

Create in Me a Clean Heart

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- [0 : 0 0] This morning we're going to partake again of the Lord's table. The table has bread on it and it's got grape juice. And as most of you here know, the bread represents the body of Jesus and the cup represents the blood of Jesus.
- These are heavy symbols. We're here this morning to remember a death. And this is hard. It's heavy.
- But this death, the death of Jesus, is the most important thing that there is to know and believe and embrace in the entire universe.
- To appreciate this death, we need to first acknowledge our sins. And we're going to do that this morning with the help of King David, David, a man who lived long ago.
- David, even though he was a man after God's own heart, was a sinner just like me and just like you. Even though he loved goodness and righteousness, even though he was a worship leader and composed music expressing his love for God, he was still a sinner just like you and me.
- [1 : 2 9] If you know the story of David, God chose him to be the king of Israel. And through great hardship and trial, God established David as the king of all the nation after the death of King Saul.
- And God gave David amazing success in battle against all the surrounding enemy nations. But David, too, was a sinner like you and me.
- We're going to read his story this morning in 2 Samuel chapter 11. In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab, the commander of the army, out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army.
- They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening, David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace.
- From the roof, he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful. And David sent someone to find out about her.
- [2 : 5 3] The man said, She's Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, and the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Then David sent messengers to get her.
- She came to him. And he slept with her. Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness. Then she went back home.
- The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, I'm pregnant. So David sent this word to Joab, Send me Uriah the Hittite.
- And Joab sent him to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were, and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, Go down to your house and wash your feet.
- So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him. But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants, and did not go down to his house.

[4 : 07] David was told, Uriah did not go home. So he asked Uriah, Haven't you just come from a military campaign? Why didn't you go home? Uriah said to David, The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my commander Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open country.

How could I go to my house to eat and drink and make love to my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing. Then David said to him, Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back.

So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. At David's invitation, he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk.

But in the evening, Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master's servants. He did not go home. In the morning, David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.

In it, he wrote, Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die. So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were.

[5 : 29] When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell. Moreover, Uriah the Hittite died. Joab sent David a full account of the battle.

He instructed the messenger, When you've finished giving the king this account of the battle, the king's anger may flare up, and he may ask you, Why did you get so close to the city to fight? Didn't you know they would shoot arrows from the wall?

Who killed Abimelech, son of Jerob-Besheth? Didn't a woman drop an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall? If he asks you this, then say to him, Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.

The messenger set out, and when he arrived, he told David everything Joab had sent him to say. The messenger said to David, The men overpowered us and came out against us in the open, but we drove them back to the entrance of the city gate.

Then the archers shot arrows at your servants from the wall, and some of the king's men died. Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead. David told the messenger, Say this to Joab, Don't let this upset you.

[6 : 47] The sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it. Say this to encourage Joab, When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him.

After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the Lord.

The Lord sent Nathan to David. When Nathan came to him, he said, There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor.

The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children.

It shared his food, drank from his cup, and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him.

[8 : 01] Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him. David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die.

He must pay for that lamb four times over because he did such a thing and had no pity. Then Nathan said to David, You are the man.

This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says, I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.

I gave your master's house to you and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah, and if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more.

Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own.

[9 : 08] You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.

This is what the Lord says, Out of your own household, I'm going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes, I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight.

You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel. Then David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

Nathan replied, The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die, but because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord, the son born to you will die.

This is a heart-wrenching story. Even the best of men can commit the worst of sins.

[10 : 24] He knew what he was supposed to be doing. It was the time when kings go off to war and probably many of the other kings were out there on the battlefield with their armies, but this king decided to stay home where it was comfortable and cozy while his men risked their lives.

David's men were out there sleeping on the hard ground in tents. And what was David doing? Enjoying the comforts of his palace.

Going for a leisurely stroll up on the roof. He notices a beautiful woman bathing and his heart is overcome with lust.

After finding out that she is the wife of another man, he decides to take her anyway. To be with her as if she was his wife.

Deliberately breaking the seventh commandment. We don't know. Perhaps David was thinking I'm the king. I can do as I please. But then he found out that Bathsheba was now pregnant with his child.

[11 : 41] And he goes to great lengths as we just heard to cover up and to hide this evil thing that he had done. He sends a messenger all the way out to where the army is camped to bring back the husband of Bathsheba.

all part of an elaborate plan to cover this up expecting that he will go and be with his wife and he can make it look like all along this is Uriah's child.

But Uriah can't stop thinking about what his companions his fellow soldiers are going through as they're camped out in the open in tents. Could he really go and enjoy the comforts of his home and his wife and then go back out to the army and tell them all about the great time that he had and the special treatment he got for the king while they were out there risking their lives missing their wives and families?

It seems that the harder David tries to get Uriah to go home and to be with his wife and to cover up this sin the more obvious it becomes that David is in a wicked frame of mind here he is feasting with Uriah in the palace making him drunk hoping to get him to do what he wants him to do while his men are out there fighting putting their lives on the line finally David decides to do another great evil to cover up his sin he breaks the sixth commandment and he gives the order for Bathsheba's husband to be killed to be murdered and he seems so cold and calm and calculated about it he even sends the message sealing Uriah's fate with him and what is

David's response when he hears that Uriah is dead don't worry about it people die all the time in battle don't let it bother you and with Uriah out of the way David carries out the fullness of his adultery taking Uriah's wife to be his own problem solved thought David I wonder how do you see David in this story there he is sinning and sinning some more and then trying to cover it up and then sinning some more all the while not too bothered it would seem by what he has done it's not that bad I mean I've made some mistakes but as long as nobody knows about them it'll be alright who's the hero of this story it's certainly not David we probably tend to look at Uriah as the hero and he certainly shines here as a man of character but he's also the tragic casualty imagine yourself in Uriah's shoes how would you feel if you were him and you knew what your king had done to your dear wife no the real hero in this story is the good and just

[15 : 29] God who will not allow David to just get away with this and so God sends his prophet Nathan God gives Nathan the exact words to bring the fullest conviction possible to David's heart David even goes so far as to pronounce the sentence that he deserves before he realizes that it's him this story is about he says the man who did this must die because he did such a thing and had no pity you are the man said God to David David realized that he couldn't hide his sin from God God was going to ensure that he did not get away with it and David crumbled in repentance before the

Lord he said I have sinned against the Lord David was broken in his heart as he admitted what he had done that he was guilty and that God was right and it's here in the midst of all this that David came to pray the words we read in Psalm 51 if you have your Bible open you're welcome to turn to it what was David's prayer right in the midst of this it was this have mercy on me oh God according to your unfailing love according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin for I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me against you you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge surely I was sinful at birth sinful from the time my mother conceived me yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb you taught me wisdom in that secret place cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean wash me and I will be whiter than snow let me hear joy and gladness let the bones you have crushed rejoice hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity create in me a pure heart oh

God and renew a steadfast spirit within me do not cast me from your presence or take your holy spirit from me restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me then I will teach transgressors your ways so that sinners will turn back to you deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed oh God you who are God my savior and my tongue will sing of your righteousness open my lips Lord and my mouth will declare your praise you do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings my sacrifice oh God is a broken spirit a broken and contrite heart you God will not despise

David David came to feel the depth of his guilt have you David acknowledged to God the ugliness and the evil of the things that he had done have you David knew that sinning was a perpetual problem in his life my sin is always before you do you know that David came to agree with God about the rightness of his verdict have you David was truly broken over his sin are you this prayer that

David prays here this is what repentance is it's what it looks like look at what David asks God to do in verse 7 cleanse me he prays what David means is that he knows the evil things he has done have made him filthy in the sight of God wash me he prays and I will be whiter than snow my guilt my sins have made me dirty they have stained me but notice the faith that David expresses here God if you wash me you can make me clean you can take that stain away the dirtiness of my sin verse 9 David says blot out all my iniquity it's as though he's saying I know

[21 : 41] God that you keep the official records on everything that I have done and I can't change what I've done or what I deserve but you can spill the ink over that part of my record so that even you can't read it or see it anymore and it's as though David in the midst of all this realizes what has led him to do this evil in the first place I mean it's if God forgives and wipes away the sin cleans off the record that deals with the past but what about the future David knows that he is inclined to sin again even after all this he realizes that there's not just his actions that have been dirty but that the dirtiness of his actions has come out of the dirtiness of his heart and so he prays create in me a pure heart oh

God take away completely that dirtiness that sinfulness in my heart God do you long for a pure heart do you long for God to take away every selfish and sinful desire of your heart and make you clean there's nothing on this earth that I long for more verse 14 is rather jarring David prays deliver me from the guilt of blood shed you who are God my savior what do you think do you think that God should answer that prayer do you think he should forgive this adulterous murderer and spare him the punishment that he deserves it's as though

David realizes there's no kind of sacrifice that I can bring that will truly atone for what I've done verse 16 you do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings what does David have to give no amount of bulls or rams or grain offerings is really going to do it all I have to offer you God is my broken heart and my repentant spirit should God forgive this adulterous murderer and spare him the punishment he deserves looking back to verse one David appeals to the mercy of God to the compassion of God to the unfailing love of

God and as the story goes God does forgive David of all this wickedness so that David does not receive the punishment he deserves we read this back in 2 Samuel chapter 12 verse 13 David said to Nathan I have sinned against the Lord Nathan replied the Lord has taken away your sin you are not going to die but because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord the son born to you will die this is maybe the hardest part of the story for all of us how God why does God seem to punish the innocent child instead of David how could he do that why should the innocent son of

David bear the punishment for his sin I wish I could tell you this morning that the child doesn't die but the child does die at some point we have to accept by faith that God reserves the right to give life and to take it away from any one of us at any moment he is God and we are not he is pure he is free from sin he is just he only ever does what is right and we are not as David just expressed we are sinful even from the womb so hard as it is we simply have to accept this by faith God is not being unjust with this punishment and once we come to terms with that we see a ray of grace

[27 : 10] God is pointing to something here should God forgive this adulterous murderer and spare him the punishment he deserves should God forgive you for all the wicked things that you've done and spare you the punishment that you deserve amazingly God loves this man David with an unfailing love despite what he's done amazingly God has compassion on him despite what he's done and amazingly God can take away David's guilt David's sin he can blot out his transgressions and he does it it would seem by punishing the innocent son of

David for his sin now let me be clear David's innocent child dying did not atone for David's sin it couldn't but it does foreshadow an innocent son of David who would come at a later time a son of David whose undeserved death is enough to atone for David's sin I'm talking about Jesus who died not just for David's sin but for mine and for yours for the sins of the whole world does it seem fair does it seem just that God would punish the innocent Jesus to take away our sins yet because God is compassionate and merciful and full of this unfailing love for you and for me he chose to punish the son of

David Jesus to take away our sins so that we could be spared the punishment that we deserve and that's what this table behind me is all about it's here we remember the death of Jesus his body was broken his blood was shed and he didn't deserve it we did he did it so that we could be cleansed and washed so that that stain that we couldn't remove could be gone and so if you have repented like David did of your sins and you are trusting in Jesus and his death to save you to forgive you to atone for you

I want to invite you to partake together with us of the bread and the cup I'll ask Dave Spellacy and Rod if you would come up and pass out the elements and if you have done this if you've repented and believed in Jesus you're welcome to partake you're welcome to remember with us and if not please just signal with your hand to let the elements pass you by we're going to wait until everyone who wishes to partake has been served and then I'll give thanks and we'll eat and drink all together to Sill van r on another can t use c to

Amen. Amen.

[32 : 38] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Father in heaven, we thank you so much for your mercy and your compassion.

We have sinned, all of us, so many times we can't even keep count.

[35 : 36] But we thank you that Jesus' blood can atone, can wash clean, can blot out our transgressions completely. Amen. We pray the prayer of David.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation. Thank you for this gift and this love. In Jesus' name, amen.

So, there's my need. Thank you, David. Share this.

Make next two gifts. Thank you. There is a blessing. Thank you. This morning's service would have to end with sadness if that was the end of the story.

But praise God it isn't. Three days later, Jesus was busted out of that tomb. God raised him from the dead.

[36 : 58] His death brought our forgiveness and his resurrection brings us life forever. And that restored relationship with God.

And so we have so much because of that to look forward to. I'm going to invite our worship team to come up and lead us in song again.