

# The Lingering Consequences of Sin

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It is a wonderful blessing to know that in Christ our sins have been forgiven (Acts 2:38: 1 John 1:7-9). However, the blessing of forgiveness, while taking away the eternal consequences of our sin, does nothing for the earthly consequences. One who is forgiven in Christ may still have to suffer a lifetime of very painful consequences for their sinful actions.

The consequences of sin can take a variety of different forms. They may take the form of an unforgettable blemish on one's character. We often see this today in the world of professional sports. Because of a particular athlete's dishonest actions, an asterisk is attached to all their achievements. Even after public apologies, the wrong is never forgotten. Their act of cheating or lying follows them their whole life. What is true in sports is true in politics, entertainment, and every other walk of life.

The same was true for Israel's greatest earthly king. David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). Yet, whenever David's name is discussed today, very often his sin with Bathsheba is also mentioned. Some wonder, in light of his sin, how David could be called a man after God's own heart. We see this even in Scripture. When Rehoboam's son, Abijam became king in Judah, we find these words from the author of 1 Kings, who is writing years after the death of David:

Because David did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, **except** in the case of Uriah the Hittite.

1 Kings 15:5 (Emphasis Mine)

Sin's consequences have a tendency to leave an unfortunate "**except**" in a person's life. It may be said of a man who was unfaithful in his marriage, that he was forgiven by wife, **except** she didn't want to continue in the marriage.

At times, the consequences of sin might be physical in nature. A drug addict may come to Christ. However, he may have to deal with a lifetime of addiction struggles due to his sin. When we sin, rarely do we consider how our actions might impact others. Be assured, the consequences of a particular sin can affect many people for many years. Consider the sin of Jeroboam when he was made king over Israel when the nation became divided. One of the first things the new king did was to set up altars in Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12:26-30). This affected the nation negatively for its entire lifespan! When the Assyrians came and conquered the northern kingdom, Scripture describes the reason for its downfall:

When He had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel away from following the Lord and made them commit a great sin. **The sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them** until the Lord removed Israel from His sight...

2 Kings 17:21-23a (Emphasis Mine)

In this same way, a particular sin committed today can affect many people for many years. Many are the victims of one person's sin.

Think of it this way for a moment: If as parents we speak negatively about the church, or demonstrate an inconsistency in attendance or Bible study, think how that will affect our children, and their children, and so on. Just as Israel walked in the ways of Jerobaom, eventually leading to their downfall, can we really expect any less for our children?

Because any sin can have serious and long lasting consequences, let us:

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1 Peter 5:8

The next time the devil tempts you, and insists that you deserve whatever it is he has set before you appealing to the lust of your flesh, eyes, and pride of life, ask yourself, "What does my family deserve?" More importantly, "What does the Lord deserve from me?" Think about the lingering consequences of sin.