



# God's Mission & David's

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What Can we Learn about Missions?



## **GOD'S MISSION AND OURS**

**God's Mission and David's (Sat. Morning Breakfast)**

**Our Mission of Desirable Blessing (Sun. Morning)**

**The Mission of The Master's Academy International (Sun. Eve.)**



We get our ideas about  
missionaries and  
missions from the fact  
that God is a King who  
sends His agents.



# What Was a Mission?



In Israel's world, one advantage of sending a messenger was that the sender could communicate and accomplish activity at a distance without being seen. But also, leaders could conduct missions to secretly achieve corrupt ends, for unlike the highly visible king, agents could perform illegal or immoral activity unwatched. From the standpoint of an observer, if the king sent a messenger, it must be for the good of the kingdom. In this study, I will focus on David's and God's use of missions, agents, and messages in carrying out the royal and Messianic plan.



# David's First Marriage Mission--Abigail

- Note the role of David as sender.
- Note the role of God as sender.
- Note the fact that God assumes responsibility for the death of Nabal.
- Note the happy ending!



1Sam. 25:5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name (royal administrative agency):

1Sam. 25:14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers (now called messengers) out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.

1Sam. 25:32 And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me (God sent her!):

1Sam. 25:39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from **the hand of Nabal**, and hath kept his servant from evil: for **the LORD** hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head, And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

1Sam. 25:40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee to take thee to him to wife.



But in chapter, 11 God's mission and David's conflict. The account begins with "At the time when kings go out" (11:1). It could also be rendered, "At the time messengers go out, David sent Joab . . . ." 17 missions or sendings through agents are found in the Chapter.



# David's Second Marriage Mission-- Bathsheba



1.) At “the time when messengers or kings go out, David sent Joab out with “the king’s men and the whole Israelite army” (2Sam. 11:1), essentially every man, on a military mission without accompanying them. Sending others on his mission allowed David to remain behind for reasons not stated—a military mission.

2.) After watching Bathsheba bathe from afar, David sent to get information about her (2Sam. 11:3)—a search for information mission. David heard that she was the wife of Uriah. It is interesting that here and the genealogy in Matthew, she is identified as the wife of Uriah. Uriah was the member of the elite 30 of David’s warriors (23:39). He probably belonged to Jerusalem’s nobility, which might explain the close proximity of his residence to the royal palace.

3.) Having received word that she was the wife of one of his warriors who was off in battle, David sent messengers to bring her to him (2Sam. 11:4)—a retrieving persons mission. The messengers “took her.” A later reference says David took her (12:12). God holds David accountable although the agent did the taking.



4.) When she discovered that she was with child, Bathsheba sent word to David informing him of her pregnancy (2Sam. 11:5)—a report mission. The only words coming out of Bathsheba’s mouth in this account are the message, “I’m pregnant.”

5.) After formulating his plan, David sent a messenger to Joab asking him to release Uriah to return from the battlefield (2Sam. 11:6)—Ostensibly a request for a full military report mission.

6.) David ordered Joab to send Uriah from the battlefield (2Sam 11:6), a request for persons mission, much like the first to Bathsheba.

7.) Joab sent Uriah to David (2Samuel 11:6)—a dispatch of persons mission. In fact, David follows protocol and asks Uriah, “What is the welfare of Joab, what is the welfare of the people, and what is the welfare of the battle” (v.7). This is pretense in requesting a full report.

8.) David sent Uriah to his house to wash his feet (v. 8). Uriah apparently understands the order clearly for he spells it out in detail in his response to David (v. 11). What David suggested to Uriah was a violation of soldiers at war according to ritual law.



9.) David sent an agent to spy on Uriah (v. 8) who reported to David that Uriah did not go home but stayed with the king's servants (v. 10).

10.) After dismissing his faithful warrior to return to his wife, the king sent Uriah a gift (2Sam. 11:8)—a gift mission. This is very suspicious. Either *masath* was a term referring to a person and/or the intent behind sending a gift was to spy on Uriah to see if he goes home.

11.) David told Uriah that he would “send him back” (11:12)—Re-commission for battle.

12.) Certain that Uriah had not been with his wife, David penned his own letter and sent it to Joab "by the hand of Uriah." This messenger terminology suggests that David's valiant warrior was an agent for his own execution statement (2Sam. 11:14). David could have used other messengers, but that would mean more people would know of his sin. The message was clear: “Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is the fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die.” Of critical interest to our theme, the plan was a play on agency and instrument which David will call “the sword.” With full consent and exemplary valor, Uriah went to his death. Question: does Uriah's zeal to die for the Lord's work release David from responsibility? Can David blame Uriah and claim his wife?—ostensibly, a military mission but really a corruption mission using military agency to cover David's sin.



13.) Having done as David commanded, Joab sent a full account to David telling him about the battle (2Sam. 11:18). Anticipating David's negative response, Joab told the messenger to tell David: "Also, your servant Uriah is dead." – a report mission with covert murder details attached.

14.) After a brief aside explaining how Joab planned to cover his conspiracy with David, the text says a second time, that Joab sent a report to David explaining all that had happened, presumably including the death of Uriah (2Sam. 11:22). This double message tells us some time had lapsed. It also reminds us of how David's sin pulled down others.

15.) David then told the messenger to tell Joab, "Don't let this upset you; the sword (the instrument) devours one as well as the other. Press the attack against the city and destroy it" (11:25)—military mission. The crucial line is David's "The sword devours one as well as the other." David not only distances himself through the *personal* agency of Joab who works with the enemy army, David comforts Joab by *depersonalizing* that agency as instrument, "the sword." There is a progressive distancing from the murder that moves from agency to instrument. Someone told Bathsheba and she mourned the loss of her husband.



16.) Assured of his cover up mission's success, David sent for Bathsheba once again, just as he had done with Abigail. This time she would not return to her home down the hill (2Sam. 11:27)—retrieval of persons mission. The language describing David's last use of agency emphasizes the abuse of royal power that David is increasingly willing to exercise. The sad story leaves us wondering with Youngblood if this isn't "the ever present potential fate of powerless victims of royal sending run amok." Bathsheba may have been more a victim of force.



# God's Mission Begins



17.) The chapter division spoils the connection between Chapters 11 and 12 and this account: "Then the LORD sent Nathan to David." (2Sam. 12:1). God's message echoed and parodied David's final message to Joab: "... the sword (that random depersonalized instrument) will never depart from your house."



# A Brief Summary about God's and David's Use of Mission



In 2Samuel 11-12:1, at least 17 separate dispatches appear relating to one mission make up this account (28 verses). But two actual missions may be distinguished; God's mission and David's. Most of the sending occurred over a distance so short that David could see, and his voice could have been heard. God's mission was Nathan's short walk to David. But distance was not the key factor--at least not physical distance. It was spiritual distance. Messengers were able to carry out what the sender could not. Nathan says, "you did it secretly" (2Sam 12:12). Messengers were able to carry out in secret what the sender could not.



God's mission realigns David's sinful mission in the messianic program. God's sends a messenger Nathan, on a mission to inform David about how he will use David's messages, messengers and mission to realign him with the messianic line and program rooted in his treaty with David (2Sam 7:14ff). But God's message will echo through Israel's history in David's house; "The sword (an instrument of agency) devours one as wells as the other."



And God's mission to  
you and me in sending  
His Son realigns us with  
Him through Jesus.