

Abuse of Power

Pious people have always known that sexual harassment, as it would be defined in the Bible, is wrong, but the Liberals' definition of sexual harassment is nothing more than a political tool. When we as a nation respected the Bible as the Word of God, and the Book that set our conduct, we had no problems. When we deserted the Word of God and the God of the Word, and set Humanism as the standard for our definitions of morality, we have nothing but problems. The Bible says that we must learn from the past, in order to have a good future.

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (I Corinthians 10:11)"

President Clinton recently floated a trial balloon saying that he was reading the story of David and Bathsheba, and how God forgave David. This is strange to hear from a man who has so ridiculed the idea of learning from the past. In contrast he says he wants to build a bridge to the future. Some of us are not too willing to cross his bridge without knowing what future awaits us on the other side. To many of us, this bridge appears to be a pit which may have been purposely designed to take this entire nation down to the depths of Hell. Some leaders in the past have tried to force us to go to undesirable futures to fulfill their own lusts. The highway of history is littered with the rubble of these brave new worlds. Before we want to follow a leader, we want to know where he would lead us.

The Decision

As the President has found, King David was a leader whose lusts carried off a future in the wrong direction. The Bible says:

"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. (II Samuel 11:1)"

According to II Samuel 11:1, David knew that it was God's time to go out and fight the battles in order to win the war. He knew that he should be doing the nation's business that God had given him to do. In stead of doing God's will and the nations business, David decided to stay home. Though David knew better, he decided to set his armor aside. When he set his armor aside, he opened himself up to all sorts of attacks of the enemy, and temptations from within.

The Temptation

"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. (II Samuel 11:2)"

David had decided to stay home in stead of going to war. Why did he stay home? He wanted to go to a peepshow. David knew what he could see from his roof. Bathsheba was not just standing in her backyard taking a bath. This bath was a purification bath for the women at the end of their menstrual periods: " for she was purified from her uncleanness. (II Samuel 11:4)" These public baths were built from old time so that women could bathe to fulfill Moses' Law (Leviticus 15:28). Since these baths in warmer places were generally built without a roof, David knew that he could go up on his own housetop and view down into the bathhouse. David had obviously gone up there before, and in no way would have suddenly discovered this place at this time.

Since the Jewish day begins with sunset, a Jewish woman who had waited the specified time for purification would normally go to bathe as soon as the new day began. Being very familiar with Jewish customs, David waited until sunset to go up on his housetop. In the twilight of the day, he would not be easily noticed, and yet would have sufficient light to see the women bathing. David had obviously frequented this spot, and was returning to see whomever came down to bathe. According to the context David had obviously stayed home to be able to continue his pornographic life.

"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? (II Samuel 11:3)"

James 1:13-16 tells us what is going on in the hearts of those that throw themselves into sexual sin.

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren."

David saw Bathsheba. He saw how beautiful she was. David called one of his men to identify her. Since there could be confusion, David would have had to call one of his personal soldiers up on the roof to look at Bathsheba. Obviously he could not identify her, for David had to send him to inquire after her. When the report came back, David found out not only the woman's name, and her family, but also that she was a married woman. The part that David had to definitely consider though was much more involved. Uriah was one of David's mighty men (I Chronicles 11:26-31). Uriah was an officer in David's army -- one of his most trusted, honorable, loyal, and trustworthy men. While David was considering sex with Bathsheba, her husband was fighting the battle to defend his country and David's honor. Uriah was the kind of officer that David needed most.

The Rape

"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 (II Samuel 11:4)."

David was driven by passion. His decision to have Bathsheba was definite. He was not going to wait any time to consider the consequences. He sent the Arkansas State trouper (oops, excuse me, that was a different story), his personal messengers who went and "took" Bathsheba. There is no indication in the passage that Bathsheba was willing to go along with this. In fact, the word "took" clearly indicates that this was not Bathsheba's idea. This word "took" is found again where Nathan describes the event:

"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 (II Samuel 12:4)."

The ewe lamb did not participate in her own destruction, and neither did Bathsheba. David was the one who took the initiative by laying on her. When David finished he threw her out like trash, and "she returned unto her house."

The Cover-up

"And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child (II Samuel 11:5)."

Never forget that David knew what he had done was not a private matter between two consenting adults. Whether or not David used a knife or sword to rape Bathsheba, he certainly used the power of his office as king. He had used his FBI to investigate and find the name and vital statistics on Bathsheba. He had used his Secret Service to go and take her to him. When Bathsheba found out that she was pregnant, someone was sent with the message to David. There are at least three other people (besides David and Bathsheba) that knew that they were alone together in David's chamber. David needed to convince all five of them to cover-up his sin. Having done this, how was he going to keep Uriah in the dark, and make the rest of the country believe that David had nothing to do with this pregnancy? David decided to make it appear that Uriah was the real father of this baby. To try to do this, Uriah could not be in the middle of the battle for Jabbah, so David made his General Joab a part of his cover-up.

"And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king (II Samuel 11:6-8)."

The cover-up plan had been set in motion. David was assured that everything would work out. He was convinced that anyone else who could be persuaded to stay home from the battle, would

also find Bathsheba irresistible. He must have thought everyone had the same lapses in character and therefore no one would condemn him for what he did. Did it never occur to him that God had removed Saul as king for far less? Had he forgotten so soon that Saul had died ignominiously and how Saul's sin had even cost the life of his son Jonathan? What a surprise it must have been to David when he found that Uriah was the first uncooperative co-conspirator.

"But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house (II Samuel 11:9)."

David did not give up easily. He called in Uriah and demanded of him why he had not slept in his house. Uriah's answer showed that he had much more character than David.

"And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? 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. 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. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house (II Samuel 11:10-13)."

Uriah's answer was clear: the ark, Israel, Judah, and Joab are all living in tents. How could Uriah do any less? No one else was able to enjoy sleeping with his wife, so how could he? How this must have pierced David's heart! As Uriah lists everyone who is suffering together, the ark, Israel, Judah and Joab it became starkly clear how the name of David was missing from this list. How can I enjoy life while others are suffering? Yet David was not only enjoying life, he was enjoying it with Uriah's wife! David's attempt to trick Uriah had failed. He found out that Uriah had more character than he had even when he was drunk. David then realized that he had to try one more thing to rid himself of this problem.

"And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 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. And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. 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 (II Samuel 11:14-17)."

Uriah was so trustworthy and loyal to David that David could even send the letter to have him killed in Uriah's hand. Uriah could be trusted with David's life, money, reputation, or even David's wife. How great the betrayal of this great man had been when David could not be trusted with Uriah's life or wife. David never doubted for a minute that he could send this "sensitive" correspondence in his hand. Surely David knew what character this man had when he had named him as one of his mighty men, but David had still betrayed a friend like Uriah. He had known who Bathsheba was, and he still went ahead.

Technically David could say that he had not murdered Uriah, but God knew differently. He could say that the Ammonites had killed him, and legally that is what happened. He could say that any inquiry into the matter would end up being just "sex, sex, sex." But God saw things differently. David had lacked any loyalty, compassion or pity on a man who should have been considered his best friend.

David then took Bathsheba as his wife. This was more out of a desire to cover-up betrayal, adultery, rape, lying, and murder than a love for Bathsheba. But justice was still marching forward.

The Paula Jones Civil Case

David was called upon to judge a matter that surely had nothing to do with Bathsheba. Unbeknownst to David, God had secretly recorded all the conversations, and he was going to have an opportunity to hear the case against him, while yet thinking that the case dealt with another man.

"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. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 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. 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. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and **because he had no pity**. 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; 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 (II Samuel 12:1-8)."

David's judgment was that a man who had stolen and violently killed a poor man's sheep, should have to pay fourfold the price of the lamb, and be put to death. There are two reasons stated for such a harsh judgment: first, he did it, and second, he had no pity.

The Indictment

"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 (II Samuel 12:9).

The special prosecutor enumerated the charges against the king. The king was guilty of despising the commandment of the Lord. He had committed adultery and rape without any pity for the either Bathsheba or Uriah. David had done evil in the sight of God. David had used the Ammonites to murder Uriah in his attempt to cover-up. He had married Bathsheba for the sole purpose of continuing his cover-up.

David's response was not to turn and blame the special prosecutor. He did not say that Nathan had brought a politically motivated investigation. Nathan's motives had nothing to do with David's sin. He didn't say that he had not had sex with that woman, as though somehow trying to impugn Bathsheba's character. He did not say that she was looking for it, as though he had only done her a favor. He didn't say that she had put on a show for him, and that he had lost control once. He didn't say that Uriah had committed suicide, as though that would change the nature of what he had done.

The Judgment

Because David had killed Uriah by using the Ammonites, the sword would never depart from his house.

"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife (II Samuel 12:10)."

Because he had raped Bathsheba, his sons would rape his own daughters, and his neighbor would rape his wives.

"Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give [them] unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst [it] secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun (II Samuel 12:11-12)."

David did not blame his sin on the special prosecutor. He did not blame Bathsheba for his sin. He accepted the blame for what he did.

"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD (II Samuel 12:13a)."

The Wages of Sin

"And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 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 (II Samuel 12:13b-14)."

Besides the punishment that David had to face, there were other consequences to his sin. David had affected the testimony of God and that of the entire nation. Because of God's testimony, and the blasphemy that it would cause, the baby must die. Some would ask, why would this baby have to die? The baby must die, because if David remained on the throne, he would be compelled to name Bathsheba's son as his successor. This child could never be king. No bastard could ever sit on the throne, and no one from his lineage for the following nine generations after him.

"A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD (Deuteronomy 23:2)."

God had promised David that the kingdom would go to his son. But this son could not reign. Ever since the time that Judah had two bastard sons by his daughter-in-law, Tamar (Genesis 38), God had had to wait ten generations until David to have a king of the tribe of Judah. This could set the kingdom back for another ten generations. David's peepshow had cost God tremendously, and the only way for God to maintain His righteous standard was for the baby to die. David's judgment had been very faulty, and God's testimony was at stake.

The Long-term Effects of Sin

Sadly, David continued on as king. God had to keep his promises, even in the presence of human failure. God had told David from the very beginning that there were long-term effects to his sin. Although we do not know what these things were, Nathan had told him that God "would moreover have given unto thee such and such things." David immediately knew what things he had lost forever because of one perverse night.

Things were never to be the same again. Everybody soon found out that he no longer fought the battles, but he did take the credit for the victories.

"And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city. And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters. Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp

against the city, and take it: lest I take the city, and it be called after my name. And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof [was] a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was [set] on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. And he brought forth the people that [were] therein, and put [them] under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem (II Samuel 12:26-31)."

When Joab, Uriah, Israel and Judah had gone out to fight against Rabbah, David stayed home. While Uriah was sleeping in a tent, David was sleeping with his wife. While men were dying to take the city of Rabbah, David was murdering his own soldiers to cover his own sin. Now that Rabbah was ready to fall, David went to take the credit for it. And the military was willing to lie for him to make him look good. The victory was timed to make it look like David was the one who overthrew the city.

But David's grief was just beginning. David's son Amnon raped David's daughter Tamar. When Amnon was done with this heinous act, he threw his sister out like a piece of trash. How could he have done such a thing? He had treated her the same way that David had treated Bathsheba. He had seen that his father had no pity on Bathsheba, nor her husband whom he murdered. He had seen how David had treated a man of great character like Uriah, and he treated his sister, a woman of great character, the same way. He rightly judged that David could not condemn him for doing the same thing that he had done.

"Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat. So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded [it], and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. And she took a pan, and poured [them] out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought [them] into the chamber to Amnon her brother. And when she had brought [them] unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister. And she answered him, Nay, my

brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly. And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee. Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her [was] greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. And she said unto him, [There is] no cause: this evil in sending me away [is] greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this [woman] out from me, and bolt the door after her (II Samuel 13:7-17).

Since David sinned and seemingly got away with it, there was an overall lack of respect for the rule of law by everyone in the country. Absalom, another of David's sons, saw that there was no willingness on David's part to judge sin, even rape. He began to conspire with other members of his father's administration to murder Amnon his brother. The conspiracy was finally carried out when Absalom had all of plans in place. Absalom knew that David could not condemn him for murder of a rapist, when David, a rapist, had killed a righteous man.

Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant (II Samuel 13:28).

Absalom could not understand why his father would not forgive him and treat him as though nothing happened when he had, as far as he was concerned, executed a rapist. While David did not forgive him, he allowed him to live right there in Jerusalem. David's judgment became so warped that Absalom was easily able to begin to undermine people's confidence in his father's judgment as king. His slogan began to be, "If I were king . . ." People began to listen to this sedition which was spread by Absalom. Soon David's family was divided against him and so was the entire country. Civil war broke out and David fled his palace. Absalom entered into the royal city with his army and proceeded to rape David's wives. Ultimately David had to go through the anguish of seeing Absalom's dead body. His family

was divided. His nation was in the midst of a civil war. Several of sons were dead. His daughters and wives had been raped. This does not sound to me like the forgiveness I hear so many asking for today. While God forgave David's sin, there were consequences to his sin, and God had to meet out punishment.

Sadly, this was not the end of the consequences: it was merely the beginning. David's poor judgment cost seventy thousand men their lives in Israel (II Samuel 24). After Absalom, Adonijah tried to lead a revolt, and soon, Solomon killed Adonijah too. Joab, David's general, had been involved in the revolt with Adonijah, and Solomon ordered his death as well.

The women in King Solomon's life became more of a problem to him than David ever had. These women wrecked his life, and seditions and murders became a constant problem of his administration. At Solomon's death, the kingdom was divided, and one king after another of his line came and went. Most of them were characterized as being evil. By the time Jeconiah became king, God was ready to call an end to the lineage of Solomon.

"Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah (Jeremiah 22:28-30)."

God had made a promise to raise up from David's line a king to sit on the throne. Because of His promise to David, he had to leave David as king, but do not confuse this with any idea that David suffered no consequences for his sin. David suffered, and so did his family, and the entire nation of Israel.

When we sin, there are immediate as well as long-term effects. Sometimes we think that we have gotten off easy, when the immediate effects of sin do not seem to be so bad, but beware my friend, for the long-term effects are always worse when the short-term effects are lessened. And we must always recognize that there are eternal consequences for every sin. I am sure that

Adam and Eve could never have imagined all the heartache that they would cause for thousands of years for something that was seemingly so small. Moses well said,

"But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD:
and ***be sure your sin will find you out*** (Numbers 32:23)."

We must understand that ignorance of the law is not an excuse in Heaven, any more than it is on Earth. Jesus said,

"But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more (Luke 12:48)."

If we fail to judge sin in the highest offices in the land, if we fail to expect decency and morality out of our leaders, then we will face the punishment of a righteous God upon our country for generations to come. We cannot, we must not, forgive a grievous sin, since in doing so, we as a nation will accept the punishment for the sin we have failed to judge. God clearly calls upon us to judge evil, just as much as He expects us to reward that which is good. If we equally reward evil and good, are we not deserving of the punishment that shall surely fall upon us as a nation?