

Bathsheba

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit."

Psalm 51:10-12

NUGGET – These are very familiar words to us aren't they? We often speak them during confession and absolution. But did you know that it was because of the beauty of Bathsheba that we have these words from King David?

Read all of [Psalm 51](#) and you see there the confession of David after he had sinned with Bathsheba. That psalm is his response to God who, through Nathan the prophet, exposed David's sin with Bathsheba. For us today it's important to note that the sin was accounted to David. Was Bathsheba complicit – perhaps, but she is not the one Nathan comes to with the word of the Lord against her. She does not, it seems, bear the brunt of the Lord's rebuke as David does. However when we get into **GOING DEEPER** we'll see the burden she does bear. For this portion though we focus on the grace of God *to* His people in spite of the sinfulness *of* His people.

It is the Lord, in today's nugget verses who David looks to:

- to put a new and right spirit within him and
- to restore the joy of the Lord's salvation to him.

The Lord is the one from whom salvation comes. Not David himself, Bathsheba or Nathan. Even in his day, David directs us to the Lord as the savior of His people. When we sin, as David did, we too, as he testifies here, trust only in God to have mercy, to restore, to put a new heart in us, to purge us, to blot out our iniquities, to be delivered from our own blood guiltiness.

As regards Bathsheba, unlike Adam, who blamed God for giving him Eve who 'caused' him to sin, David, in this psalm acknowledges that the sin is all his. He sees his sin as both what he is born with from the womb and what he chooses to do in rebellion toward God. He does not blame Bathsheba or God. He knows that God desires holiness of life from and for His people, and yet David is clear in his confession that only by the mercy of God is he cleansed.

It is a safe bet that Bathsheba heard this psalm at some point in her long life with David. Perhaps she too, as we do, found solace and reason to rejoice in God's mercy as result of these beautiful words.

APPLICATION – God alone is merciful. He is the one we look to for restoration and wholeness when we sin. Because He purged our guilt away through the cross of Jesus Christ we to can rejoice in the salvation of God.

1. Consider Bathsheba hearing these words. Who in your life might, like her, need to hear these words from you? Who would benefit from knowing that you have put your trust in the Lord for His salvation?
2. As you go through your next few days, perhaps write, yes, write out this psalm and post it where you can see these words in your own handwriting and allow God to use these ancient words to remind you of His mercy to you.

PRAY - Ask God to give you peace through His grace in Jesus Christ Who restores in you a clean heart and puts a new and right spirit within you.

Peace in Christ, Pastor Tom Rhodes

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Going Deeper together. We meet in the Fellowship Hall during the Education Hour for discussion and prayer with all those who're able to come. If you're not able to make it Sunday, please feel free to e-mail me with your comments or questions so that we can have the benefit of sharing them together.

GOING DEEPER

Bathsheba, though not having many verses of scripture, has a great impact on our understanding of God's law and gospel. There is the reality of harshness in punishment for sin and the true sweetness of God's grace in forgiveness. There are really 3 stories of Bathsheba – the first is the well-known story of she and David, the second is the lesser-known story of she, David and Solomon later in life and the third is of Bathsheba and Solomon after David dies.

For the first story read [2 Samuel 11 & 12:1-25](#). Let's establish something here from the get-go. Bathsheba did nothing wrong in taking a bath. And in fact, as David was king, it may not be fair to even implicate her in becoming pregnant. The rights of kings as regards sexual behavior with his subjects are not something we have real-world knowledge of. However Nathan gives us the Lord's view regarding what David had done in making Bathsheba pregnant and in killing her husband and then taking her as his wife.

The only words attributed to her in this reading are, 'I am with child'. And with those words are set in motion the chain of events that eventually leads to the death of her husband and the birth of Solomon. Of course God could have used other means to bring about the birth of Solomon but he chose to use this. What benefit do we get by God doing this?

Also Bathsheba is with child by someone other than her husband, similar to Mary and Joseph. And we see Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, acts in an honorable way, as did Joseph. What does Uriah teach us? When the baby was struck ill by the Lord, David had hope that the Lord would relent why? As we said in the **NUGGET** – Bathsheba does bear a burden for the sin of David. She must suffer the loss of both her husband and her child. Sin has a price that the innocent bear. In this way she reminds us of what Christ has done for us.

Now for the second story read [1 Kings 1:1-40](#). In verses 11-31 we see the details of how Bathsheba was used to see that Solomon was established as king after David. Unlike previous women we've studied who used outright deceit – here we see Bathsheba, while not manipulated per se, at least being informed and guided as to what needed to be done for herself and Solomon. When she does as instructed from Nathan, we see a good result. This reminds us to be wise in choosing who we listen to for instruction. Where else in scripture do we have similar admonitions? What other observations about Bathsheba do you notice in this story?

For the last story of Bathsheba read [1 Kings 2:10-25](#). Notice that in verse 13 she asks Adoni'jah's intentions before she speak with him. What insight into her character and growth might be inferred? However she yet does not seem to grasp the implications of what she does next in speaking with her son Solomon. She seems to have been duped and Solomon recognizes the deception as that of his brother and not his mother. With all that we've seen of her story, how would you characterize Bathsheba and what might we learn from her?

