

LESSON TWELVE

KING DAVID (Continued)

A. THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM:

When David became King of the united nation he began to look for an appropriate capital. David's choice was Jerusalem, which was still held by the Jebusites and it was called Jebus. It had never been completely in the possession of the Hebrews. It was centrally located and was suited to be the capital of the kingdom. It lay on the border between Judah and Israel and had a good water supply. It also was a very strong stronghold. The capture of this city was difficult but successful.

David desired to make Jerusalem not only the political capital but also the religious capital of the nation.

B. THE ARK PLACED ON MOUNT ZION:

Since David desired Jerusalem to be the religious capital, it was not long before he sought to bring the ark to Jerusalem. It had been at Kirjath-jearim for 70 years. His first attempt was a failure due to a disregard of God's Word. Rather than have it carried by the Levites, it was put on a new cart. Uzzah, who touched it, died and the ark was left for three months in the home of Obededom, whose household was greatly blessed by God as a result. After this, David brought the ark up to Jerusalem in the proper manner. He placed the ark in a tent, which he had prepared in Jerusalem, amidst great rejoicing and offering of sacrifices.

There is a lesson here that we should learn. We must not use Philistine methods to do the work of God. The work of God must be done God's way and according to His instructions.

C. DAVID'S DESIRE TO BUILD A TEMPLE:

David built for himself a fine palace but he was not happy about it because the ark of God rested in a tent. He planned to build a permanent temple for the ark, but God did not permit him to do this. The prophet Nathan told him that this honor would be given to his son, for David was a man of war. David's reaction to these disappointing words was to voice a prayer of submission and thanksgiving before God. He then proceeded to gather substantial quantities of material toward the time when his son would build the temple.

D. A MAN OF WAR:

King David was very successful in warfare. He defeated the Philistines on the west. Then he turned east and defeated Moab, Edom and the Ammonites and the Amalekites. Finally he began to extend his kingdom in the north as far as the Euphrates River, subduing the Syrians, and their allies. He brought unto his dominion a large tract of country up to the Euphrates River. For the first time, the Hebrew territory filled up the whole outline originally traced in the promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:18).

E. DAVID'S SIN WITH BATHSHEBA: (II Samuel 11:1-27).

The darkest blot on the record of David was concerning the sin of adultery and murder. While his army, under Joab, was in battle with the Ammonites, David was at home resting. He saw Bathsheba washing herself as he looked from a palace window. He desired her, sent for her, and committed adultery with her. When she informed him that she was expecting a child, he had Uriah brought home from the battlefield so that he might be with his wife. However, Uriah would not go to his home and David assigned him a deadly position at the battlefield. There he was killed as David planned, and David took Bathsheba as his wife. For this serious sin, David was severely punished.

David accepted the rebuke from the prophet Nathan, humbled himself and repented. It brought him to the lowest depths of penitence. His salvation at this time was in the fact that he was able to humble himself, confess and truly repent. However, this did not save him from the judgment of God. The Bible states: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." As David has sown, so he reaped. The child born of Bathsheba died. The sword never departed from his house. All his days, domestic trial and tragedy tore David's heart.

There are a few lessons that the student should learn from this tragic episode in David's life:

1. One sin generally leads to another. The sin of murder took place as David tried to cover up the sin of adultery.
2. No sin can be covered. The Bible says, "Be sure your sin will find you out."
3. This sin in David's life took place because he was at home, idle. He should have been at the battlefield, leading his army. It does not pay to be idle.
4. David's sin took place because he looked upon Bathsheba. We must be very careful what we look upon.
5. All sin must be judged.
6. There must be heart-felt confession and repentance before there could be forgiveness.
7. Our sins generally affect others. The results of sin are far reaching and others suffer as well as the one who commits the transgression.

F. ABSALOM:

One of David's greatest trials took place through a conspiracy, which was led by his own son Absalom. Absalom was David's third son, whose mother's name was Maacah (II Samuel 3:3).

Amnon was the eldest son of King David. He had defiled his own sister, Tamar, and for this Absalom slew Amnon. It was probably at this time that the idea of taking the throne presented itself to the mind of Absalom. Following the murder of Amnon, Absalom fled to Geshur where his mother's father Talmai lived. After three years Joab persuaded David to permit Absalom's return to Jerusalem (II Samuel 14:1-24). However, it was not until another two years had passed by before David consented to see him, and then forgave him.

Absalom was a handsome man and many people were attracted to him. He moved through the country with chariots and fifty attendants. He pretended to take a great interest in people by meeting those with problems. He was clever and convincing and these efforts caused many people to favor him. After four years Absalom had sufficient goodwill to take the decisive step. He went to Hebron, assembled his followers and had himself anointed King (II Samuel 15:7-12). With a considerable force of men, he marched north against his father and David had to flee.

A battle took place in an area called the "Wood of Ephraim" (II Samuel 18:1-18). Absalom had gathered the troops of Israel and he had a greater number of troops than what David had. However, David's men were hard core troops, seasoned in battle and were superior to Absalom's

hastily gathered soldiers. David's men won a decisive victory. With the battle won, Joab killed Absalom who had become ensnared by his long hair in a tree. When David learned of this, his reaction was one of great grief. Absalom's defeat finished the revolt and David was able to return to Jerusalem.

G. NUMBERING THE PEOPLE: (II Samuel 24:1-25 & I Chronicles 21).

Another great sin that took place in David's life came about by his decision to take a census. The Lord did not want his people to have their trust in their numbers. Repeatedly he had proven his power to deliver them regardless of the power of the enemy. God had told them not to number the people (Exodus 30:12). However, David commanded Joab to do so.

This definitely was an act of pride, on the part of David. He may have had other reasons for doing this, such as a desire to levy taxes upon the people. The Bible states that Satan provoked David to do this so this act was directly due to Satan's influence upon David. Joab tried to show David that this was wrong but David refused to listen.

The record given in II Samuel and I Chronicles states different numbers but a careful reading of the Scripture will show why different numbers are given. Here are the numbers:

1. II Samuel: 800,000 (Israel) + 500,000 (Judah) = 1,300,000.
2. I Chronicles: 1,100,000 (Israel) + 470,000 (Judah) = 1,570,000.

It is necessary for us to read carefully the explanation that the Bible gives. Concerning Israel, in II Samuel, it states that the valiant men that drew the sword were 800,000, while in I Chronicles, it states that all Israel were 1,100,000. Likewise, concerning the record of the number in II Samuel, the men of Judah were 500,000 and in I Chronicles it states that the men who drew the sword were 470,000. In other words, in Israel there were 300,000 non-combatants and in Judah there were 30,000 non-combatants.

Joab actually didn't complete this census. He did not count the men of Levi and Benjamin.

God sent Gad the prophet to David with three choices of punishment, from which David was to choose one. David's words were pathetic. He said, "I am in a great strait, let me fall now into the hand of the Lord for very great are his mercies, but let me not fall into the hand of man." When he saw the pestilence from God taking men by the tens of thousands, we read of David begging God to let the judgment fall on him and his father's house. Sin and disregard for God's Word cannot go unpunished. There is no respect of persons with God.

The plague, which killed 70,000 of David's newly counted people, was stopped just outside of Jerusalem at the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, where Solomon later built the temple. In repentance, David purchased the floor and oxen from Araunah and offered sacrifices to God.

H. DAVID'S DEATH:

Toward the close of his life, David handed over to Solomon the immense stores which he had set aside for the building of the temple, along with the pattern which had been given him by divine revelation. By this act, David indicated that Solomon was to succeed him.

Physical weakness and a contest among his sons for the throne marked the last days of David. David reigned for 40 years and was buried on Mount Zion. His reign was one of the most memorable periods of Israel's history.

