

- 1990's Popular TV show on cable channel VH1: "Behind the Music." Took famous bands and rockstars and gave us the backstory. If you knew their "rock and roll" / BTM gave us the "sex and drugs" - the sultry, salty parts of the story. Outrageous scandals, shocking offences, excessive lifestyles.
- We've been doing a sermon series on cov'ts, each made with a Biblical Rock Star: Noah, Abraham, Moses, David. Tend to think of them as heros, founding fathers of Bible, divine-esque celebrities. From the time we're children hearing these stories, assume that these people in the Bible must be there *because they are good.*
- But today, I want to take us "Behind the Covenant" - b/c there's an outrageous scandal behind almost every one of these Biblical Rock Stars.
 - 1) NOAH: As soon as God promises never to destroy the earth again, Noah plants a vineyard, gets drunk and comes home naked, where his sons discover this disgrace.
 - 2) ABRAHAM: His wife Sarah is really pretty, and twice during his travels he lies and says that she's his sister and has her go live with a king so people won't try to hurt him so they can steal her.
 - 3) MOSES: Would focus on life before his fame, when he became a *fugitive* after killing, with his own hands, an Egyptian who was arguing with a Hebrew.
 - 4) DAVID: Growing up, nice boy, shepherd, slayed Goliath. Became king. Turn to adultery: sleeps with Bathsheba, has her husband killed to cover his tracks when she ends up pregnant. And then we'd need a *second* episode for David's children, among whom a civil war breaks out after one sibling rapes another.
 - Basically, we could get Axl Rose, Aerosmith, and the Rolling Stones in a room and have them trade stories and they'd STILL come out looking better than the frontmen of the Bible.

Rev. Kathryn L. Pocalyko
Lutheran Church of Our Saviour
North Chesterfield, Virginia

March 11, 2018
Fourth Sunday in Lent

2 Samuel 7:4-5, 12-17*
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

*We have swapped out the Lectionary's appointed reading from Numbers 21:4-9 for 2 Samuel 7:4-5, 12-17 in order to complete the series of covenants in the Hebrew Scriptures.

- When we learn these gritty details, we might wonder if these Biblical Giants really are the faithful, godly people we thought they were.
 - I mean, what do you do when you learn the nice old fellow who built the big boat with all the zoo animals was an alcoholic who had a problem with indecent exposure and picked favorites among his children?
 - What do you do when King David's behavior is more than just one affair but a lifelong pattern of manipulating women?
 - Such is the danger of going “Behind the Covenant”

- AND YET, this is “Behind the *Covenant*” - God still makes a covenant with each of rockstars. Grafts all these sinners onto eternal promise. Commits to be their God. To stick by them. To bless descendents and generations from them. In case of David, it will be into his messed-up family line that God chooses to be born.
 - The Bible isn't always interested in telling us the story of *consistently good people*, but a *consistently good God*

- Going “Behind the Covenant” shows some pretty outrageous scandals and explosive news about this Good God: If God chooses to make a covenant with, and then in Jesus chooses to become incarnate among these sinners, well, then God must really love the whole world.
 - And if God is willing to make even them eternal promises, well, then God must really NOT be in the relentless condemning business but in the eternal saving business.

- When the Word is made flesh and dwells among us as Jesus Christ, God, in a more personal way than ever, takes us Behind the Covenant, and
 - It is Outrageous scandal that God’s eternal love is born to a powerless infant;
 - Shocking offence that God’s Son befriends criminals and cheats;

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- Scandalizing truth of how God's body is nailed to the cross, where God gives up divine fame and fortune to take on the frailty and humiliation of death as a demonstration of POWER and LOVE.
- The scripture sounds this good news over again, in every new age, from those first early rock-stars to the sinners Jesus loved to the scandals of our own lives:
 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."
 - "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."
 - "by grace you have been saved...by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of [a consistently good] God"

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