

The Gospel According to Bathsheba- 2 Samuel 7, 11-12

Josiah Haas

Introduction:

1. Good morning and welcome to First Free! I first want to extend my gratitude to Pastor Jason for asking me to speak this morning. It is the upmost honor to be diving into God's Word with you. I also want to thank Pastor Jason for his preaching to our church this semester. Pastor Jason started in August in the midst of moving a settling his family in the city. Since then he's been faithfully preaching the word to us almost every week, so let's extend our thanks to him.... Pastor Jason you've shown us many things, but the biggest thing you've showed me is that it's possible to be a follower of Jesus and a St. Louis Cardinals fan.

2. The youth are with us today! We're excited for you all to be in the service. The youth has been going through the Bible and is in 1 Timothy right now, and if you're a junior or senior higher today I just want to say you are a valued contributor to this church body. We need you. I'm excited you're here today.

3. If this is your first time at First Free or at church in general I want to personally welcome you! We're so glad to have you and I'd love to get to know you after the church service. Please join us downstairs in the fellowship hall for refreshments after the service.

It's the Christmas season, and it's the season of joy! It's the season of hope, of expectation and celebration. We sing the words every year, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her king." It's the most wonderful time of the year.

But maybe this Christmas you are asking this question: why don't I feel joy? Or maybe you've had this thought: how could I experience hope in the midst of this brokenness?

You look at the divisions in our society and are torn apart by the brokenness

You see injustice running wild and are frustrated after hearing about another shooting in Chicago

You're a high school student who is lonely at school and you're just so done with it

You're overwhelmed at work and seem to be at the office nonstop

You've been struggling with the same sin over and over and you don't know what to do

Your marriage is on the ropes and slowly seems to be falling apart

You're heading in a few days to a family with lots of conflict that brings the worst out of you

In some way or another we are all experiencing brokenness this Christmas.

And we wonder: how could anything good come out of this broken situation?

Segue:

I have to imagine that the woman we're going to be talking about today was thinking that exact same thing. We've been going through the women in the genealogy of Jesus, and today we are going to be talking about Bathsheba, and she was a woman of brokenness. She was someone who experienced deep despair and deep pain. And she had to be wondering: how could anything good come out of this broken situation? We're going to look at her story, and we're going to see

what God does in the midst of her brokenness. And I hope we're able to see what God has convicting me of this week- that we need this story to understand the story of Christmas.

We're going to look at this story in 4 phases. There's so much text here and we just don't have the time to hit every verse, but hopefully the 4 stages will help you track this story well.

Here's some quick background information to set the scene. You know in Star Wars where they have the pre-credit scene that tells you everything that happened in the last movie? Well here's your Star Wars pre-credit scene.

David is the king Israel has been waiting for!
 They asked God for a king and their first king was Saul, who wasn't a good leader.
 Then comes David, who...
 Slayed a giant with a sling and a stone
 Defeats the Jebusite stronghold of Jerusalem to set up the capital
 Brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem
 Victorious over enemies, especially the Philistines
 Brought rest to the people of Israel
 He's on top of the world; he's almost untouchable
 If there's a decision to make, he's going to do the right thing
 This is the king Israel has been waiting for!

Phase 1 is likely one of the highlights of David's life

Phase 1: Promise

2 Sam 7:12-13

< ¹²When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. >

God makes a covenant with David

Throughout the Bible, we see that God speaks and makes promises
 He binds himself to His word

If you've never thought about it, think later today why it might be important to our faith that God is a covenant-making God

Covenant with David:

David's offspring will have a kingdom
 He will build a house for God's name
 God will establish the throne of his kingdom forever

David already has multiple wives at this point. There's a lot of women who can bear the promised son. Bathsheba isn't even in the picture!

Phase 2: Rebellion

2 Sam 11:1

< ¹In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. >

Can you see how the text is already tipping us off that something bad is about to happen?

This is the time when the kings go off to war, and David is the king!

But where is he? He stays in Jerusalem.

Story: I was a camp counselor for 5 summers, and one of those summers I remember a particular incident. It was getting toward the end of the summer and the counselors were getting tired. It had been a long ten weeks of watching over kids and we were worn out. It was a 90-degree July day and it happened to be water day, where we do all outdoor water activities. So, we have a water-balloon toss and a slip and slide and a kiddie pool and lots of fun things are going on. At the end of the day, the counselors were supposed to be gathering their kids together, but there was a problem. Before us was a giant muddy field that was just begging for us to start a mud fight. Next thing you know, the counselors break out into World War III and start catapulting mud at each other! People are tackling each other, slipping all over the place, and we're covered in mud. Meanwhile the kids just have their eyes wide open, looking at this crazy mess in front of them. And out of the corner of my eye I see our boss standing there, with her arms crossed, giving us "the look." And boy did we get in trouble. You see, we weren't doing what we were supposed to be doing, and we got ourselves into a huge mess.

And this is the same thing we are going to see with David.

When we aren't faithful to what God has called us to do, we can get ourselves into a huge mess.

< ²One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, ³ and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." >

The first thing that's important for us to realize from these verses is that Bathsheba IS doing what she's supposed to do

Water in ancient Israel at this time likely was collected from jars that were on the roof

You go to the roof when you are going to wash yourself

She seems to be a law-abiding citizen, because we'll see in a minute that she's cleansing herself of uncleanness

She's following the law

From what these verses say, we have no reason to believe that Bathsheba is doing anything wrong.

In fact, the only reason why David could see her is because he is not doing what he is supposed to be doing

When I was in Israel, I got a better idea of how big Jerusalem was in the time of David
 The city of David at that time is about 15 acres
 In comparison, this is about twice the size of Soldier Field.

I want to give us an idea of the warning that David gets- a three-pronged warning.
 Where's Miles? Would you be willing to help me for a minute?
 This might be helpful for those of us who are wanting a visual for what's going on here

Miles-aboam: BRO. That's Bathsheba. First of all, she's the daughter of one of your mighty men and granddaughter of your counselor. Second, she's married. And third, she's married to one of your best men who's fighting for you!

Now David is at a crossroads.

He's at a train crossing where the red light is flashing, the gate is down, and there's a train coming. If he goes any further there will be a train wreck.

< ⁴ Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. ⁵ The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant." >

This happens so quickly, we should be stunned! David had repeatedly resisted temptation in his life. He's the king that we expect to do no wrong!

But he abuses his position of power. He's the king and he can do whatever he pleases.
 David uses his position to take what he wants.

Bathsheba has no power. She can't refuse a royal summons.

She comes to David just as he asks, and he sleeps with her.

He takes advantage of his position to get what he wants

She is a victim of his lust.

She becomes pregnant, and David is surely the father

The information about her purifying herself tells us she's a law-abiding citizen.

She's following the purity laws

David goes into fix-it mode. He tries to get Uriah to sleep with Bathsheba so that the child could go as his

Plan A: 6-11

David brings Uriah home, gives him a present, sends him home to sleep with his wife

Uriah sleeps at the door of the king's house

The ark of the covenant is in a booth and men out there are fighting and I am to go home and relax? I won't do such a thing!- Uriah is loyal, with virtue beyond the call of duty

Plan B: 12-13

David invites him in and gets him drunk.

He lies on a coach and still doesn't go to his own house
 Uriah drunk is better than David sober!

Plan C: 14-25

David writes to Joab and sends it with Uriah.

Put Uriah on the front lines, and draw back from him that he may die.

They do so, and David is pleased.

A lustful glance has turned into a murder plot
 Sin has a snowball effect

2 Sam 11:26-27

<²⁶ When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him.²⁷ After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the Lord.>

Bathsheba mourns, she laments for her husband is dead

She's legitimately heartbroken, for Uriah is dead

Her mourning shows again that she is law-abiding

In Jewish culture there's a mourning period after someone dies

She observes it!

Does David mourn: No! He's lost many men and Uriah and he's totally fine!

David can finally breathe! It's taken a lot of effort, but he got what he wanted

David brings her to his house and she bears him a son

He's fixed the situation.

All's well that ends well right? Wrong.

What he did displeased God.

Phase 3: Punishment

2 Sam 12:1

< ¹The LORD sent Nathan to David... >

This is a powerful statement!

There should be alarms going off in our heads right now

The words in the Bible matter!

There are endless riches in the words of Scripture

The fact that the LORD sends Nathan to David is massive, because in chapter 11 David has been doing the sending, which shows his power.

Verse 1 David sends Joab to war

Verse 3 David sends an inquiry to a man

Verse 4 David sends messengers to Bathsheba

Verse 6 David sends for Uriah

Verse 14 David sends Uriah's death sentence to Joab

Verse 27 David sends for Bathsheba to be his wife

David's sending has shown his power, how he is in control
And now, God SENDS a prophet to him.

David is under the illusion that he is the one in power. He thinks he is the sovereign king and that he is in control!

God's sending is a reminder that only the LORD is all powerful. Only he is sovereign and is in control. Nothing is hidden from his sight.

12:2-4 Nathan tells him a story about a rich man who has many sheep and a poor man who has one lamb. The rich man takes the lamb from the poor man.

12:5-6 David is enraged

How could anyone do such a thing! He deserves more than the usual punishment, which is fourfold restitution. He deserves to die!

7 You are the man!

Nathan hasn't brought a message to David; he brought a mirror!

Punishment

12:10 "The sword shall never depart from your house"- and this happens! There's conflict

12:11 "I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun"- And this happens too!

12:14 The child who is born to you shall die.

Pause to think about Bathsheba's brokenness here

She's been summoned and impregnated by the king

The king orders her husband to die, then takes her as his wife

The son she bears for the king dies as a punishment for what David did.

She's lost everything. She's at rock bottom.

She's thinking, "How could anything good come out of this brokenness?"

She lamented, and when we experience pain like this it is good to lament

Maybe some of us are in this place today

It's good to cry out to God in the midst of our despair, and He hears those cries.

He can handle it when we pour out our hearts to Him

Praise God the story is not over here. God is not done with her yet.

Phase 4: Redemption

Verses 13-14: Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die."

David knows he has sinned against God. He actually deserves to die.

Bathsheba knows this too. She has every right to be furious at David for what he's done to her.

David repents: If you want to see David's repentance in this moment read Psalm 51

"Taken away"- the word here is "passed over." Does this ring any bells for anyone? If we had more time we could look throughout the Bible and see that often passing over is an act of God's grace.

Maybe one of the most scandalous things in this entire story is the fact that God forgives David
How could God forgive him?

He's the king who's supposed to be the model of keeping the law, yet he's breaking 10 commandments left and right! He causes Uriah to be murdered, he commits adultery, he takes what isn't his, he covets his neighbor's wife!

He doesn't deserve God's grace, he deserves the punishment!

God in his mercy spares David

Verse 24: Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and made love to her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved him; ²⁵and because the LORD loved him, he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah (loved by the LORD)

The other truly scandalous thing about this story is that Bathsheba bears a son & God loves him!

Previously she's heartbroken, her husband and her son have died

She's wondering how anything good could come out of her situation.

She's the husband of a Hittite man, who now becomes David's wife

This is truly a messy situation!

Now, she bears a son, and the LORD loved him!

The Lord loving him suggests that Solomon will be David's successor

He will be the offspring who will be king and build a house for God (Phase 1)

Ultimately through this line will come the king who reigns eternal: Jesus

Let's not be naïve to the pain that Bathsheba suffers in this story because of the king

She's felt real pain from these experiences

Her life is not kittens and roses from this point on

Let's not understate the reality that God doesn't just bring something good through Bathsheba, he brings King Jesus, the greatest good humanity has ever seen! He's the king they're waiting for!

We sing "Joy to the world the Lord is come, let earth receive her king," but I think we forget what kind of king we're talking about here

The King who comes through Bathsheba is much different from the King who sins against her.

David:

King who's at home when his army is fighting
King who is tempted and gives in
King who uses his power to take what he wants
King who causes another man to die

Jesus:

King who's Immanuel- God with us
King who's tempted & knows no sin
King who gives up his power to serve
King who gives his life for others

God takes Bathsheba's brokenness and brings something beautiful out of it. Friends, the good news for us today is that how God redeems Bathsheba's story is the same way he redeems our stories.

In fact, this is the very reason why we celebrate Christmas!

We're in desperate need of help because, like David, we all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And like Bathsheba, we all find ourselves in situations of brokenness. And on our own we are hopeless. We wonder if anything good could come out of our brokenness. But at Christmas, through the line of Bathsheba, God sent his son Jesus into the brokenness of our world. And Jesus lived and died and rose again victoriously that whoever believes in him would not perish but have eternal life. Redemption has come and his name is Jesus.

But that's not all! Jesus is coming back again! And Revelation 21 there will be a day with no more pain and no more suffering and Jesus will reign as king forever and ever. And from the throne he says, "I am making all things new!!"

Friends, this is the gospel!

This is the reason why we can have joy and hope in the midst of our brokenness.

This is the reason we celebrate Christmas, because redemption has come and his name is Jesus. And he's coming back again and will reign forever!!!

If you've never heard the gospel before and maybe God's been working in your heart, I would love to talk to you after the service to talk about what it means to ask God to bring redemption to your story.

This is good news; it's the best news you are ever going to hear.

Let me close with this: I've recently learned about a beautiful form of pottery in Japan called Kintsugi. You see pottery sometimes breaks when it's in the kiln or when it's being moved from one place or another. This piece that someone has spent hours on is now in shambles on the floor. It's seemingly worthless. But not to these artists. These artists take the pieces of the pottery and they use gold dust to put the jar back together piece by piece. And by the end the ceramic pot is whole again, even more beautiful than before, and it's ready to be used. And it looks like this...



What a beautiful picture of what God does for Bathsheba and for us. He takes our brokenness and redeems us, and He uses us for His glory.

For all of us living in broken situations, let's remember the reason why we have hope this Christmas- that hope is that we have a king in Jesus who is making all things new. He's taking broken things and making them beautiful.

Benediction: Revelation 21:1-5

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making all things new!”

Church, go in peace, knowing that Jesus will reign forevermore more and he is making all things new.