

2 Samuel 11:1–3

In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah.

But David remained at Jerusalem.

It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said,

“Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

Research shows that over a half of U.S. drivers have names for their cars!

Some say that naming your car is important because it creates a special bond between the driver and the car.

- A driver doesn't pick the car.
- The car'll pick the driver!
- It's a mystical bond between man and machine!

Even if you don't go quite that far, naming your car gives it a certain personality so you may have a stronger sense of ownership. Not only that, choosing the car name can influence your personality, as a driver.

Obviously, Herbie would drive differently than Bullet!

And Princess differently than Lexie!

Aggressive cars have headlights that are slanted like narrowed eyes.

Friendly cars, on the other hand, have grilles that are upturned like smiles.

Car purchasers in Germany tend to buy cars with smiling grilles and narrowed headlights because they want cars that are both friendly and aggressive!

More and more, we are seeing human qualities in nonhuman things.

Amazon's Alexa is a cylindrical object that we can talk to, and many Americans are now starting their days by asking Alexa to:

- tell them the weather,
- play them a song, or
- give them a recipe for dinner.

The 1st words out of my mouth most mornings are,

"Seri, set a timer for 5 minutes"

while my coffee brews in the French Press.

This phenomenon may be leading some children to see a wide range of objects as living things. One app developer reports that because of Alexa, his toddler now talks to beverage coasters.

Back in 2013, there was a movie titled, "**Her**" in which a lonely man develops a relationship with a talking computer operating system. Although the film seemed far-fetched back then, it comes across as entirely plausible today. Research is showing that people who feel isolated are more likely to attribute consciousness to their gadgets. Perhaps loneliness is causing us to want to have relationships with our things.

Clearly, there is an increasing danger in seeing objects as humans. We don't want our children to become adults who talk to coasters and fall in love with AI machines.

***But there's an even bigger danger in seeing humans as objects —
objects that satisfy our personal desires and agendas.***

This is a problem that is as old as sin. King David didn't perceive Bathsheba as a human being; he saw her as an object.

David's problems began in the spring of the year. Instead of doing his job and leading his soldiers, David remains in the comfort and safety of Jerusalem.

Late one afternoon, David lazily gets up from a nap and takes a walk on the roof of his house. He looks down and sees a very beautiful woman taking a bath. He likes what he sees, like a car buyer spotting a car with a grille upturned like a smile.

David sends a messenger to inquire about the woman and receives a report:

“This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite”.

Bathsheba is a flesh-and-blood human being, daughter of an Israelite named Eliam, one of David's “mighty men”.

She is also the wife of Uriah, a man who is a brave and loyal soldier of David.

What should have been instantly and crystal clear to David is that Bathsheba is off limits.

She is the daughter of one of David's biggest supporters and is lawfully married to one of his soldiers. But David doesn't see any of these people as human beings, deserving of compassion and respect. To him, they are objects for him to use.

David says, ***"Alexa, get me Bathsheba!"*** Well, not exactly. Maybe he would do that today. But in ancient Jerusalem, he sends messengers to fetch Bathsheba.

Whether she had a choice in the matter is entirely not the point! The King abused his position of power to commit a sin against many of his subjects on multiple levels and that was only the beginning!

When she sends David the message: ***"I am pregnant"*** he still doesn't see her as a human being. He doesn't see the child within her as a human being but as another problem to be dealt with.

And so, he doubles down. ***"Send me Uriah the Hittite,"*** he says to his captain Joab.

"Hey, Uriah old buddy! I'm hearing great things about your work out there on the battlefield. You deserve a break. Go home and check up on your wife. You deserve a few days off!"

But Uriah is a human being, not a talking computer operating system. He is going to follow his conscience. Instead of going home, he sleeps at the entrance of the king's house with all the other servants.

Uriah says, ***"My lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? No way! I will not do such a thing!"***

Uriah the Hittite turns out to be more honorable than David the king of the Israelites.

So now, with a heart as cold as ice, David goes all in! He writes a letter to Joab and forces honorable Uriah to unknowingly carry his own death sentence.

“Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.”

Uriah is killed on the battlefield — tossed away like an inconvenient object.

This is a chilling warning to us. It illustrates the deadly danger of seeing humans as objects — objects that satisfy our personal desires and agendas.

Instead of respecting Bathsheba as a woman and a wife, David sees her as an attractive thing designed to give him pleasure.

Instead of honoring Uriah as a soldier and a husband, David disposes of him as though he were an annoying, throwaway object.

This story packs an emotional punch as it shows the great harm that can be done when we treat people not as human beings but as objects to be used!

In recent years we have seen over and over again the incredible pain that comes from treating people as objects for personal use! How many careers and lives have been shipwrecked because of the damage they inflicted on people who should have been shown respect as human beings!

Of course, it is not only kings and celebrities who treat people like objects. Each of us, in our own way, can put our own desires ahead of another person's welfare, or treat someone as a stepping-stone as we pursue our own agendas.

- Maybe we befriend a fellow student because they can help us pass a test ...
- hire an immigrant day laborer so that we can pay them a cheaper hourly rate ...
- date a wealthy person so that they will buy us expensive gifts ...
- keep our employees at a part-time level so we don't have to pay for health insurance.

Fortunately, a simple formula exists to keep us on the right track:

Love people, not things; use things, not people.

Love people, not things!

See everyone as a precious child of God, made in the image of God.

Respect them as daughters, wives, sons, husbands, mothers, fathers, loyal workers, faithful fellow Christians.

Love them as Christ loves them, remembering the commandment of Jesus...

John 13:34

Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another!

Use things, not people.

- Use Alexa to tell you the weather and play your favorite songs.
- Use a car with an upturned grille to get you to work and take your children to soccer.
- Use your computer to keep your calendar straight and make you more productive.

But don't ever love these things so that they draw your attention away from the flesh-and-blood human beings around you.

David was considered the greatest King of Israel.

He was a man after God's own heart!

And yet we have here in Scripture one of the most shameful examples of the abuse of power!

How is it that such a man could do such terrible things?

It is a cautionary tale for all of us! If such a man could fall so far, we should take heed, for we too are fallen human beings who tend to use people and love objects.

It is also a tale of hope; that if such a man could still receive mercy, we too may be forgiven!

There were terrible consequences visited upon David for these sins, but he also received God's mercy and forgiveness. He was not cast out forever but restored again by the love of God.

Examine your life and your attitudes.

Do you love people as Christ has loved you?

Do you use objects and not love them?

Matthew 6:21

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Where we have fallen short, ask God for his mercy.

Ask our loved ones for forgiveness.

And then pray that the Lord would give you the strength and wisdom to be like him and **love people and use objects!**