

Session 4

Bathsheba

2 Samuel 11 and 12, 1 Kings 1 and 2

Because there are a number of difficult topics in this story, particularly child loss, it would be good to mention this at the beginning of the session and offer anyone space to leave or say if it gets too much for them.

Intro

Over the last few weeks, we have been looking at women in the Bible. We have focused on the women in Jesus' family tree. We looked at Tamar and found that we may be broken but we are not worthless to God. We then looked at Rahab and found that our past doesn't define us and how God changed the course of her future because of her act of faith in Him. Last week, we looked at Ruth and saw how God can provide and restore us.

(If you would like to ask the group how the last few weeks have been, go for it!)

Part 1

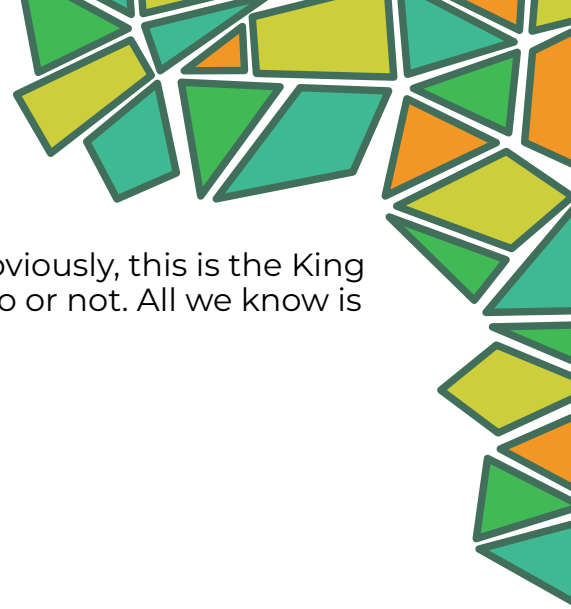
Today we are going to look at the story of Uriah's wife. She was called Bathsheba. This is set later in the story of God's people when they had kings. And, at this time, King David was on the throne. If you have ever heard of the story David and Goliath, this is the same guy. That story was before he was King. There was a war going on and King David often had to fight or send out his army to fight against other nations. During one attack, David stayed at home instead of going into battle.

²One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, ³and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." ⁴Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. ⁵The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

2 Samuel 11:2-5

When David heard this, he sent for Uriah, and he tried to get him to go home and be with his wife. Basically, he wanted to cover up the wrong he had done. He even got Uriah drunk to try and get him to sleep with his wife but both times he didn't go home. Uriah did this because he didn't feel it was right to go home when his fellow men didn't get to.

So, David knew he was in trouble and people would find out that Uriah's wife was pregnant by him. To cover this up, he sent Uriah into battle and put him purposefully in harms way so that he would die. Sadly, this is exactly what happens. Uriah dies in battle and Bathsheba mourns her husband. When her time of mourning had finished, David brought her to his house and married her and she gave birth to a son.



The Bible doesn't say what Bathsheba's motives were. Obviously, this is the King wanting to sleep with her. We don't know if she wanted to or not. All we know is that they did sleep together.

Discussion Questions

- ▶ What are your initial thoughts?
- ▶ How do you think Bathsheba is feeling?
- ▶ Have you ever had, or been on the end of, mixed motives?

Craft Time

Part 2

David has a friend called Nathan. God sent Nathan to David with a message;

"When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, ³but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

⁴"Now a traveller came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveller who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him."

⁵David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! ⁶He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity."

⁷Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man!"

2 Samuel 12:1b-7a.

Nathan tells him what God says, and God says that he has given David all these things and would have given him more, but he wanted what wasn't his and had gone against God in his act of taking Bathsheba and killing Uriah. God says there will be consequences for his actions and that he will bring chaos to his household. David says sorry and repents honestly. God forgives him as he is truly sorry, but the consequences of his actions still stand, and God says that his son will die. **(Very sensitive and hard topic so make sure to address it carefully)**

The child becomes ill and sadly dies after 7 days. This is an awful thing that happened, and it is specific to this story. It doesn't mean that all babies who die are a consequence of someone's wrong actions. That is just the case in the life of David. David comforted Bathsheba during this time and she eventually had another son named Solomon.

(If you would like to read David's response, you can find that is Psalm 51 in the Bible.)





It's hard to possibly imagine going through all that, losing a husband and then losing her son.

Although David recognised his wrong, his wrong behaviour brought a lot of pain and sorrow.

Discussion Questions

- ▶ Do you think there is hope for Bathsheba?
- ▶ How do you think God sees the situation?
- ▶ Have you ever felt similar emotions to what you think Bathsheba is feeling?

Craft Time

Part 3

We don't hear of Bathsheba again until the next book in the Bible, 1 Kings. King David is now super old and is about to die. Solomon isn't the eldest son so the eldest living son assumes that he would be king and starts the celebrations to celebrate him becoming king. King David is still alive.

David's friend, Nathan, goes to Bathsheba and tells her of what is happening. If the older son becomes King, then their lives would be in danger. So, she goes to King David and tells him about what is happening and reminds him of a promise he made that her son, Solomon, would become King after him. So, David made Solomon king before he died, and Bathsheba became the King's mother.

We see that Bathsheba not only has a son, but also, he becomes king. Bathsheba has had a complicated story, but now we see she her becoming the mother of a king. This does not mean she doesn't carry the scars of her past. You do not forget loved ones who have sadly passed away, but we do see God at work in her life, restoring what was broken.

Discussion Questions

- ▶ How do you think Bathsheba felt? Do you think she still had pain? Scars? Hurt?
- ▶ What do you think of God looking at this story?
- ▶ Do you think God can restore you?

Craft Time



Summary

Bathsheba has a complex story, there was pain, loss and mixed motives. However, we see this hope from God. He blessed them with another son, and that son ends up being king. We see that God restores her to a place of honour as one of Jesus' ancestors.

We all do and have done wrong things. We may feel guilty or carry shame from the things we have done wrong or from the wrong others have done against us. However, forgiveness can be found in Jesus if we choose to follow him.

If you have any questions about that, please ask.

(Link to craft.)

