

**2 Samuel 11:1-15**  
**Ephesians 3:14-21**

“In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him;” Just like I hear Bill Cosby’s voice as the voice of God when I’m reading the story of Noah, I have a certain voice that I hear when I’m reading this story today, or rather a set of voices. I have in mind three main characters from one of my favorite childhood television series, “Lost in Space.” And when I read this opening sentence from 2 Samuel all I can hear is Robot saying “Danger Will Robinson! Danger!” The first sentence foreshadows the immense danger and intrigue that will follow, like the opening scenes of a “Lost in Space” episode showing Professor Smith idling about, then coming upon some new narcissistic, and duplicitous scheme. “Danger Will Robinson! Danger!”

For those of you who haven’t seen the show or need your memories jogged, the basic plot of “Lost in Space” is that of a family of space explorers (the Robinsons) and a couple extra crew members (the pilot and Prof. Smith and Robot), who get lost in space. Three of the main characters, Will Robinson, Prof. Smith and Robot almost always end up in turmoil together. Will is a young adolescent who is characterized by honesty, some naivety, and exceptional intelligence and bravery. Prof. Smith is the foil to Will: dishonest, suspicious, of exceptional intelligence and a distinct coward. Robot is, as his name implies, a robot – tasked with helping all the explorers in their day-to-day endeavors as needed. However, his main task seems to be looking after Will and protecting him from the duplicity of Prof. Smith. Often times once Robot becomes aware of pending danger to Will, of a mortal threat, he will announce loudly, “Danger Will Robinson! Danger!” while waving his arms in and flashing red lights on his chest.

So, like I said, when I read this story these are the characters and voices that come to mind. “In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.” Alright, here’s our first clue, cue up the sinister music before we cut to commercial. David isn’t leading his soldiers in battle. Who else have we read about, in 1 Samuel say, who as king didn’t lead his soldiers in battle after becoming a powerful and successful king? Saul. Saul behaves this way; Saul as he becomes wicked and duplicitous; the Saul who plots to kill innocent David; that Saul. And now David is behaving in a similar manner? David, for our purposes today, will be played as Prof. Smith – not as we might have come to expect, as Will Robinson. Think of Prof. Smith volunteering to “guard” the ship while those “foolhardy Robinsons” go off to explore dangerous territory; after all he surmises, they are expendable – only useful to his means for pursuing various ends of self-interest.

“It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king’s house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful.” Prof. Smith’s interest is stimulated – needless to say this wouldn’t be the case if he was out with the Robinson family committed to the good of the whole rather than selfishly, blindly pursuing his own gratification. You can almost see his eyes

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begin to narrow, then glimmer. “Hmmm...now what have we here?” “David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, ‘This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.’” “Ahhh...” thinks Smith, “perfect. We’ll have to be discreet, not let the Robinsons in on the plot, but yes, yes, this is very nice indeed.” And he rubs his hands with glee, grinning malevolently. And he initiates his dastardly plan, “So David sent messengers to fetch her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house”, and, as always, there are complications, “The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, ‘I am pregnant.’” Now what to do? What to do?

Enter Will Robinson, as Uriah the Hittite. Eager, earnest, intelligent, brave Will. Prof. Smith is invariably want to draw Will in because he’s “just a sniveling boy” and can be duped more easily than the rest of the older Robinsons. And what happens?

*2 Samuel 11:6-15*

*So David sent word to Joab, ‘Send me Uriah the Hittite.’ And Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, ‘Go down to your house, and wash your feet.’ Uriah went out of the king’s house, and there followed him a present from the king. But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. When they told David, ‘Uriah did not go down to his house,’ David said to Uriah, ‘You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?’ Uriah said to David, ‘The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing.’ Then David said to Uriah, ‘Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.’ So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day, David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.*

*In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. In the letter he wrote, ‘Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.’*

David tries seven ways to Sunday to co-opt Uriah into his machinations, his Machiavellian plot. At first through kindness and flattery, then through gentle, but firm insistence. Then through trying to get Uriah drunk enough to reverse his convictions.

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Now to those of you reading this and thinking, “Well, I mean, what’s the real harm in what David’s doing? It’ll make everyone happier in the long run. He’s not as scheming and devilish as you’re making him out to be.” For those of you who still think at base that David looks more like Will Robinson than Prof. Smith read 1 Samuel 21:1-5.

You may remember that when David first fled from Saul he went to Ahimelech the priest and asked for some provisions and a sword. The priest had nothing but the sacred bread, which he would allow David and his men to eat, if they had only “kept themselves from women” (verse 4). The priest assumes they may have conducted themselves otherwise. David’s answer, and especially the tone of it, is very pertinent to our text. He confidently assured the priest that he and his men had kept themselves from women, almost incensed that the priest would think otherwise. And the reason David gives is that he and his men are on a mission for the king. The inference is that this is a military (or at least official) mission.

Now here is a most amazing thing. David, years earlier, was adamant about the fact that those on a mission for the king should keep themselves from sexual intercourse. Now, years later, David is amazed that a man on a mission for the king is willing to abstain from sexual intercourse with his wife. Worse yet, David sets out to convince – even compel – Uriah to go to do so, even though it will cause him to violate his conscience. This is not “causing a weaker brother to stumble;” this is cutting off a stronger brother’s legs at the knee. Uriah is an example of the commitment expected of every soldier, and of David in particular – at least the David of the past. Uriah is now acting like the David we knew from earlier days. Uriah is the “David” that David should be.

Uriah’s words should have shocked David into a realization of the depth of his sin. The author uses these words in an ironically pivotal way. Uriah has just told David that he will not go to his own house, that he will not eat and drink and sleep with his wife. He has put this matter emphatically: “By your life, and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing” (verse 11). In the very next verses, David compels Uriah to “eat and drink” with him, with the hope that he will lie with his wife. And when Uriah swears by the life of the king that he will not do so, the king ends up taking Uriah’s life. How ironic! How tragic!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Deffinbaugh, B. “David and Uriah” retrieved 7/29/2006 from [http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=566](http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=566)

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“Danger Will Robinson! Danger!”

*2 Samuel 11:14-15*

*In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. In the letter he wrote, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.”*

Prof. Smith is fully prepared to let Will Robinson take the fall, even die to protect his lie, his fear of discovery. He’ll even make a deal with an enemy if it serves his own ends; perhaps a pact with hostile space aliens in return for betraying the Robinsons.

How strange it is to see David, the mighty man of valor, (1 Samuel 16:18) dealing with Uriah, another mighty man of valor, like the enemy. Here is Uriah, a man who will give his life for his king, and David, a man who is now willing to take Uriah’s life to cover his sin. We all know that it doesn’t work. How strange it is to see David making Joab his partner in crime, especially after what Joab has done to Abner.

When Joab came out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the well of Sirah; but David did not know it. So when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the middle of the gate to speak with him privately, and there he struck him in the belly so that he died on account of the blood of Asahel his brother. Afterward when David heard it, he said, “I and my kingdom are innocent before the Lord forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. May it fall on the head of Joab and on all his father’s house; and may there not fail from the house of Joab one who has a discharge, or who is a leper, or who takes hold of a distaff, or who fails by the sword, or who lacks bread.” So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner because he had put their brother Asahel to death in the battle at Gibeon (2 Samuel 3:26-30).

David condemned Joab and put him under a curse because he shed the innocent blood of Abner. Now, this same David (well, not really the same David) now uses Joab to kill Uriah and get him out of his way. David’s enemy (Joab) has become his friend, or at least his ally. David’s enemies (the Ammonites) have become his allies (they fire the fatal shots which kill Uriah). And David’s faithful servant Uriah has been put to death as though he were the enemy. Not only is Uriah put to death, but a number of other Israelite warriors die with him. They have to be sacrificed to conceal the murder of

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Uriah. Uriah's death has to be viewed as one of a group of men, rather than merely one man.<sup>2</sup>

How wicked! How twisted and terrible! Can you see it? Young Will's innocent face? Prof. Smith's screwed grimace, darting countenance?

But here's the thing. If you walk out of here today only wondering about the side of David you never knew; or at least the side you've never been able to reconcile with the description elsewhere as "a man after God's own heart" then you've missed the most important point. We're all capable of making the shift from Will to Prof. Smith – all-too-often it's a breathlessly short commute. David at the height of his power and fame falls all too quickly. And each one of us is capable of the same.

Listen up men! You want to learn from this – then take it at face value. You can either engage as valiant soldiers in what Steve Arterburn describes as "every man's battle", or you can become susceptible as David – there is not middle ground. From masturbation, fetishes, sex toys, pornography and strip clubs to checking out women jogging on your way to work, there is not middle ground in this battle against lust and adultery. You either fight or become complicit, because sins of omission necessarily lead to sins of commission. So how do you make that a reality in this hyper-sexually charged culture?

*Ephesians 3:14-19*

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Start here, start with faithful investment in the life of worship, discipline and service within the church. Invest in being faithful, as David should have, and you will see the benefit. Too much time spent at work, too much time spent at play, too much time spent away from God's people and a proper attitude of worship – well, sins of omission will always lead to sins of commission.

And what are you teaching your children? What are you teaching your sons? What are you teaching your daughters? They know about your "secret" stash of Playboys, or that hidden cache of movies. They've caught your eyes lurking about eight inches below the eyes of that woman you're talking to. They catch it when you risk a quick look in the

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

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rearview mirror at the woman jogging past the car. And when in doubt about mixed message they'll stick with what's observable, not what's ideal. So either get out there and lead them as David should have been leading his soldiers, or sit back and reap the consequences. There is no middle ground. Want your sons to be faithful and carefully respectful and loving in their relationships with women – teach them; and if you don't know how to go about it ask someone who does; ask your minister – ask me, ask Steve. No embarrassment. Read the "Every Man" series of books. Listen to "New Life Live" broadcast on Word FM 101.5. There are so many excellent resources to help with this.

What about your daughters? You want them to be careful, chaste, have good self-image that isn't dependent on the mercurial standards of sex appeal? Then teach them, with your actions in regard to women, with your wisdom from honest talks about relationships, what works, what doesn't. Again, if you don't know how, ask someone who does. You have the responsibility to be out front in this battle – whether you feel prepared, sufficient, or not.

Women, if your husband, brother, father or male acquaintance is having a problem with sexual sin, encourage him to get help. And for goodness sake, if you are part of that sexual sin, whether in an affair, sex outside of marriage, or engaging in a non-sexual affair, now is the time to stop. That's not God's will for your life or for his. He didn't create you to be in dishonest, conflicted relationships like that. And your kids are watching, your kids are learning. What are you teaching them about covenantal faithfulness, about self-respect? Lead them by example, and if you don't know how get help.

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This is not for you. This is not what Christ intends for your life, as Christians, his namesake.

*Ephesians 3:14-21*

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ*

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*may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness.*

*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.*