

Lessons Learned in the Valley – Part 1 **2 Samuel 12:13-25**

Introduction:

1. After the king of Israel (David) had committed adultery with Bathsheba, he hid his sin for over a year, hoping that God would forget it.
2. As we have seen, God didn't forget it, but rather sent the prophet (Nathan) to rebuke David for his sin. What was David's response? vs. 13
3. David acknowledged his sin and God forgave him, but David was about to enter one of the lowest valleys of his life.
4. Nobody enjoys the valleys of life, but life is not a continuous mountaintop experience - not even for the believer. A Christian has his share of struggles, heartaches, and valleys just like everybody else. We are not immune to the valleys, nor are we immune to the feelings and emotions that come with the valleys (despair, discouragement, loneliness, fear, depression).
5. But, those of you who have been through valleys could probably attest to one thing - the most powerful lessons you have learned in life have been taught to you through the valleys of life. This is true of King David and the valley he went through.
6. You may be in a valley right now, and you feel like things are about as low as they can get. Let's look at David and the lessons he learned while in the valley, and allow these things to help us and encourage us today.

First lesson learned – there are consequences when I disobey God.

1. Sometimes, our valleys and problems in life are self-inflicted. It is because of our own stubborn disobedience. This is certainly not always true, but if we were really honest, we would have to admit that it sometimes is true.
2. Nathan told David, "You are not going to die (vs. 13), but because you've done this deed, and because you have been such a terrible testimony for God, the baby that you have had with Bathsheba is going to die." vs. 14
3. After Nathan departed, notice what happened (vs. 15). God brought David into this valley to teach him the valuable lesson that there are consequences when we disobey and sin against God. Sometimes we can read a story like this - that only happened one time in the Bible - and think that this is the standard way God operates in every situation.
4. This was a unique situation in that very little of the Bible had been written at that point. Believers in the Old Testament did not have the Holy Spirit indwelling them, and David was held to a very high standard because he was the leader (the King) of God's people.
 - Please do not read this and think, "Oh no, I sinned, God is going to take my child," or think that if you had a child die in the past, God was punishing you.
 - This was a unique, one-time event, it was a different dispensation in God's Word, and God's dealings with mankind change as more of His revelation is revealed.
 - Today, we have God's completed Word. Today, instead of God dealing with us through various circumstances, God deals with us through His Word. His Word reproves us, corrects us, and instructs us when we go astray.

5. But, please understand that today we still will suffer natural consequences for sin, and that God can **use** these times to get our attention, and get us to forsake whatever sin we may be involved in.
6. It is important to remember that forgiveness and consequences are two completely different issues. When we are saved, God's forgiveness through Christ is total and complete, but there are still consequences that come when we disobey God.
7. Many Christians live under a false delusion that they can do anything they want to do, and because they are saved and secure in Christ, it will be like nothing ever happened.
 - It is true that we are eternally secure, and it is true that we have forgiveness as a present possession in Christ, but this does not exclude consequences for our sin. These are two separate issues entirely.
 - If I tell my child not to touch the hot stove, and he touches it anyway, and disobeys and disregards what I say, do I still love him? Is he still my child? Do I forgive him? But, does this mean that there won't be any consequences? Of course not! He will suffer a burn, and maybe have a terrible scar for the rest of his life.
 - When we sin and make bad choices, there will be consequences, and possibly bad scars. We reap what we sow. This is a divine principle that we cannot escape.

Second lesson learned – closeness to God can come through the valleys.

1. When David entered into this valley, notice what effect it had on his relationship with God (vs. 16). David drew near and close to God. David had not been walking closely to God. He was far from where he should have been in his relationship with God.
2. Some of the sweetest times of fellowship with God can come while we are in the valley. We realize that we can't deal with it and that we must draw strength from Him!
3. Many times, the valleys of life will drive us to our knees, and we discover things about God we never knew – we get to know God in a more personal way. Philippians 3:10
 - Example: We see this with families, don't we? People in a family don't see each other for years, and then tragedy brings them closer together.
4. In Psalm 73, the psalmist is in a deep valley and greatly discouraged (vs. 16), but it led him to cry out to God, "*You are the strength of my heart!*" vs. 25-28

Third lesson learned – God may deliver you through the valley rather than out of the valley.