speak:** Joab cared about the messenger, and the messenger cared about Joab, but whom did David care about? Himself!

**2 Sam 11:25** And David said to the messenger, "You shall say to Joab, 'Do not let this matter be a grievance in your eyes. For the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your battle against the city, and overthrow it.' And make him strong."

- Y. The chronicler's detail culminates in David's final coldness
1. The messenger is in on the secret about Uriah to the same degree as Joab. They are both off the hook now.
  2. David's "no problem" attitude shows the smugness of his supposed success
  3. 'Everything's cool. And- oh yeah, win the war.' The fate of

the kingdom resting on one killing.

4. And David will have cause to greatly regret the adultery and murder the rest of his life (and beyond, actually)
5. But by finally taking responsibility, he mitigated the evil outcomes as much as was possible- not *seeming* like much

#### IV. How does this relate to Christ?

Christ was tempted to *please Himself* and abandon His mission. Eternal thanks to the Trinity that He didn't, Rom 15:3.

#### V. For the Walking Wounded (1Thess 5:14, "Uphold the strengthless") If you are overwhelmed, at least know that we're *all* pawns.

#### VI. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, "Convince, rebuke"): **What have I done wrong?** **How have I lost righteousness?** Do my self-justifying skills block out shame?

#### VII. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, "Exhort/encourage"): **How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?** Lord, let me feel shame wherever I need to.

#### VIII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?** Praying not to be led into temptation daily is a very *practical* matter.

Wrap-up: What a plot cannot? It cannot succeed.

Seven things God hates, Prov 6:16-18. #6- a heart that plots evil. God hated what David did. He hated David's heart in doing it. Yet God's eternal love was set on David. God would not let David's sin succeed.

When we agree with God's aim of our blamelessness, we do not have to plot, Prov 16:3; Ps 37:5-6. In rolling our ways onto God, we virtually UN-scheme or ANTI-plot.

Do not plot. That is the peaceful way. (Such as giving people wisdom to choose well, then leaving it with them- no manipulation.)