



The Good News

April 9th, 2017

Volume 17, Issue 15

Uriah - The Perfect Soldier

By Michael McCleary

Last week we considered David's mistakes in the events of Bathsheba and we looked at some lessons we can learn from those mistakes to help us be faithful to God. We noted the many ways in which David attempted to cover up his sin, and we also noted how David finally came to grips with his sin and repented, teaching us that no one is ever "too lost to be saved" if they are willing to repent and obey. However, one individual that is sometimes overlooked in the study of "David and Bathsheba" is the one person that did everything that he was supposed to do: Uriah the Hittite. There is not much known about this man; almost nothing of his history, how he came to be among the children of Israel as a Hittite, or who his parents were. Yet, if we study for a moment what little we do know about him we might be able to find some application for ourselves as Christians. We pick up the account in **II Sam. 11:6** after David has committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba and has learned that she is now pregnant. We read again that David, rather than taking responsibility for his sin, decides that something must be done to cover up what had happened. David calls for Uriah to be brought home from the frontlines, he questions Uriah regarding the war effort, and he then suggests that Uriah go to his house, and his wife, for the night:

Uriah had his mind on his duty as a soldier of Israel – We find in **vs. 9** that Uriah did not go down to his house, and to his wife, for the night. Rather he stayed at the door of the king's house along with all the other servants. When David learned of this, he questioned Uriah as to why he did not go down to his house. Consider Uriah's answer in **vs. 11**: "*The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.*" One of the aspects of Uriah's character that we learn from this one statement is that Uriah was the perfect soldier:

he had only his duty as a soldier of Israel on his mind. He could not possibly enjoy the comforts of home while there were battles to fight and a war to win. We find here a lesson of focus on our duty as Christians.

Uriah felt a deep sense of loyalty to his God, his nation, his commander, and his fellow soldiers – We find these elements of loyalty in this order in **vs. 11**. Not only was Uriah intent on his duty as a soldier, but he was also mindful of his loyalty to those that benefited from his duty. This sense of loyalty would not even be compromised by the drunken state that David lured Uriah into in **vs. 13**. He maintained his consideration of all those to whom he felt loyal and would not enjoy the comforts of his home. We find here a lesson of loyalty to our God and our brethren as we go about our duties as Christians.

Uriah was a valiant and brave man, never one to retreat – We find in **vs. 15** that David identified Uriah as a valiant warrior by advising Joab to place him with the others like him and arranging Uriah's death. We also learn in **II Sam. 23:39** that Uriah was on a short list of elite soldiers in Israel (37 in all). As we read the rest of the account, Joab obeys the commandment of the king, and Uriah is killed in battle. We find here a lesson of developing and maintaining a warrior mentality as we conduct ourselves on this earth. We can never yield when faced with temptation or persecution, and we can never retreat (into sin) when faced with adversity. We must be strong and valiant, just like Uriah.

We find that, though we do not know much about Uriah, we know enough to be able to classify him as the perfect soldier...can the same be said of us as we "*fight the good fight of faith*" (I Tim. 6:12)?