

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Sept. 4

MONDAY

David, confronted with his sin by Nathan the prophet, acknowledges it. Nathan assures him that the Lord has forgiven him, and he will not die. He adds that the child born from David's adultery will surely die.

READ: II Samuel 12:13-14

David humbled himself in the sight of the Lord. And God forgave him! The prophet tells him that his child will die. Amazing! The guilty adulterer lives, and the innocent child dies! God's ways are always amazing! In any way He pleases, He carries out His desires and glorifies Himself! Oh that we might glorify Him always for His wondrous, yet mysterious, works! And also be assured of His forgiveness even at our worst moment!

TUESDAY

Nathan returned to his home. Bathsheba gave birth to a baby boy, but he became deathly ill. David fasted and slept on the ground and did other things which showed his great distress, always crying to the Lord for mercy, hoping that God might spare the child. His advisors could not give him relief or comfort, and he refused to eat.

READ: II Samuel 12:15-17

David does all that he can do to save the baby. His heart is distressed within him and his actions reflect that brokenness and contriteness. Does he not harbor in his heart the secret wish that God might somehow allow the boy to live? Yet he does not demand it of the Lord, for his own sin is before him. And David knows that in his wickedness, he cannot prosper. Help us, Lord, never to think that somehow we can escape the consequences of our sin; that we are immune to its effects on us; and that our sin shall not find us out.

WEDNESDAY

A week after birth, the baby died. Servants were afraid to tell David. They were afraid how angry he would be. However, they didn't have to tell David after all; he could tell by their demeanor and whispering that his son had died. David stopped his mourning, got washed and dressed, and went to the house of the Lord to worship. Then he went home and ate.

READ: II Samuel 12:18-20

It's been said that the hardest thing a parent can ever do is bury a child. That may be so, but if we had to, would it not be wonderful to be able to do so as David did? He put behind him the activities of mourning and worshipped the Lord - the same Lord who gives is the Lord who takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord! David found his faith to be genuine, for in the storms of life, it anchored his soul. God may have some things ahead of us today that are difficult. Maybe they are not as difficult as burying a child, but still... How will we endure it? By worshipping God with praise and then moving ahead.

THURSDAY

David's servants were astounded by his actions. It was the opposite of most people and they told him so. David explained that while the child lived, we was always hopeful that God might change his mind and let the child live. But once the baby was dead, there was no reason to continue doing so. He knew that one day, he would go and see his child again.

READ: II Samuel 12:21-23

David's behavior gives us understanding of those who die young. It seems that when the child of a believer dies, all is well with his soul - that somehow, God covers their sin. The Bible says that *the promise is to us and to our seed*. This is a blessed truth for Christian parents who lose a child. It may be that we have the privilege of sharing this, turning sorrowing into eternal joy!

FRIDAY

David comforted his wife Bathsheba after the baby died. Time went by and she conceived again and bore a second child whom David named Solomon. And that baby was loved of the Lord. God sent Nathan to David to tell him to name the baby Jedidiah meaning *beloved of God*.

READ: II Samuel 12:24-25

Wow! Isn't the mercy of God a fantastic thing to us! We were children of wrath (God's wrath on us) and of disobedience (our disobedience towards God) and God not only forgave us and reconciled us to Himself, He made us to be His favorites! God said of Jesus Christ, "This is my beloved Son," and he says the same thing about you and me! Today, we are beloved of God!

SATURDAY

While all this has been going on in the palace, out on the battlefield, David's key general, Joab, had been fighting against the Ammonites. He notified his David that he was on the verge of capturing Rabbah (meaning the 'City of Waters') and urged him to gather additional troops and complete the conquest. Joab added that if he himself led the military forces to victory, his exuberant troops would probably name the city after him, and he didn't want that to happen.

READ: II Samuel 12:26-28

Rabbah, the city of waters, is actually a section of Jerusalem - the area where the water reservoir was located. But the focus is not on the place nor even on the event, but on General Joab. He is put before us here as a model of a faithful servant. He exemplifies for us what it means to put the glory of the Lord as the great priority of our lives. Joab was almost afraid that the honor might inadvertently come to him! Help us, Lord, to live that way today, doing our utmost for His highest!

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