

Saturday 23rd November



#Bathsheba

“David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife” *[Matthew 1:6b]*

The fourth woman in the family tree of Jesus isn’t actually named by Matthew, yet we know her name to be Bathsheba from the Old Testament narrative. Matthew tells us that she is the mother of Solomon, and Uriah’s wife. If you don’t know the story of Bathsheba, you can read about her in 2 Samuel 11 and 1 Kings 1–3.

Bathsheba was a very beautiful woman and was married to Uriah, a soldier in David’s army. When David spots Bathsheba, he seduces her, and she falls pregnant. When David realises his sin will be found out, he calls Uriah home so that he can pass the child off as his, but Uriah won’t go home to his wife whilst his fellow soldiers are still in battle. David then sends Uriah to the front line so that he is killed, and takes Bathsheba as his own wife. The prophet Nathan condemns David for stealing another man’s wife and murdering her husband. The son conceived dies, but then they go on to have Solomon, the king who rules after David.

We don’t really hear the story from Bathsheba’s viewpoint, perhaps assuming she was complicit, but she may not have been. She was seduced by the king, who she couldn’t disobey and then her husband was murdered by the king. Not only that, she loses the baby she has been carrying. Bathsheba had a difficult life and we need to remember that, like many women in the world, she may have been forced into the life she now lived and its consequences.

Life-giving God,
we thank you that for most women in this country, there is some equality.
We remember before you all those women who struggle because of inequality:
women who are still treated as property;
women who are treated as second-class citizens;
women who still struggle to be treated equally at home, at work, in society.
We pray for all those who strive for a fairer world,
where all are equal, regardless of gender or other factors,
that your kingdom may come.
Amen

Prayers for November written by Revd Claire Rawlinson
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