

March 20, 2021

Read 2 Samuel 11

Key verse: 2 Samuel 11:27

*When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.*

## **Hubris**

One of the qualities of the Bible that has led me to admire it so much is that it speaks difficult truths. David was a great king who loved the Lord and built Israel into a great nation, but he also committed adultery, tried to hide it, and ended up arranging the murder of the husband of the woman with whom he committed adultery. But nothing is hidden from God; David was confronted by the prophet Nathan and suffered serious consequences for his crimes. And yet David is still considered Israel's greatest king.

There is a movement in the United States to glorify our history, to scrub the pages of our history books of any reference to any crimes that our government has committed. Those who draw attention to those crimes are labeled "unpatriotic." Those who criticize policies that perpetuate the ongoing racism, misogyny, and sexism are often scorned, even threatened by those who would insist that our history is litany of virtuous acts as though our crimes could be hidden from God or from our own people.

What made Israel a great nation was its ability to recognize its own blunders and to admit to the crimes committed by its own leaders. The refusal to recognize our mistakes only leads us to repeat those mistakes. The United States is a nation of high ideals, ideals we have not achieved and will never achieve if we refuse to see our own flaws. And our greatest patriots are not those who wave our flag while denying our flaws but those who strive to make our nation live into the ideals that we embrace, ideals that are closely related to our Christian ethics.

The issues we face as a nation are complicated and we don't all agree on the best way forward, but we need to be humble and honest about our past if we want to proceed. The same is true of us as Christians. God still loved David after he committed the crimes described in today's reading. And it's because he loved David that he confronted David with the Truth. As a nation and as individuals, we can rest assured of God's love despite our transgressions, therefore we can be honest about who we are and what we have done.

**Prayer:** God of judgment, God of forgiveness, you can see through any mask that we would place upon ourselves as individuals or upon our country as citizens of this great nation. Remind us that our greatness comes from our commitment to you and the laws and principles that you convey to us through scripture, through your Son Jesus, and through your Holy Spirit. Keep us from being puffed up. May we strive to be pleasing in your sight for who we truly are rather than feared and respected in the sight of others for who we profess to be. Amen.