

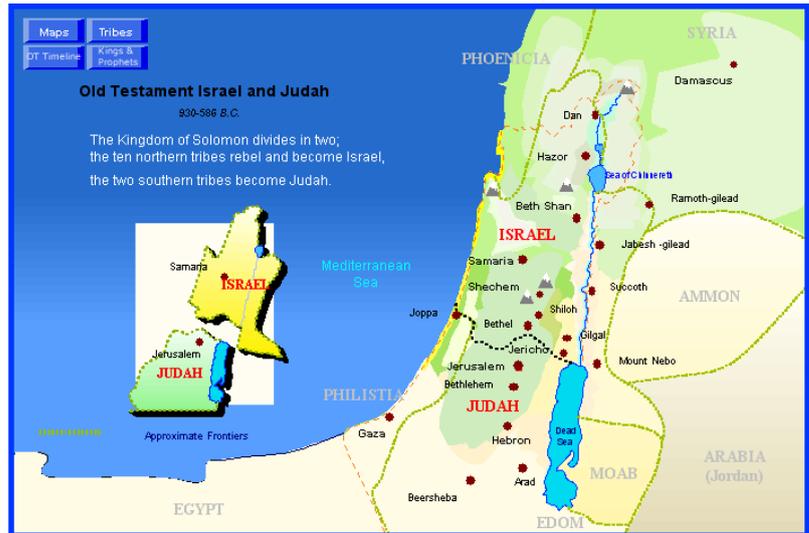
## No.20 Bathsheba - from depths to heights!

### 2 Samuel 11:1-17; 2 Samuel 11:26-27

We now look at a further wife of David, Bathsheba. She was one of his eight wives, as David had not restricted himself to the monogamous marriage covenant given by God (**Exodus 20:14**). Abigail had unexpectedly become the wife of the King of Israel. Abigail showed such amazing wisdom in her reaction to the problems caused by her husband, Nabal. She had great respect for David and her love for God and His ways saved David from great heart ache. Bathsheba was not so wise and certainly didn't help David to keep away from sin.

David had fulfilled the great future which Abigail foretold, (**1 Samuel 25:28-31**). He restored the nation to peace and great military power. After he had been King over Judah for seven and a half years he became the ruler over the entire nation of Israel and Judah together. He had followed after God's directions in his life and still loved God dearly and he gave God the glory for his success.

'How the mighty have fallen'. Maybe David had let his cutting edge in his relationship with God slip? Maybe the success had made him lazy in listening to God? Maybe he was allowing his flesh to dominate his decisions? Maybe for once he didn't want to obey, a little rebellion, a little pride? A small choice of disobedience, choosing not to go to war with his troops as he should have done, but getting his commander Joab to do the work, led to his adultery with Bathsheba, murder of her husband and death of their baby. One small sin with massive impact both to themselves, their family and even the Nation!! All sin has a powerful ripple effect.



Bathsheba was an exceptionally beautiful woman who was married to Uriah. He was a really strong character with much disciplined flesh. When David called him back from the war he tried to persuade him to go and see his wife. David was hoping Uriah would sleep with her and so Bathsheba's pregnancy would be credited to her husband. Uriah refused saying 'the ark and Israel and Judah, my lord Joab and servants are all camping in the open field how can I go home and eat and drink and sleep with my wife, I will not do this thing' **2 Samuel 11:11**. This led David to keep Uriah home for an extra couple of days, get him drunk and try again, this too failed. David caught in a trap by the consequences of his sin felt he had no alternative than to add to his problems and draw others into the problem and persuade Joab to go along with his plan.

This must have been so hard for Joab knowing what an honourable and courageous officer Uriah was. We could be forgiven for feeling sorry for Bathsheba as she was the victim of a demanding King when she was lonely and vulnerable, as her husband was away. She had not expected to be seen by the King as she would have expected him to be at war. Was she rather naïve and just didn't think through the consequences? On the other hand did she deliberately choose to flaunt herself? Or was she trying to draw another man's attention while her husband was away from home, especially the King? She had been brought up by her father Eliam, who was one of David's heroes, so she was well aware of God's law about adultery and knew what was right and wrong.

She certainly didn't warn King David, when he called her, about disobedience to God especially as she was married and he should consider the respect of his people. She did not prevent David from bringing God's name into disrepute (**2 Samuel 12:7-12**). One word from her would have brought David up short as he was in the wrong place at the wrong time, but he would have responded to a warning. As his disobedience continues he hardens his heart and so he moves into further depravation. These steps of the consequences

of sin are seen so clearly in **James 1:14-15**. 'every person is tempted when he is drawn away, enticed and baited by his own evil desire (lust and passions) then the evil desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully matured, brings forth death'. And the outcome of this one night of passion is death for the baby; death for Bathsheba's husband Uriah; and a violent death for three of David's sons; also his son Absalom used his harem as seen by all Israel (**2 Samuel 16:22**) Above all David displeased God (**2 Samuel 11:27**)

Typical response to sin for all of us is to try and cover it up, look at Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (**Genesis 3:10**) David tried really hard to cover up what they had done, especially after finding out Bathsheba was pregnant. When we become panicky about being found out for something we have done wrong we are so much better to admit our mistake **immediately**. David hardened his heart and it took nearly nine months before God asked Nathan the prophet to confront him and he was repentant, **2 Samuel 12:1-14**. Arranging the death of Uriah must have really eaten away at him and not allowed him to have any peace of mind and all the time watching his wife getting larger with the pregnancy, was a constant reminder. David's sorrow over their sin led to writing **Psalms 51** in which he expresses true repentance, acknowledging his wrong, taking full responsibility, and asking God to 'create a pure heart within me and renew a right spirit within me'. Bathsheba went on to have a baby which was very poorly and after seven days, during which David fasted and prayed, he died. Then David worshiped God stating that one day he would see him again, **2 Samuel 12:15-23**. David comforted Bathsheba and she again became pregnant and God showed great mercy and blessing and gave them a son which they called Solomon, 'beloved of the Lord' She raised him from infancy to be set apart as a prince and ruler. She instructed him daily in the fear of the Lord and in God's commands, **Proverbs 4:3-5; Proverbs 6:20-21**.

**Repentance** means completely turning round 180 degrees from the thing you have done wrong. (**Acts 3:25-26**).

**Action now:** Say sorry; Show love; Make restitution where appropriate; determine never to do it again; Show by your life there is a change.

**People who repented:** Simon Peter in **Luke 24:33-34**; People of Nineveh in **Jonah 3:10**.

**Remorse without repentance:** This can be as deceiving as we think we have repented but there is no heart change, no true humility. Judas in **Matthew 27:3-4**; King Saul in **1 Samuel 26:21**

#### **After repentance:**

1. Stop sin - **1 John 1:7; 1 John 3:6**.
2. Receive peace – **Romans 5:1**
3. No condemnation – **Romans 8:1**
4. Spiritual refreshment - **Acts 3:19**
5. Joy in Heaven - **Luke 15:8-10**.
6. Be Baptised - **Mark 1:4-7**.
7. Worship – **John 4:23-24**

The amazingly beautiful woman who attracted a King and gave birth to his son experienced the great extremes of emotions with the death of her baby and her husband to the gratitude towards David for standing by her caring for her and his son. Also the opportunity to marry him when the law stated she should be stoned.

Her life with David must have been difficult as she was involved with him and the problems he had with his family. He was very angry when he heard about the incestuous rape of his daughter Tamar by Amnon (**2 Samuel 13:21**) when his two sons died violent deaths. Amnon died after orders from Absalom (**2 Samuel 13:29-30**) then Absalom himself was caught in a tree and stabbed by Joab, David's commander (**2 Samuel 18:14-17**) when David was totally distraught. Bathsheba had to speak up for her precious son Solomon to be King as Adonijah was trying to be a step ahead of the elderly King David and get himself installed as king (**1 Kings 1:12-39**). After David's death when Solomon was King, Adonijah tried to manipulate Bathsheba to be king but Solomon saw through his plan and had David's third son killed immediately (**1 Kings 2:13-25**).

So much violence and trauma in one family must have been a strain for this woman, but she was determined that Solomon would be the son of King David crowned king, so there would be no problems after his death. She was a woman who knew what she wanted and went after it (**1 Kings 1:11-35**).

- Today we need, as women, to recognise the problems we can cause for men in the area of seduction if we do not behave in a way that is in line with the Word and honouring to God.
- Do we dress as becoming a 'holy' woman of God? Do we speak with a clean mouth or is our conversation full of innuendoes and suggestions?
- Do we keep a lookout for any men who have lustful thoughts towards us and keep well away from the trap? Or are we flattered?
- As a married woman do we speak kindly to our husband and behave as a real helper when he goes through his own trials? Do we support or criticise him?
- When it comes to our children are we always pushing them forward for positions that they may not have the character to complete successfully?
- Do we have a clear picture of the holiness of God?

**Pray:**

'Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your Truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear Your Name'. **Psalm 86:11**

'Create in me a pure heart O God and renew a right spirit within me' **Psalm 51:10**

## No.20 Bathsheba - from depths to heights! Challenges Questions

### **Read the notes about Bathsheba.**

1. What do you think were the motives of Bathsheba when she was bathing in the King's view?
2. What do you feel was the cause of the adultery? Is it the same today?
3. Describe in your own words the time while the child was dying and the outcome from Bathsheba's point of view.
4. How do you think Bathsheba felt about Solomon especially when she heard that another son of David was setting himself up as King (**1 Kings 1:11-39**)?

### **Read Luke 2:21-38**

5. How old was Jesus at this time? (**Leviticus 12:1-4**)
6. Where did Mary and Joseph bring the new baby Jesus to and why? **Luke 2:22-24**
7. Who was the first person who met Jesus there? What kind of person was he and what was he waiting for? **Luke 2:25-27**
8. What did Simeon declare about Jesus? **Luke 2:28-34**. What warning did Simeon give Mary? **Luke 2:34-35**

