

# An Ethical Appraisal of David-Bathsheba Relationship in 2 Samuel 11

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## Abstract

The Old Testament is saturated with ethical issues. Ethics is a framework that is covered with sound moral principles and decisions. Interestingly, the account of the relationship between David and Bathsheba (2 Sam 11) outlines certain ethical issues relevant for modern Christians. This paper reveals that in the David-Bathsheba relationship narrative, certain ethical values were breached though with consequences. The paper reveals David's violation of the ethics of self-satisfaction and perseverance (2 Sam 11:2-3); ethics of fidelity/faithfulness in marriage (2 Sam 11: 4); ethics of integrity (2 Sam 11:6-8); the ethical principle of trustworthiness and sincerity (2 Sam 11:14-15); ethics of the right to human dignity (2 Sam 11: 4a); the ethics of love as well as that of cooperate mutual good (2 Sam 11:15-16). It is obvious that David could not consider, appreciate, and think highly of the life of Uriah as important. In other words, David violated the ethics of respect for human life (2 Sam 11:16-21). This paper thus concludes that the David-Bathsheba narrative is bequeathed with ethical concerns relevant for modern Christians.

**Keywords:** Ethical issues, Old Testament, David-Bathsheba relationship, 2 Samuel 11

## 1. Introduction

Ethics or ethical is derived from the Greek '*ethos*' meaning, custom, habit or conduct. It thus seeks to evaluate human conduct, and the rules, and principles used to control it. Ethics is also concerned with conscious and purposeful behavior and with the obligations and rules that relate to it. It aims at discovering what factors make actions good or bad, right or wrong, for both individuals and social groups.<sup>3</sup> According to Arnold and Williams, the word ethics, when used in the Old Testament, in a more evaluative sense, can refer to the way these historical texts assess such behavior.<sup>4</sup> The Old Testament ethics is the highest good that has an "underlying principle", "underlying rationale", and central tenet.<sup>5</sup> Ethics is the discipline to do the "right thing."<sup>6</sup> It is a framework that is covered with sound moral principles and decisions. It is a moral grid through which our decisions in life are made- both in our personal lives.<sup>7</sup> However, looking into the life of David before and after the period he lived as a king in Israel and Judah, one would see love, kindness, compassion, friendship, truthfulness, respect for life, mercy, and reverence to Yahweh at its peak. Not until he had a relationship with Bathsheba that it appears he lost his sense of humor, and by trying to keep in secret the relationship he enjoyed (2 Sam. 11:3b), he crawl into chains of unethical issues which this paper examines with its implications for Nigerian Christians.

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<sup>4</sup>Arnold T. Bill & H. G .M. Williamson. 2005. Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Book Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press. 259.

<sup>5</sup>Alexander T. Desmond & Baker W. David. 2003. Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press. 225.

<sup>6</sup>Wayde Goodall. 2007. Why Great Men Fall. Abuja: Still Waters Publishers. 115.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. 115.

## **2. The Old Testament and Social Relationships**

In the Old Testament, relationship between a man and a woman is extremely ethical if only it is related in the right way. God Himself is a social being.<sup>8</sup> In Genesis 1:26, God said “let us create, *make or do*(*na‘aseh*) man...” Aside from the numerous occurrences of the meaning “do” or “make” in a general sense, ‘*asâ* is often used with the sense of ethical obligation. Israel as the covenant people were frequently commanded to “do” all that God had commanded (Exo 23:22; Lev 19:37; Deut 6:18 etc.). The numerous contexts in which this concept occurs attest to the importance of an ethical response to God which goes beyond mere mental abstraction and which is translatable into obedience which is evidenced in demonstrable act.<sup>9</sup> He created human beings as social beings since He created human being in his self-image-male and female to live together (Gen 2:18-24). God did not create humans as “solitary beings,” but wanted them to be “social beings” Gen. 1:27; 2:18-20, 23).<sup>10</sup>

Marriage is a divinely ordained relationship or union. Created man needed a counterpart, a “help-meet,” or “a helper fit for him.” Marriage relationship, therefore, is God-given. Of the woman Adam declared, “This is the bone of my bones, and the flesh of my flesh,” signifying essential unity and responsibility. In the beginning, during the creation week, God initiated the concept of relationship - be it personal, intimate, and ethical,- according to Genesis 2: 18, “And the Lord said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him”.

In the Old Testament, there are clear evidences that God is interested in the relationships of human being on earth, and few of the Old Testament passages support this. The following biblical passages are of significance:

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female (Gen 1:27-28). Man shall leave his parents, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one body (Gen. 2:24). When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eye, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man’s wife. And if her husband hate her, and write a bill of divorcement... (Deut. 24:1-4).

The passages above prove beyond every reasonable doubt that God is absolutely interested in ethical relationships of man. He initiated the act of relationship when he said “it is not good for man to remain alone” and I will make a help meet for him (Gen. 2:18), and God from Adam’s rib molded a companion, and a partner who related to Adam emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually. God is interested in ethical relationship that approves reverence and loyalty to Him. Long after Adam and Eve’s relationship was inaugurated by the Creator Himself in the Garden of Eden, Satan through the negligence of Cain and his descent, by their way of life, influenced and altered the relationship master-minded by God from the Eden.<sup>11</sup>

Morality in Israel was initiated by God through Moses, the priests, and prophets. However, it is unfortunate to see that any given phenomenon in the social and moral codes of relationship in the Old Testament may in fact be derived from one or more of the many cultures out of which Israel was compounded...we must therefore, abandon the idea that we may explain every social custom in Old Testament by the simple device of relating it to some analogous institutions in desert code of the Semites. We shall have occasion frequently to refer to these outside cultures which influenced Hebrew relationships,

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<sup>8</sup>The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, <http://multimedia.opusdei.org/pdf/en/29.pdf>, Accessed on 10th February, 2014.

<sup>9</sup>Laird Harris, Ed., 1981. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 1 & 2, Chicago: Moody Press, Accessed from Bible Works version 7.

<sup>10</sup>The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, <http://multimedia.opusdei.org/pdf/en/29.pdf>, Accessed on 10th February, 2014.

<sup>11</sup>Ellen Gould White. *Messenger of Hope: Connecting with Jesus*. Seoul: Everlasting Gospel Publishing Association, (no year of publication), 32.

marriage, and family ideas and ideal, this includes a brief account of the phases through which the Hebrews appear to have passed, and of the cultures from which they borrowed in fashioning their own peculiar ethos. Fortunately a great amount of knowledge has now been brought to light by archaeological findings. In order to explain given belief or custom which we find in the Old Testament; we may have to consider the possibility that it was derived, either in whole or in part from one of the following sources:

1. The Desert Code of the Early Semites
2. The Babylonian-Assyrian Culture
3. The Egyptian Culture
4. The Hittite Culture
5. The pre-Hebrew Civilization of Canaan

The sources from which we may learn something of the social life of these people can be divided into two main groups- legal codes and religious or semi-religious cults. Among the laws, the chief are the famous code of Hammurabi, found in Susa by a French expedition in 1901-1902; the middle Assyrian legal documents found later at the site of Ashur, described as series of amendments of the existing laws which were either the Babylonian code itself or a body of laws of a closely related character; and the Hittite code excavated at Boghaz Koi in 1906. A comparison of enactments of these codes with those of the Hebrew laws reveal a number of interesting parallels which in some cases leave us in no doubt as to the fact that they possessed a common origin.<sup>12</sup>

In his book titled *“The Hebrew Marriage,”* Mace, argues that almost all the ethics of relationship in the Old Testament are influenced by the nations round about the Israelites, therefore, suggesting that the life and conducts of the Hebrews are guided by the Semitic law codes. He further states that “the cultures of the nations which surrounded Israel are alike patriarchal in the basis of their social organization. Indeed, the patriarchy was not only central to the community life, but central in their thought about human society—thus the picture which the Old Testament presents is that which the people practiced as they arrived in Palestine, and whose members recognize Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as their common ancestors, and required themselves in particular as the children of Israel.”<sup>13</sup>

Sexual issues occurred so much in the Old Testament, some were ethical and other were not. The Bible contains both moral and immoral sexual activities of men of Israel. This is affirmed by Frank Minith, Paul Meier, and Stephen Arterburn who claimed that:

Infidelity is about sex. But even more fundamentally, infidelity is about deception. Adulterers have to lie to account for their whereabouts and the use of their time. They have to account for strange phone calls, mysterious credit card charges, and money missing from checking accounts. They have to account for withdrawing sexually and affectionately from their spouse.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the syncretism in the theocratic ethical codes of conduct as directed by God through Moses (Exo 20:1-17) at Mount Sinai, the Hebrew culture was still unique and outstanding as regards human relationships. Herbert Harper stated that, “all known cultures have some limit on extramarital relations and some means of enforcing such designated taboos.”<sup>15</sup> Mace also quoting Eisfeldt, went further to claim that the practice of immoral sexual relationship is termed as “wrought folly in Israel” in fact it means no less than “committing a crime against Israel.” Shechem’s violation of Dinah is regarded as having “wrought folly in Israel” (Jgs 20:6-10; Judges 19: 23-24). Tamar pleads with Ammon saying: ‘for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly’ (2 Sam 13:12-13). In Jeremiah 29:21-23, two prophets are condemned for adultery which is also described as ‘folly in Israel’. The same word is translated as *lewdness* in Hosea 2:10, comes from the same root word, these are ‘deeds that ought not to be done’ (Gen 20:9). To

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<sup>12</sup> Mace R. David. 1953. *Hebrew Marriage: Sociological Study*, New York: The Epworth Press. 44, 52.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 62, 63.

<sup>14</sup> Frank Minith, Paul Meier, and Stephen Arterburn. *The Complete Life Encyclopedia*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1995), 354.

<sup>15</sup> Swenson Greg. *Coping with Infidelity in Marriage*, [www.gregswensonphd.com/infidelity.htm#4](http://www.gregswensonphd.com/infidelity.htm#4), (Accessed on 21th August, 2013).

bestow sex upon an improper person or an object was an abomination. This innate horror of the misuse of sex was probably greatly intensified by the fact that it was the 'male organ' which bore the sacred symbol of the national covenant with the Yahweh. Indeed, it may well be that the high code of sexual morality which the Hebrews managed to maintain owed much to the particular nature of the initiatory rite into the community of Israel.<sup>16</sup>

Accordingly, sexual immorality or misapplication of sex was a taboo in the land of Israel and one who commits such is seen as rebelling against the land. This means that the patriarchs who feared the lord God of Israel transmitted into their children the law of sexual purity and their children passed it on to their third and fourth generation.<sup>17</sup>

### **3. Ethical Appraisal of 2 Samuel 11**

In the story of the relationship between David and Bathsheba, there are some ethical issues that are glaring and such include: - covetousness/lust, infidelity, deceit, betrayal, stealing, cooperation with evil and murder.

#### **Covetousness/ Lust (2 Sam 11:2-3)**

<sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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?

Covetousness, is being jealously eager for possession of something especially property of another person. David as a spiritual and political leader in Israel understood very well that for another person to jealously or unlawfully take another person property is sin. He was quite aware of the injunction 'thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife' (Ex. 20:17b). One thing is that ethics is never a business issues or a social issue or a political issue but always a personal issue.<sup>18</sup> Personality is someone's individual conscience, capable of running his life and choosing his acts.<sup>19</sup>

Lust on the other hand, is a strong desire, especially sexual in nature, it entails an urgent crave for sexual contact. It could also be a general want or longing not necessarily sexual or devious. Lust is violent in action. It must be understood as that which confuses the emotional feelings and puts out false sensations. It is only the powerful, pure, and truthful emotional feelings that give the best resistance against lust. The ultimate fight against lust is in the heart if only it maintains healthy and honest emotional background that is guided by the influence of the Spirit of God.<sup>20</sup>

David saw, admired, desired, and was enticed but could not guard his emotions, and his lustful desire outweighed his good sense and integrity.<sup>21</sup> Even after he had been informed that Bathsheba was married to one of his soldiers at the battlefield against the Ammonites, he went ahead and sent for her (2 Sam 11: 3-4) . And as such, he violated the ethics of self-satisfaction and perseverance.

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<sup>16</sup>Mace, 221.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, 221.

<sup>18</sup>Maxwell C. John. *Ethics 102: What Every Leader Needs to Know*, (New York: Time Warner Book Group, 2005), 9.

<sup>19</sup>Anselme Michel. *Freedom and Morality: A Nonsubjective Moral Code*, (New York: Philosophical Library Press, 1983), 56.

<sup>20</sup>Paul Arthur Bell. 2012. *The Ethical Standard*. New York: Xlibris Corporation, 157. [www.xlibris.com](http://www.xlibris.com), Accessed on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.

<sup>21</sup>Daniel F. Case. *David and Bathsheba: Sin, Cover-up, Condemnation, and Restoration (A four-part Biblical study of Grace and Healing)*, <http://www.case-studies.com/david1> Accessed 26th November, 2013.

### Infidelity (2 Sam 11: 4)

<sup>4</sup> 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.

From 2 Samuel 11: 3, David was told that the woman was Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. He was quite aware of Bathsheba's marital status but went ahead to request for her. In this regard, this paper considers his action as unethical and as well indicts him of infidelity. However, infidelity simply means unfaithfulness in marriage. It entails having sexual relationship or intercourse outside the person one is married to. It is also called extramarital sexual relations - having marital affairs beyond the sphere of marital cycle. Infidelity was an ethical issue in ancient Israel, it was also in the time of the New Testament writers and it is also in our contemporary times. The Hebrew word for adultery or infidelity, is  $\text{נָאָפֵט}$  (*nā'ap*). As a verb, it appears in Qal imperfect, 2nd person, masculine, singular.  $\text{נָאָפֵט}$  (*nā'ap*) appears 31 times in 33 verses; 15 times in the Old Testament and 18 times in the New Testament. In the Old Testament  $\text{נָאָפֵט}$  (*nā'ap*) appears in same form in the same root word for adultery (17), adulterer (8), adulteress (4), and adulterous (1). It is interpreted as "to commit adultery," "to have sexual relation usually with a man/husband or with a woman/wife of another." A woman or man who involves in this act is called adulterous woman or man. In Ancient Israel adultery is likened to in the worship of a god or gods other than Yahweh (idolatrous worship)-the violation of the ethical worship for the Hebrews<sup>22</sup>.

The Decalogue, specifically, Exodus 20:14 and Deuteronomy 5:18, adultery/infidelity is acclaimed, an offence against Yahweh and certainly, a legal offence in ancient Israel, which elicited severe condemnation (e.g., Deut 22:22).<sup>23</sup>

The punishment for adultery when it was committed with mutual consent was death for the two parties (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:24). In Babylon the guilty pair were to be bound together and cast into the river (§129). In Ancient Israel, the law prescribed stoning as a means of death (Deut. 22:21, 24; Ezek. 16:40; 23:47).<sup>24</sup>

Ethically, infidelity is a misuse of sexuality. It is the violation of the ethics of fidelity/faithfulness in marriage. It is indeed the violation of the ethics of marital code of conduct and the violation of marital bond itself,<sup>25</sup> and David, could as well be charged for these ethical violations.

### Deceit (2 Sam 11:6-8)

<sup>6</sup>And David sent to Joab, *saying*, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup> And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. <sup>8</sup> 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.

According to Webster's New World Dictionary with Student Handbook, deceit could be defined as the act of deceiving or lying; a dishonor or trick; to lie or cheat. In verse 6 - 11, David tried to convince Uriah why he must go home to rest and lie with his wife. The royal gift that followed Uriah, (see, verse 8) is meant to induce him to consider himself specially favoured, and therefore, relax and enjoy his opportunity to go home and be with his wife. The essence of the gift was not to show how favoured Uriah was before King David but rather a way of concealing his crime. When Uriah refused to go down to his house (verse 9), King David got him drunk and yet he did not concede (verse 13). True integrity is having loyalty to a principle and truth.<sup>26</sup> From this scenario, we see that David violated the ethics of integrity.

<sup>22</sup>William I. Holladay. A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, (London: E.J. Brill and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2000), Accessed from Bible Works Version 7.

<sup>23</sup>Raymond Westbrook. 1990. "Adultery in Ancient Near Eastern Law" RB 97: 542-80.

<sup>24</sup>Maze, 246

<sup>25</sup>Maze, 241, 243

<sup>26</sup>David, Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite, [http://kukis.org/Samuel/2Sam\\_11.pdf](http://kukis.org/Samuel/2Sam_11.pdf). Accessed on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2014.

### **Betrayal (2 Samuel 11:14-15)**

<sup>14</sup>And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. <sup>15</sup>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.

Every time people make wrong decisions, there is an impact, even if they don't immediately notice it.<sup>27</sup> Michel has this to say:

“...the loss of honour is equivalent to moral death. From the standpoint of consciousness, this is the gravest occurrence. To expose falsehood and slander, are therefore definite moral obligations. Respect and esteem are demonstrated through social conventions. In this sense, civility, courtesy, politeness, and most particularly, sincerity, truthfulness, fidelity and tolerance become duties of behavior.”<sup>28</sup>

He identifies certain qualities that could be duty of behaviours. Among these qualities are, truthfulness, sincerity, civility etc. These qualities are such that could attract one's trust and dependability. Nevertheless, in the story of David and Bathsheba, David betrayed trust in Uriah by allowing him to carry his death warrant to his executor. And as such, he violated the ethical principle of trustworthiness and sincerity.

### **Stealing (2 Sam 11: 4a)**

“And David sent messengers, and took her...”

Although in 2 Samuel 11, the word stealing does not appear, there is however, a similitude of such act in David's taking of what does not belong to him, that is, Uriah's wife. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew **גָּנַב** *gānab*, when used in the Qal form, means “steal, rob, kidnap”. The Decalogue records the prohibition of *gānab*, with a simple apodictic formula (Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19). The Rabbis argue that this was a prohibition against kidnapping. More likely, the command is a general dictum against the taking of anything that belongs to someone else or to the community at large. This could also be extended to the protection of the natural resources of this world and the dignity and reputation of people.<sup>29</sup>

The prophets use *gānab* (both in Qal and Noun) in a literal sense (Jeremiah 7:9; Hosea 4:2, parallel with killing). In the legal regulations of the Talmud, *gānab* may refer to ‘kidnapping’ or normal theft of property, where the law adds that two witnesses are required. *gānab* may also mean to “create a false impression or delude.” If the crime of *gānab* takes place in the sight of the owner of property, then it is robbery. If it takes place in sight of other witnesses but not the owner, then it is theft. Thus robbery is seen to include the loss of dignity inflicted on the owner, a personal sense of affront. By contrast, theft is a devious action conducted out of sight of the one robbed.<sup>30</sup> From the account of 2 Samuel 11: 4b which state, “And David sent messengers, and took her...” we can deduce the act of kidnapping as well as of theft. David in doing this has violated the ethics of the right to human dignity.

### **Cooperation in Evil (2 Samuel 11:15-16)**

<sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*.

The word ‘cooperate’ simply means to work together to achieve a purpose. Co-operation literally means working together. It is an expression of any combined effort of two or more persons for any purpose, or to accomplish a project for mutual good.<sup>31</sup> Biblically, socially, and culturally, it is ethical to work together to achieve a purpose for the benefit of all, likewise, it is also unethical to work corporately to

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<sup>27</sup>John C. Maxwell, 49.

<sup>28</sup>Michel Amselme, 71.

<sup>29</sup>VanGemeren (Ed). 1997. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology*, 3: 879.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>James Hasting, 112.

perpetuate evil. Base on this fact, Joab and David cooperated to perpetuate the killing of Uriah and other innocent soldiers and so caused pain and lost to their relatives (2 Sam. 11:26) thereby, violating the ethics of love as well as that of cooperate mutual good.<sup>32</sup>

### **Murder (2 Samuel 11:16-21)**

<sup>16</sup>And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; <sup>19</sup> And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king, <sup>20</sup> And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? Knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? <sup>21</sup> Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall that he died in Thebez? Why went ye nigh the wall? Then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

Although, *nakah* (smitten) was employed in the text to express the way Uriah was killed, the whole scenario reveals an event of murder, the Hebrew *rāṣaH*. The initial use of this word appears in the Qal stem in the Decalogue “you shall not murder” (Exo 20:13). Murder, the Hebrew *rāṣaH* appears in the Mosaic legislation, as though the term bore a special connotation of premeditation.<sup>33</sup> The root *rṣh* appears 38 times with the sense of murdering or killing. This term traces its root in the practice of blood vengeance.<sup>34</sup> Numbers 35 ends on a dramatic note: “Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it” (v. 33). Significantly, Jesus in the New Testament, ranks humiliation, degradation, and dehumanization along with murder (*rāṣah*) the LXX *phoeneuō* (Mt 5:22).<sup>35</sup>

Despairing of accomplishing his wishes, David plans the death of Uriah (2 Sam. 11:14, 15). He writes a letter which he commands Joab to set Uriah where he knew there were valiant men. This ended up in Uriah's murder.<sup>36</sup> David committed murder by proxy and as such, showed disrespect for human life. Accordingly, respect could be referred to as having high opinion of, think highly of, appreciate, revere, value, take into consideration, or regard, for life.<sup>37</sup> It is obvious that David could not consider, appreciate, and think highly of the life of Uriah as important.<sup>38</sup> In other words, David violated the ethics of respect for human life.

### **4. Implications/Conclusions**

King David was a leader who got caught up in a downward spiral of unethical decisions that gave consequences for both him and the people he was called upon to lead and protect. His failure as a leader was dramatic even by today's standard.<sup>39</sup> King David's breach on the ethics as mentioned above brought the consequences that changed his life forever; as accounted in 2 Samuel 12: 10-12:

From this time on, your family will live by the sword because you have despised me by taking Uriah's wife to be your own. <sup>11</sup> "This is what the LORD says: Because of what you have done, I will cause your

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<sup>32</sup>James Hasting, 112.

<sup>33</sup>Harris, (Ed.) {Gleason L. Archer, Jr.; Bruce K. Waltke}. 1980. *Theological Wordbook of the O.T.* 2: 860

<sup>34</sup>VanGemeren (Ed). 1997. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 3: 1188.

<sup>35</sup>VanGemeren (Ed). 1997. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology*, 3:1189.

<sup>36</sup>Henry Preserved Smith. *Critical exegetical commentary on the book of Samuel*, Edingburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, New York; 1969, p.319

<sup>37</sup>*Oxford American Thesaurus of current English*

<sup>38</sup>Daniel F. Case. *David and Bathsheba: Sin, Cover-up, Condemnation, and Restoration (A Four-part Biblical Study of Grace and Healing)*, <http://www.case-studies.com/david1> (Accessed 26th November, 2013).

<sup>39</sup>Dean C. Ludwig & Clinton O. Longenecker. *The Bathsheba Syndrome: the Ethical Failure of Successful Leader*, (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993), 265.

own household to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man before your very eyes, and he will go to bed with them in public view.<sup>12</sup> You did it secretly, but I will make this happen to you openly in the sight of all Israel" (NLT).

King David's breach on these ethical values of: love, fidelity, respect for life, truthfulness, and cooperate good, provoked God to anger (2 Sam. 11:27b). Through Prophet Nathan, God made a pronouncement to David that brought about a catastrophic disaster in his life and those of his immediate family. First, the death of the new born child by the same woman he stole from Uriah (2 Sam. 12:18); second, the incest and rape of Tamar by his half-brother Ammon (2 Sam. 13); third, Absalom having sexual relationship with 10 of David's concubines (2 Sam. 16: 20-22);<sup>40</sup> fourth, Absalom purposely placing himself in position to gain favor and love among the people for possible seizure of power from his father, David. David being betrayed by his own son (2 Sam. 15: 13-14) as he betrayed Uriah;<sup>41</sup> fifth, the civil war between King David in Judah and his son Absalom in Israel warring against each other (2 Sam 17) which led to the death of Absalom (2 Sam.18) and of Amasa, David's nephew, who was killed by Joab and Abishai (2 Sam. 20:7).

It is important to understand that David's secret sins did not affect him alone, the consequences of David's breach of ethical and moral values- brought about consequences beyond his imagination. The consequences of his sin were not removed even after God had forgiven him, it got lasting effects on David's family. This story illustrates how devastating the consequences of sexual sin are. It's effect is both spiritual, mental, social and physical and how it affects participants and their families.<sup>42</sup> David gets Joab to transfer Uriah to the hottest point of the battle at Rammah because he refuses to break the soldier's vow (2 Sam. 11:6-13), Joab is instrumental to procuring Uriah's death in the war, and then sends news of it to David (2 Sam. 11:14-27). Joab's unethical unswerving loyalty to David makes one believe that no disloyalty is made when ethical and moral codes are upheld and protected for religio-social, religio-political, and religio-economic benefits of the nation. Nevertheless, following the storyline of 2 Samuel 11, David's conduct could be adjudged unethical.

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<sup>40</sup>ISBE Bible Dictionary, Bible Works 7,

<sup>41</sup>[http://www.biblelessonconnection.com/season3/lesson7/3-7\\_ConsequencesOfSin.pdf](http://www.biblelessonconnection.com/season3/lesson7/3-7_ConsequencesOfSin.pdf). Accessed on 23th February, 2014.

<sup>42</sup>The Consequencies of Sin.[http://www.pornfree.org/Devotions/devotion\\_sin\\_consequences.htm](http://www.pornfree.org/Devotions/devotion_sin_consequences.htm). Accessed on 24th, 2014.