

DAVID'S SINS

2 Samuel 12:1–14

ADULTERY AND MURDER

- David committed adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:4) and murdered her husband Uriah the Hittite (11:14–17; 12:9)
- although David committed many sins during his life these two displeased God the most (I Kings 15:5)

NATHAN'S PARABLE (1–4)

- the parable of Nathan is the most famous parable in the Old Testament (cf. Trees, Vineyard, Eagles, Boiling Pot)
 - the parable was designed to help David see himself as God saw him
- apparently the Lord sent Nathan to David on the day Bathsheba gave birth to the baby (cf. 14, 18)—about a year after he sinned
- he was carnal and received divine discipline (serious illness) for a year *before* his confession if Psalm 32:3–5 refers to this incident
 - the rich man symbolizes David; the poor man symbolizes Uriah; the lamb symbolizes Bathsheba
 - the rich man owned "a very large number of sheep and cattle" (2), suggesting that he was a shepherd like David
- the illustration is appropriate because David knew how attached one could become to a pet lamb since he had been a shepherd
- the comparison of the baby ewe-lamb to a daughter who slept in the poor man's arms is a not-so-subtle reference to Bathsheba
 - the rich man stole the baby lamb to show hospitality to a guest—breaking the poor man's heart and the Mosaic Law

DAVID'S JUDGMENT OF THE RICH MAN AND SELF JUDGMENT (5–6)

- in anger David first considered a punishment greater than the Law required:
 - literally, 'this man is a son of death' ("deserves to die," not the KJV's "shall surely die")
- David pronounced a judgment in keeping with the Law: fourfold restitution for stealing a sheep (Exod 22:1)
- the parable forced David to pass judgment on himself: when he condemned the rich man's sin he also condemned himself
 - if the rich man deserves to die for stealing a lamb, what does David deserve for adultery and murder?

INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE (7–9)

- once he recognized the injustice in the parable, Nathan made the application to David—two words: '*atah ha'ish* 'You the man!'
 - it was not until Nathan said to David, "You *are* the man!" that David understood the meaning of the parable
 - the LORD described the great blessings He has given to David over the years:
 - position, protection, possessions, prestige, and privilege (7–8)—all symbolized by the rich man's great wealth
 - Nathan enumerates David's sins against both God and man (9)

FUTURE DIVINE DISCIPLINE (10–12)

- David will now reap exactly what he has sown, and more of it—a long and hard and bitter harvest
- four of David's sons die prematurely—an unnamed son (12:18), Amnon (13:29), Absalom (18:14–15), and Adonijah (I Kings 2:25)
- David's sexual sins against Uriah will give rise to sexual sins committed by Absalom against David—*lex talionis* (cf. 16:21–22)
 - even though he confessed his sins he still received divine discipline for the rest of his life ("the sword shall never depart")

DAVID'S CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS, AND COMMUTING OF THE DEATH PENALTY (13)

- the full expression of David's confession can be studied in Psalm 51
- adultery (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22) and murder (Exod 21:12–14; Lev 24:17, 21; Num 35:16–21; Deut 19:11–12) are capital offenses
 - God, the author of these laws and the supreme ruler of Israel, has the right to commute the death penalty if He wishes

IMMEDIATE DIVINE DISCIPLINE (14)

- confession of sin and forgiveness does not always remove divine discipline: the baby will also die (cf. 18)