

First Lesson: 2 Sam 12:15b-23

Second Lesson: John 14:1-14

## **Homily**

When we study the many heroes of faith in the Bible, King David is one that we often talk about. God choosing him from the fields, his courageous defeat of a giant, and his victories on the battlefield all while remaining faithful and dedicated to God. However, he was a human being and as such he was subject to temptation and sin just like all of us. What I love about reading the Bible is that it doesn't just give us accounts of perfect people but shows us that even the great heroes are sinful, flawed and broken. These people and their accounts are not always easy to read. They show that even great men of faith, like David, can fall into sin and make decisions that are against what God commands.

Our first lesson today, found in the Second Book of Samuel, is the account of King David's murderous affair with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Our lesson kind of lands us right in the middle of the story, where David and Bathsheba's child is sick and King David knows he has sinned grievously, by ignoring and willfully disobeying the commandments of God.

David, believing it to be his fault, is passionate in his prayer, fasting, and sleeping on the ground.

Finally, after seven days, the child dies.

Everyone expected David to be shocked and upset at this news and to go into deep mourning, perhaps even harming himself out of guilt. Instead, he got up, washed, and bathed, got dressed and anointed himself. He then went to the house of the Lord and worshipped. After that, he broke his fast, and had food set before him.

His servants are a little perplexed by his behavior and asked him why when the child was sick, he fasted and wept, but once it had died he arose and ate food.

He replies to them,

*“While the child was alive, I fasted and wept, for who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me and allow the child to live. But now that he is dead why should I fast?”*

*“He's gone now. I can't change that,”*

*“He's not coming back to me, but I will go to him.”*

God taught David, and through him the Hebrews, two important lessons by way of that story. Firstly, sin brings real consequences. God punished David and Bathsheba's adultery, and David's jealous murder of Bathsheba's husband, by depriving them of the child they conceived in sin. To our eyes, it may appear unjust that this innocent child was the one to suffer for his parents' misconduct, but we must remember that God's justice and limited human concepts of justice are not the same thing. God's ways are not our ways.

Secondly, even the most grievous sins may be repented and forgiven. David was an adulterer and a murderer; Bathsheba was an adulteress and an accomplice to her husband's murder. Nevertheless, after they truly repented, they were permitted to have another child and this child became the great wise King Solomon.

Many of us have lost a loved one and it is never an easy thing to go through. Unlike David, who knew of his sin, many of us are not dealing with the consequences of this type of behavior. It is hard to understand why we can watch a long and sad decline, doing everything we could to keep the end from coming, laboring, worrying, praying, but in the end we are unsuccessful.

During times of great loss and suffering, our faith can be challenged. In Romans 5:3 Paul says:

*“More than that we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.”*

God is still with us, and we must remember that we are not alone in our trials. How many of us have faith like David, Paul, Job, or Noah to accept what is, trust in God despite what is happening, and understand that God has not abandoned us. Do we continue to trust God despite the hardships we are going through? Do we place our focus on God or on how unfair our circumstances seem at the time?

Our next lesson from the Gospel of John gives us some inspiring words that may help with our resolve and give us strength to stay in faith.

*"In my Father's house are many mansions:"* said Jesus in the second lesson,

*"if it were not so, I would have told you."*

David knew this truth already. He knew the character of God. He trusted in His goodness, and he had faith. Jesus didn't say, "You know it because I told you." He said instead, "You already know it. If what you know were not true, I'd tell you."

The good news comes in Jesus’s next statement.

*I go to prepare a place for you."*

He came into the world, at first glance, a prophet like other prophets. He declared the Word of the Lord. He announced the judgment of God on a disobedient people. He proclaimed the invitation to repentance. He pointed us to the kingdom of God. But He did more, because He was

more, no mere prophet, but God, the Son of God, not merely a messenger, but the Way.

As He said to Thomas,

*"I am the way, the truth, and the life:  
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

For all the pointing of all the prophets, it remains true that as humans we are weak, flawed, and sinful, totally unable to live a life free of sin, unprepared to reach that final goal.

The good news is that He, the Lord, became a man who was like us.

and, as a man, trod the paths of death, and suffered for us, after which He broke those bonds, after death he rose again, and goes before us, to make us welcome in His Kingdom forever.

Jesus is the way.

By the path He opened,

by the pains He suffered for us, by the Blood He poured out for us,

Jesus is the way.

by the cross on which he died,

by the tomb in which his lifeless body lay,

by His glorious triumph over death,

He has become the Way, and that Way leads on to glories unimagined.

*"Verily, verily, I say unto you," Jesus says, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also;"*

And we may respond remembering Psalm 23 that David wrote,

*"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me."*

*"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*

And we follow Him on the path He prepared, In His Truth, in His life, to the place where David knew He would go, where his son awaited, where some of our loved ones wait, and where, above all, He awaits, the one who loved us enough to die and rise again.

The Lord be with you,

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the way and the truth and the life, look upon us poor sinners and stir up in us, by thy cross and resurrection, the lively hope of everlasting redemption, thou who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.