

Jesu Juva

“We Three Kings of Israel Are: King David”

Text: 2 Samuel 11:1-5, 22-27; 12:1-7a, 13-14; John 8:1-11

She was beautiful. Stunning. Every man's desire. Of that there was no question. But Bathsheba's beauty brought out David's ugliness. The ugliness lurking in his heart; the ugliness of sin. Once he saw her, the sin in his heart would let him think of nothing else . . . until his lust was satisfied. It didn't matter to him that she was someone else's wife. Sin thinks of nothing else than getting what it wants. Sin is completely selfish.

And that ugliness didn't end once David satisfied his lust. It then had another problem to contend with - David's reputation. Once Bathsheba was found to be with child, he couldn't let anyone know it was his. For what would the people think of him? So after at first trying to cover up his sin, David had her husband, Uriah, killed - though he made it look like an accident. And then he took Bathsheba to be his - and if all the people thought even more highly of him, so generously taking care of this poor widow - that was just the cherry on top.

Now, there are many stories about King David we could have considered tonight in our series *We Three Kings of Israel Are*, but this one I think, really serves to highlight and point us to the work of Jesus, the true King of Israel, for us. For just as with Saul last week, what Jesus does is exactly the opposite of David. For whereas we see the real ugliness of David, the sin lurking just below the surface (as it does in all of us), this story helps us see the true beauty of Jesus shining forth.

For it was to no beauty that Jesus looked - who Jesus comes to take as His Bride is the most ugly, sinful, adulterous, beastly ones of all: us. Though our ugliness and sin might be lurking below the surface and we might be pretty good at hiding it from others, He sees it and knows it. He knows the sins that not only come out in our words and deeds but also the ones that are hidden, that fill our minds and hearts. He knows how adulterous we are to Him in having others gods - other people and things in this world that we fear, love, and trust more than Him. He knows how beastly we can be to others, and that in any spiritual beauty contest we'd be the first ones out. *And* laughed out for even being there and trying to think ourselves beautiful.

But upon *us* He looked - not with self-centered, self-satisfying lust, but in true self-giving love - He looked upon us and wanted us to be His Bride. And so He came and didn't take life, but gave His up for us, to (as we read in Ephesians): ***sanctify us and cleanse us by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present - us - the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish*** (Ephesians 5:25-27). To make us who are ugly as sin beautiful in forgiveness and holiness.

And that He might make David beautiful, God sends Nathan to him to uncover and expose his sin. That's always painful, and David pronounces a correct verdict when he says: ***the man who has done this deserves to die!*** That's what we deserve, too. *The wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23). But notice these very important words that Nathan speaks from God next: ***The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child who is born to you shall die.***

Now, there are two really important things there: **first**, the Lord forgives David. He will not die in his sin as he deserves. And **second**, there will be a death, just not David - but the son of David. He will die. And it happened that the son born to Bathsheba did in fact die. But that wasn't *really* who God was talking about here. There was coming another son of David, the Son of David, who would die not just for David's sin, but for the sin of the world. Upon this coming Son of David the Lord would put all sin, that He die instead of us. And, of course, that promised Son of David was born in the city of David, Bethlehem, and was given the name Jesus. As we'll remember and celebrate in just a couple of weeks now.

And one day, that Jesus was in the Temple when they brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And again, how different is Jesus! All they could see was her sin. All they could see was her ugliness. But Jesus saw His Bride. A scared little lamb, just like we so often are, when our sin is uncovered and exposed and we are deserving of shame and yes, death. But they were all His lambs. The ones carrying stones just as ugly as she. And so Jesus plays the Nathan for them, to expose their sin. So, Jesus says, ***Let him who is without sin*** - who has not also been adulterous to the Lord in sin - ***be the first to throw a stone***. No one can. And neither does Jesus. For He did not come to condemn, but to be condemned for her, in her place, on the cross. He came to be condemned for them, in their place, on the cross. He came to be condemned for us, in our place, on the cross. That we be washed and made holy from our ugly and deadly sin, and ***go and sin no more***.

That is your King. A king not for the beautiful but for the ugly in sin. A king not in it for Himself but in it for us. A King who lays down His life for you, that you may have life in Him. So like David, repent, and then rejoice, that the Son of David has been slain *for you*, *your* sin has been put away, and *you* will not die but live. For your King has come to take you as His Bride, and He has. And when He comes again, the wedding feast will begin. A feast and a joy that will have no end.

In the Name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.