

The King and His Injustice

2 Samuel 12:1-12

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The story of David and Bathsheba epitomises the misuse of power, showcasing how the powerful can exploit their authority and evade accountability for their injustices. While worldly authority may fail us, the God of all authority and justice gives us hope!

1. The Confrontation

The positive aspect of justice is all about raising up the downtrodden, whereas the negative aspect is about confronting injustice. Confronting injustice may mean confronting people in authority. It was not straightforward for Nathan to confront King David, but *2 Samuel 12:1a* says, the LORD sent Nathan to David. It is God's authority that gives Nathan a sense of security, and it is His superseding authority that is our grounds to confront injustice. Grounding justice in ourselves leads to two extremes – either we end up fearing man or we indulge in self-righteousness. We are on shaky ground until our justice is rooted in the authority of God who anoints us with the Spirit of Justice. It is about His justice and not ours – this is so assuring, especially when we must confront injustice with people in positions of authority over us.

2. The Conviction

Nathan confronts David tactfully with a story about how a poor man was unjustly treated by a rich man who took the former's only sheep to be slaughtered for his guest. This story is about David, who despite having many wives took Uriah's wife away from him, when lust came knocking. David was outraged like a good shepherd and a good king, ready to judge and proclaim that the rich man be put to death. David was consumed by righteous anger at which point Nathan cuts into David's heart in *2 Samuel 12:7a*, "Nathan said to David, 'You are the man!'". The king stands condemned by his own judgement. We are quick to point fingers, but we dislike admitting to our faults. We get defensive when we are accused. We love justice – but we hate being judged. By exposing others' crimes, we hide our hypocrisy. We must not neglect our own sin. Justice begins in the house of the Lord among God's people.

3. The Charges

2 Samuel 12:7-9 underlines how David had spurned God's goodness and blessings, despised God's word and done evil in God's eyes. In *Psalms 51:4*, in David's prayer of repentance, he cries out "Against You [God], You only, have I sinned and done what is evil

in Your sight". Neither God, nor David, was over-spiritualizing David's injustices. Though his sin was directed against Uriah, something greater was violated. When we commit injustice against someone made in the image of God, our offence is against the God in whose image that person was made. When we under-spiritualize justice, we cut off its very foundations. When we separate justice from God, we are on a path to perverting justice. We must hold fast to a God-centred understanding of justice because that is the very foundation to pursuing justice.

4. The Consequences

2 Samuel 12:10-12 spells out the consequences of David's acts, that he would never again know peace, he would lose all honour, and would be put to death (*Ex 21, Lev 20, Deut 19*). As we see God bringing this justice upon David's head, there are 3 things we can learn:

- a) Don't lose hope for justice
- b) Don't lose yourself to revenge
- c) Don't lose respect for authority

Justice is hard. Doing justice is like walking a tightrope. We fall off the moment justice becomes about us. Our own justice is biased, crooked, partial and does not bring restoration. Like Nathan was sent to David, Jesus was sent by our Father to convict us of our injustices and sin. He ultimately did so not through any parable or teaching - but through His own suffering and death. Jesus was committed to executing God's justice perfectly, offering up His life as a substitute for our corrupt lives. He Himself became our refuge. Jesus invites us not only to walk like Him, but with Him. As *John 16:8* says, when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement. Now we have hope, because we walk the tightrope of justice *in* Christ & with His convicting Spirit *in* us.