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The Facts **Concerning** **Backsliding**

John Roesch

All Scripture is From the King James Version of the Holy Bible

The Facts About Backsliding

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*To Teresa
God's greatest gift to me*



Introduction

When someone we know is headstrong, they are often referred to as “stubborn as a mule”. And this can be anyone who bucks the standard, whether they are right or wrong. We’ve all known someone who will go right simply because they were told to go left.

For many of us, this applies to our spiritual life as well; we’ve all felt the urge, in a moment of passion, to rebel against what we know and have been taught is right.

Most times we resist this temptation, but when we don’t, we find that it gets easier and easier to compromise with what we know is right and proper, until this becomes our standard; our way of life.

When a mule is happy where it is, it’s hard pressed to get it to move. Even with a bit in its mouth, the harder we try to move it, the harder it fights back, pulling back from us as we try to move it forward. This action is called backsliding, and is a good example of how we get when we resist God’s commands and directions.

We get headstrong, resistant, and as stubborn as a mule. We still have our salvation, we always will have that, but we will lose its joy, our peace, and God’s closeness as we walk away from Him.

Is this a permanent condition, or can we recover from it?

To answer this. Let’s look back at a couple of well known kings that, despite the fact they are remembered as the great kings and champions of the faith that they are, made some very human mistakes. We can learn a lesson from either of them.

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The Old Testament Kings



The Enticing that Caused David's Misdeed

David is known as the man who was after God's heart. He wrote more of the Psalms than anyone. He was Israel's greatest king, and through his son Nathan was an ancestor of Jesus.

It is his throne that Jesus will reign from for a thousand years. But David was human as we all are, and as he got complacent, he was tempted. He was resting in Jerusalem at a time when kings went off to battle as recorded in ...

2 Samuel 11

1 ¶ And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. 2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

I'm sure David had never counted on anything like this happening, so let's look at some of the contributing factors to this event, realizing how many times these instances occur in our own lives/

First, David wasn't where he was supposed to be; if he was in Rabbah, how different would his life have turned out? We'll never know.

Next, he was getting out of his bed at evening time. This isn't the

usual time to get out of bed. We've all heard that the idle mind is the devil's workshop. Here is the best example of this.

The woman wasn't there to tempt him. I won't claim to know the bathing rituals of the Israelites back then, or how often people walked on their roofs, but this was unfortunate timing for everyone involved.

Had David done the right thing, he would have turned away embarrassed upon seeing her; he would have respected her right to what she was doing.

And if he had watched, which was still very wrong, but then left and let the matter drop, the greater sin would have been avoided.

But he didn't.

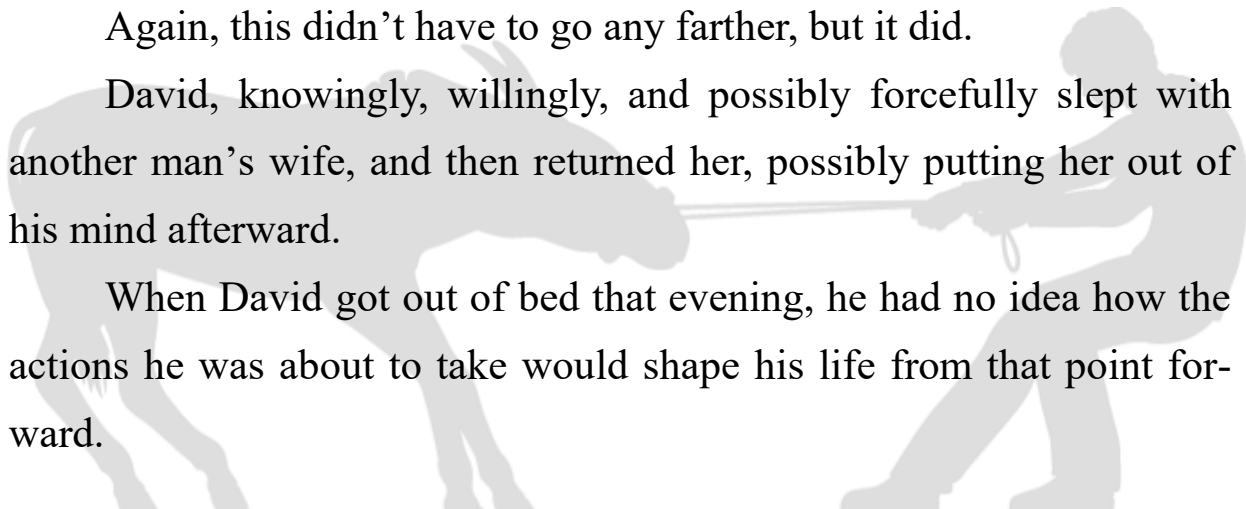
Now he was curious; he wanted to know who she was. He found out she was Bathsheba, married to one of his officers, Uriah the Hittite. Again, he could have stopped there, but he didn't.

So David sent his messengers to bring her to him. The Hebrew word is **וַיִּקְחָהּ** (way·yiq·qā·khe·hā), and means, among other things, to buy, use, fetch, seize, or bring her. Scripture doesn't record if she was there of her own free will or not.

Again, this didn't have to go any farther, but it did.

David, knowingly, willingly, and possibly forcefully slept with another man's wife, and then returned her, possibly putting her out of his mind afterward.

When David got out of bed that evening, he had no idea how the actions he was about to take would shape his life from that point forward.



2 Samuel 11

3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.



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The Event that Continued David's Misery

Over the next few weeks, scripture doesn't record David seeking God's forgiveness. In fact, it seems he didn't have any more contact with Bathsheba, she seemed to have served his purpose for her, and he might have even forgotten about her, at least until she got a message to him, letting him know she was carrying his child.

David's first reaction was to cover his own tracks. The problem was, Uriah wasn't home, and hadn't been home since before David had become an adulterer.

A scheme formed in David's mind: he would send for Uriah, let him go to his house, lay with his wife, and believe the child Bathsheba would bear was his child. Problem solved.

Only it wasn't. Uriah was an honorable man, much more than David was becoming. Uriah reported to David of the goings on of the battle, and David then told him to return to his home and rest a bit. David thought that his plan had worked until he was told that Uriah was sleeping outside the king's gate, and had never returned to his own house.

2 Samuel 11

11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. 12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to

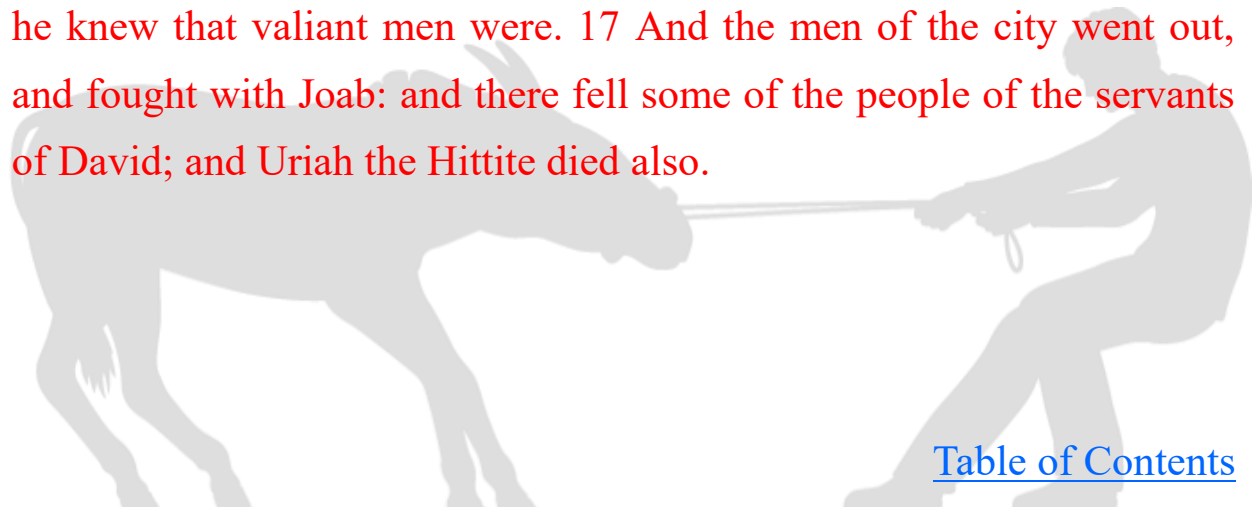
morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

David was greatly disappointed, and realized that he had to do what he now thought of as the right thing. Funny thing was he would have to do so many wrong things to be able to do this right thing, and this wasn't a clue to him. He was now so backslidden that right and wrong had both become blurred lines.

For him to marry Bathsheba without losing face with anyone, Uriah would have to be dealt with, and quickly. He was a soldier in a battle, and things go wrong in battles.

2 Samuel 11

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. 16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. 17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.



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The Encounter that Convicted David's Misstep

One would reason that David was pretty tightlipped about this situation for good reason. He might not be proud of what he did, but he seemed to realize some people might get the right idea about it if it came to light. And enough people knew enough of what had happened.

Whomever had identified Bathsheba knew that he had asked of her, and hopefully knew little more than that.

The messengers who took her knew he had met with her, and possibly more, but like the first person, David was sure they knew not to cross their king.

He could count on their silence.

He could count on Joab's silence as well; he was, after all, his captain. David didn't doubt Joab's loyalty. If he had, he would have a different captain.

So it's easy to see he thought he had gotten away with it. He was no longer the same man anymore; guilt eats at one's soul; the heart gets heavy, the countenance is miserable, and paranoia kicks in. People were wondering among themselves about what is wrong with him, and anytime two or more were seen talking to each other, they were seen as knowing what he did, and talking about it behind his back

At this time, God sent His prophet Nathan to the king, and Nathan had a situation to bring before him.

2 Samuel 12

1 ¶ And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him,

and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

Finally, David could imagine someone who had done something horrible. Not as bad as he had done, but at least he could now express the anger he had kept within himself since that fateful night. He was so ready to do this, that he possibly interrupted Nathan's tale.

He invoked the great oath "As the Lord liveth..." attempting to make this a righteous indignation. When wallowing in guilt, we typically go overboard when we get a chance to dish it out.

David, forgetting he had done much worse, showed no mercy to this one. Nathan, as God's mouthpiece, had delivered the perfect parable to David. As a former shepherd, this tale struck at his heart; his corrupted and hurting heart. His reaction was quite severe.

"As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:"

He was now where Nathan needed him; in the crosshairs.

2 Samuel 12

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.



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The Episode the Corrected David's Mistake

Sometimes guilt is so great that when you are found out, it can only be described as relief. And it feels so good you wonder why it had to take so long.

David confessed his sin, and this saved his life. Even though he was forgiven, sin has consequences, and this one was paid for by his son, the one that was innocent in all this.

Our sins and their consequences don't affect just us, they can change the lives of those dearest to us.

David went on to be the greatest king Israel ever had. Although he had backslidden, his genuine repentance restored him to his walk with God.

This same result applies to us under the same condition: genuine repentance.

2 Samuel 12

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

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Solomon's Sensual Demise

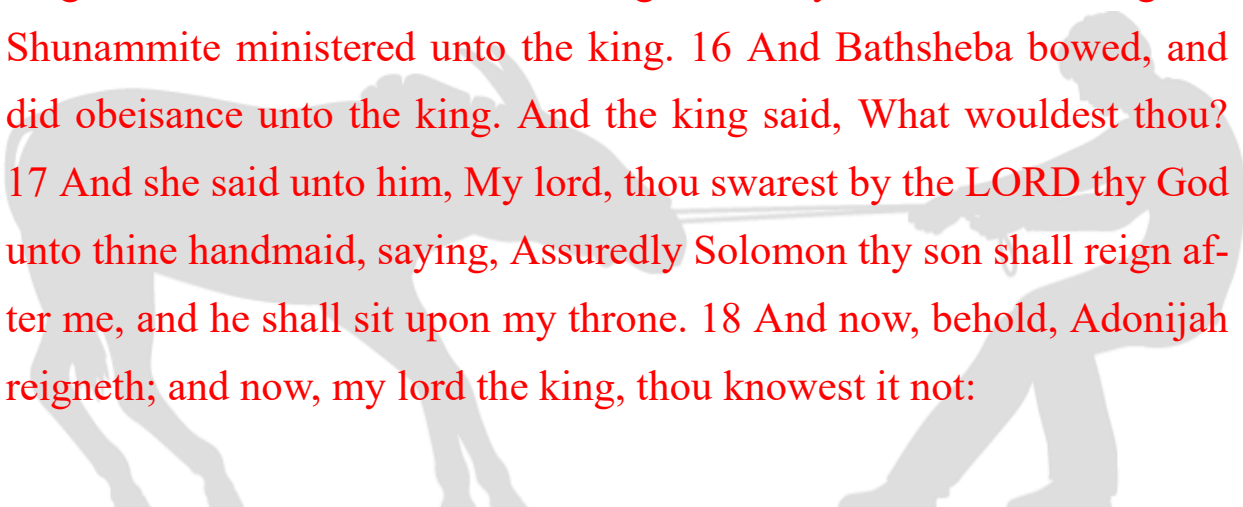
Where David was a warrior whose bravery and leadership was known by all, Solomon was a mommy's boy. Some say he was a sissy, but we can prove the mommy's boy claim.

When Adonijah, David's son sought the throne as David was old and bedridden, Nathan did not seek out Solomon to confront David concerning this, despite the fact that David had already said that Solomon would reign after him.

Instead, Nathan, wishing to nip this in the bud, went to Solomon's mother, Bathsheba.

1 Kings 1

11 ¶ Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? 12 Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon. 15 And Bathsheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king. 16 And Bathsheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou? 17 And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. 18 And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not:



When most people think of King Solomon, they think of the one who built the first and greatest temple, something that David his father wished to do, but God forbade him because he was a warrior.

After the dedication of this temple, God asked Solomon what he wanted, and Solomon asked for wisdom to rule the people correctly; God gave Solomon that wisdom, and riches as well.

Solomon had a reputation of being a wise king, and proved this on many occasions with many different judgments.

But Solomon's great weakness and downfall was women. He might be the biggest polygamist recorded, for he had seven hundred wives.

And yes, many marriages were indeed political, but you'd think there weren't that many countries in the world. And because the 700 wives weren't enough, he had a concubine of 300 women.

That's a total of a thousand legal and common law wives. Yet despite all these wives, some see Solomon as one of just two people recorded in Solomon's Song: he and the Shulamite woman, seen as passionately in love with each other.

Yet his own reputation puts him as the third player in the story: the Shulamite woman, her beloved, and Solomon, who actually was the spoiler. Solomon the womanizer couldn't be that dedicated to one woman. Instead, he was wishing to take her from her beloved for himself.

All these wives from all these other lands brought their cultures with them: their foods, their fashion, and their gods.

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