– Continued from page 1 –
rapes of Dinah and Tamar such that no sensible reader can close either chapter wondering whether either woman had been ravished. However, nothing is said in Scripture about David forcing Bathsheba. No Scripture states that she was violated by him. That Dinah and Tamar were victims of rape is further indicated by how their brothers reacted. Dinah's brothers Simeon and Levi killed every male in the city of Shechem (Genesis 34:25-26). Tamar's brother Absalom killed Amnon (2nd Samuel 13:28-33). The inspired language and the relevant circumstances are indubitable – these two were raped. Nothing remotely comparable is said of Bathsheba.

In what sense did David take her? It has been suggested that rape was communicated in the fact that David had taken Bathsheba. *"David sent messengers, and **took** her; and she came to him, and he lay with her"* (2nd Samuel 11:4). Some readers are old enough to remember when the word "Taken" did not immediately evoke thoughts of Liam Neeson's daughter. While taking might be forceful, it might not. Context is relevant. This particular verb, which appears nearly a thousand times in the Hebrew Scriptures, is employed over fifty times with reference to marriage. Abraham commanded his servant, *"**Take** a wife for my son Isaac"* (Genesis 24:4). Especially noteworthy in the case of Isaac's intended is that her consent was explicitly requested. *"They called Rebekah and said to her, 'Will you go with this man?' And she said, 'I will go'"* (Genesis 24:58). Rebekah was taken quite willingly. That Bathsheba was taken does not even hint at the application of force or coercion.

Did David's regal authority prevent resistance? Some presume that because David was King in Israel that Bathsheba was powerless to decline his efforts. Joseph's example demonstrates otherwise. He was a slave in Egypt (Genesis 39:1) when the wife of his master Potiphar attempted to seduce him on a daily basis (7-10). When she finally went beyond words and *"caught him by his garment"* (12), *"he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside"*. She was the wife of the captain of Pharaoh's guard and he was a slave. He could have yielded and claimed it was sexual assault under color of authority, but he still chose to flee. This decision cost him years in prison as Mrs. Potiphar accused him of attempted rape (16-20); nevertheless, it was the right choice. That Joseph was a male victim and that the female perpetrator in his case never used greater physical force than to grab an article of clothing may seem like too much of a disparity to compare to David and Bathsheba, but there is no record in God's word of either

– Continued on page 3 –

– Continued from page 2 –
David or his men imposing physical force or threat of harm against Bathsheba at all.

What did the Law of Moses require in cases of rape? *"If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you. But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. But you shall do nothing to the young woman; there is in the young woman no sin deserving of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so is this matter. For he found her in the countryside, and the betrothed young woman cried out, but there was no one to save her"* (Deuteronomy 22:23-27). The Law presumed if a man took a woman and lay with her in the countryside that she had tried to protest, but was overcome, and it also presumed that if the event transpired in a city that her efforts at protest would be sufficiently noticeable to arouse the attention of others who would intervene. Legally, consent was automatically implied in the absence of protest. God said so. If David was raping Bathsheba, she was obligated to resist.

Did Bathsheba have an expectation of privacy? David ought to have been in battle, not on his palace roof when he beheld Bathsheba bathing (2nd Samuel 11:1-2). Regardless, someone would have been up there. Rooftop visits were so ubiquitous in that time and place that guests falling from roofs was a common liability concern, with the Law requiring, *"When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it"* (Deuteronomy 22:8). Peter went to the housetop to pray (Acts 10:9). Anything done in sight of a roof was a public display, making Bathsheba's choice of bathing location inappropriate.

What does the inspired record actually say? *"David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house"* (2nd Samuel 11:4). He sent. They took. She came. This encounter does not even hint at a lack of consent.

"What Must I Do to Be Saved?"

Acts 16:30

Learn the Gospel
John 6:45; Romans 10:17

Believe in Christ
Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

Confess Christ
Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

Repent of Sin
Acts 3:19; 17:30

Be Baptized into Christ
Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

Remain Steadfast
1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"The Assembling of Ourselves Together"

Hebrews 10:24-25

Sunday
Worship @ 10:00 a.m.
Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

Wednesday
Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

Thursday
Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

"If a Man is Overtaken in any Trespass... Restore Such a One"

Galatians 6:1

Confess Trespasses
James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

Repent of Sin
Acts 8:22

Pray for Forgiveness
Acts 8:22

Remain Steadfast
1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A Word Fitly Spoken Is Like Apples of Gold in Settings of Silver"

Proverbs 25:11

"People who can't communicate think everything is an argument. And people who lack accountability think everything is an attack."

– Unknown

"Whole Counsel"

Acts 20:27

Volume 4, Issue 44 November 1st, 2026

Was Bathsheba Raped?

Bryan Matthew Dockens

It is becoming increasingly common to suggest King David was not only guilty of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah, but that he actually raped her. That is quite an accusation to make against a man who cannot defend himself since he died 3,000 years ago and whom inspiration never so accused.

How did Bathsheba treat this alleged rapist? Bathsheba became David's wife (2nd Samuel 11:27) and went on to bear him four more sons (1st Chronicles 3:5).

Did Bathsheba's experience compare to other rape victims? *"Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and* ***violated*** *her"* (Genesis 34:1-2). Shechem *"defiled"* Dinah (5, 10). *"Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them to Amnon her brother in the bedroom. Now when she had brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, 'Come, lie with me, my sister.' But she answered him, 'No, my brother, do not* ***force*** *me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing!' ...However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he* ***forced*** *her and lay with her"* (2nd Samuel 13:10-12, 14). The Holy Spirit is able to use straightforward language to describe the

– Continued on page 2 –

Rio Grande Valley Church of Christ

505-864-0282 rgvcoc@gmail.com

Box 989, Belén, NM 87002 www.RGVChurchOfChrist.org

75 Sherrod Boulevard Facebook.com/RGVChurchOfChrist