

Bible and the Headlines: Royals Misbehaving

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In Google's search engine, the term "royal" will auto-populate with "scandal." These two terms go together like peanut butter and jelly. Their symbiosis was on display in recent headlines around the world.

The Antipodes has two stories of Scandinavian royalty misbehaving. On November 7, Australia's SkyNews.com.au carried, "'She's Asking for Millions': King Frederik of Denmark's Alleged Ex-Mistress Genoveva Casanova Launches Legal Action Against Spanish Media." At the heart of the legal filing are 14 photos published by Spanish media. The media interest is because, "The recently crowned King Frederik has seemingly hinted at a past 'affair' with Mexican socialite, Genoveva Casanova in his new memoir." Unlike the press, Denmark's queen appeared to be reconciled to her husband's philandering.

The November 7 edition of the Australian lifestyle website, 9Honey, featured, "Exclusive: Inside the Battle to Futureproof Norway's Monarchy as the Royal Family Faces Two of Its Biggest Scandals in Generations." The first scandal comes from the step-son of Norway's Crown Prince who has been charged with rape and assault. "The criminal case against Marius Borg Høiby is expected to bring unprecedented scrutiny on the monarchy and its key players when it gets underway in February." Compared to these felonies, Princess Märtha Louise accepting payment for her participation in a Netflix documentary would not even be a transgression if she were not in the Norwegian line of succession.

The Telegraph on November 8th titillated its readers with "Cursed Princes, Playboys And Pariahs: Europe's Royals Can't Escape Scandal." Starting with the newly monikered Andrew Mountbatten-Winsor (formerly Prince Andrew), and going through the dynasties of Spain, Norway and the Low Countries, the article gives a rundown on regal ignominies: "Many of Europe's ancient houses have their own Andrews; a rogues' gallery of royals whose blunders, gaffes and crimes have threatened the very institution of monarchy itself." These misbehaviors are fodder for republicanism.

The kings of Israel were not immune from felonious behavior. The First Book of Kings contains an example when royal privilege led to murder. It began with a field King Ahab expected its commoner owner to sell to him. The commoner refused, "So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because the man had said, 'I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.' King Ahab lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat" (1Ki 21:4). Queen Jezebel had the man arrested on trumped up charges and executed (1Ki 21:13). King Ahab got his field.

The royal bad boy in the New Testament was King Herod. John the Baptist attempted to correct the king but, "... Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, for John had been saying to Herod: 'It is not lawful for you to have her.' " (Mat 14:3-4). King Herod crossed into other forbidden relations by lusting after his stepdaughter (Matt 14:6-7). To satisfy a vow he made to his stepdaughter, King Herod presented her with John the Baptist's head on a platter (Matt 14:11). Adding to his scandalous behavior, King Herod mocked and tried to humiliate Jesus the night before Jesus' crucifixion (Luk 23:11).

There will not be royal scandals in Heaven. The book of Isaiah tells us about our heavenly King, "He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. (Isa 9:6). If only human royalty would behave until He starts to reign.