



Associates for Scriptural Knowledge • P.O. Box 25000, Portland, OR 97298-0990, USA

© ASK, April 2015 • Telephone: 503 292 4352

Webpage on the Internet: <http://www.askelm.com> • E-Mail address: askoffice@askelm.com

Dear Associates and Friends,

April 2015

One thing is made clear throughout all the Old Testament, and especially in the narratives of the histories of Israel's united and divided kingdoms — nobody is perfect, no one is without sin, not even the archetypal king, King David of Israel. Even though he is the type of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, he was terribly flawed, as are each of us.

The narrative of this month's portion deals with the siege of the city of Rabbah and what occurs during that period of time in Jerusalem between King David, Uriah the Hittite, and his wife Bathsheba. God's punishment on David is pronounced and carried out. "[Israel and Judah: 8. Bathsheba and Rabbah](#)" is the title of this month's article. Rabbah is a city of the Ammonites in present-day Jordan. Bathsheba and David's adultery is probably known to most of you.

King David and Mourning

King David is inconsistent in the reports of Scripture on who he mourns and when. He is reported to mourn for his enemies when they die, but not mourn for his friends when they die. For example, he mourns with great lamentation over his enemy King Saul, who tried to kill him several times. He also mourned for Saul's son Jonathan, but in a political sense Jonathan was also David's enemy because he was a potential rival to the throne which God had promised to David (2 Samuel chapter 1).

David, King of Judah, elaborately mourned over Abner, the general of Ishbosheth, the rival to David as king of Israel (2 Samuel 3:31–39). When Ishbosheth died David was made king over Israel as well as Judah, but there is no indication of him mourning.

When Uriah the Hittite died, there was no mention that David mourned for his loyal soldier, but Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, did mourn for her dead husband (2 Samuel 11:26–27). When David's firstborn son by Bathsheba took sick, David took several actions that were indicative of mourning. David did these acts for seven days while the child was still alive (2 Samuel 12:18–24). Once the child died, Bathsheba mourned the death of her only child (so far as the text tells us), but David resumed his normal activities after his son's death, his actions confused his servants.

As the article next May will show, David will not mourn for the firstborn of all his children, his son Amnon (2 Samuel 3:2), who was murdered by David's most beloved son, Absalom. But David mourned for Absalom while he was still alive, but in exile, and he mourned even more after Absalom did die.

Solomon's Understanding

After the first child died, another son was born to David and Bathsheba. Solomon grew to become King of Israel and Judah. He grew up with the Uriah/Bathsheba events as part of his young life experience: "**So I lauded the dead, those who had already died, Over the living, those who are still alive ...**" (Ecclesiastes 4:2).

"A good name is better than the best attar [ointment], And the day of one's death than the day of his birth. It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting In that it is the terminus of every human; Thus let the living lay this on his heart. Better is vexation than mirth, For with a troubled face the heart may become better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, And the heart of the stupid in the house of rejoicing."

• *Ecclesiastes 7:1–4*

This is not a “think happy thoughts” philosophy. This is down-to-earth understanding of the realities of physical life. His view of life in the flesh is similar to Job’s, but Job had somewhat of an excuse. He underwent the deaths of many of his loved ones, loss of status, income, and severe physical pain to the extent that he wanted to die. Solomon’s life was entirely different. He had the best of everything, and he had the God-given wisdom to analyze even the good things in his life. He wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes and many Proverbs for the benefit of mankind.

Our Situation Now

The apostle Paul somewhat agreed with Solomon. The difference was that Solomon did not have the knowledge of the hope in Jesus Christ — David’s greater son (infinitely greater than Solomon). We have that hope, which is an advantage for us all.¹

“... yet we are encouraged, and are delighting rather [with expectation] to be away from home out of the body and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore we are ambitious also, whether at home or away from home, to be well pleasing to Him. For all of us must be manifested in front of the dais of Christ, that each should be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, whether good or bad.”

• *2 Corinthians 5:8–10*

We should rejoice in the knowledge, understanding, and wisdom God makes available to us.²

“Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and [the result will be] the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus. For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is grave, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is renowned — if there is any virtue, and if any applause, be taking these into account.”

• *Philippians 4:6–8*

Yes, the peace of God shall be garrisoning your hearts (yes, even the evil heart we all have, hopefully changing through God’s Holy Spirit within us), and your apprehensions (your thoughts and mind) in Christ. We should align our requests with God’s will. You may prefer the last words of this passage the familiar way the King James Version phrases them: **“think on these things.”** We who have God’s Holy Spirit should look at the future positively, even if we should die before Christ returns, because of the hope that is in us.

Thank You

We understand from several of you, that you thank God for ASK and for its continuing operation. We are humbled by such prayers. We thank God for you who support ASK, even if you only give encouragement. We do not have a calling to do what we do, but we do enjoy providing the information from ASK in all its various forms. And most of that information is free to you! We operate ASK because we love God’s Word. We expect it to teach us, expand our minds with the reality of God’s plan for all mankind. You like learning new things or you would not continue reading and learning from ASK. Thank you all.

David W. Sielaff
david@askelm.com

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:17–20:

“Now, if Christ has not been roused, vain is your faith — you are still in your sins! Consequently those also, who are put to repose in Christ, perished. If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we. (Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing.”

² Read (or reread) my March 16, 2015 Commentary, [“Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom.”](#)