

## **Bathsheba – A Study of Forgiveness**

Widows of the Old Testament  
Teacher/Facilitator Study Guide  
Sylvia De Jong

*Italics* indicate the text in the Student's Study Guide.

\*Indicates the author's study helps for the teacher/facilitator.

### **Review of Abigail**

*Choose one (or more) from the following list, that was the most helpful to you in the study of Abigail and write below how it helped you. Consider sharing this in class.*

\* Have list read aloud as a review and give several participants the opportunity to share what was most helpful.

- a. *Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas depended on the Ark to save them in battle and died. Some people depend on church membership or baptism to save them. Only faith and trust in the true God and His Son, Jesus Christ, will save a person's soul.*
- b. *Abigail learned from her father that David said "The battle is the LORD's" and slew Goliath with a slingshot and the giant's own sword. Her faith grew.*
- c. *Abigail's father chose a wealthy husband for her. He was a mean spirited, selfish man. We must advise our children to prayerfully choose godly mates with good character.*
- d. *Nabal chose to ignore David's request for food and David chose to wipe out Nabal and his household. It is important for us to consider long-range consequences before acting.*
- e. *Abigail's ancestor Caleb conquered a mountain held by giants. It gave her courage to conquer giants of fear, pain and discouragement. God's Spirit empowers us to conquer.*
- f. *In Psalm 32:8, God says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go." Abigail consulted God for wisdom, not her drunken husband. Whom do we seek for wise counsel?*
- g. *Abigail brought a peace offering to David and Nabal's household was spared from death. Jesus Christ, God's gift to us, gave himself as our peace offering.*

- h. *Abigail would run to the Lord with her hurts and struggles. God brought her out of all her struggles, but used them to train her in wisdom. He will keep you from yielding to temptation and give you the right response to hardship.*
- i. *God gave Abigail insight to confront David wisely. He sends people to confront us if needed and will send us to someone in need of godly confrontation for His glory.*
- j. *Nabal faced God's judgment for his cruelty to the people in his life. Pray for those who bring you pain and suffering, to have a transformed heart or be removed from your life by God's power. Ask God for wisdom in confronting that person.*
- k. *God gave strength to Abigail throughout Nabal's marriage to her. If you are caring for someone in a difficult situation, God will strengthen you and help you.*
- l. *If God does not provide another husband for a widow, He promises to be her husband (Isaiah 54:5). He provides fellowship, joy, communication, and all that is needed.*

*Share prayer needs. Personal things discussed here are to be kept strictly confidential. Do not share it with anyone else unless you obtain permission from the person who shared it here.*

## **Prayer**

### **Bathsheba – A Study of Forgiveness**

*“Praise the LORD O my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives (sahach)all your sins . . . and redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion . . . as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” Psalm 103:2-3a, 4, 12).*

*Salach (saw-lakh') – Hebrew word means to forgive or pardon*

\*David and Bathsheba in our study experienced God's forgiveness and David could therefore instruct and comfort many through the Psalms concerning God's compassion and forgiveness.

**Map:** Point out En Gedi, Hebron and Jerusalem

## Historical and Cultural Background

1. *As our last study closed, David was hiding from King Saul at En Gedi and sent men to bring Abigail there to be his wife.*

*\*In that culture and time, some men had a number of wives, as did David. His wife Michal had no children. Ahinoam (Ammon), Abigail (Chileab or Daniel), Maacah (Absalom), Haggith (Adonijah), Abital (Shephatiah), Eglah (Ithream).*

2. *As we begin this study, approximately twenty two years have passed (pg. 89) since David was anointed by Samuel to follow Saul as king.*

3. *King Saul faced a battle with the Philistines. He was terrified and went through the motions of seeking God, but not from a heart of faith. Then he approached the witch at Endor. Why did she hesitate to do as he asked? He had expelled the mediums and spiritists from Israel. She was afraid it was a trap and that she would be killed. Saul promised her she would not be punished.*

4. *Saul asked her to bring up the spirit of Samuel. She was shocked when Samuel's spirit appeared.*

*\*There is disagreement among Bible scholars concerning whether it was actually Samuel's spirit that appeared or a demonic apparition. I believe that God brought back Samuel's spirit supernaturally to communicate to Saul that his kingdom was about to be torn out of his hand and given to David.*

5. *The following day Saul was wounded and deliberately fell on his sword. His sons died during the battle with the Philistines (1 Chronicles 10:13-14). Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD. He even consulted a medium for guidance, and he did not enquire of the LORD. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David, son of Jesse.*

6. *Our faith can be eroded and our relationship with God distanced by willful disobedience. A lack of desire to please the LORD or seek Him in faith may make us open to follow our own course of action or seek advice from ungodly sources.*

**Discuss:** *What are some ungodly sources which people use today, to gain knowledge of the future or to find assistance in decision making? Psychics, horoscopes, crystals, channeling, palm readers, fortune tellers, witches, witch doctors.*

*\*Seeking the help of a psychic, horoscope, palm reader and such things displays a complete lack of trust in God's desire to give us wisdom.*

*Is it pleasing to God for us to be involved in any way with the occult: to read or see the Harry Potter or Twilight series books or movies or other popular occult-related media in our culture?*

*\*Stephanie Meyer, author of the Twilight series, received her story in a dream and vision. She felt compelled to write about a blood sucking vampire and mortal love affair. She says she has dream visitations with "real" spirits. J. K. Rowlings, author of the Harry Potter series, centers her books around the occult aimed at young readers. These books and movies are drawing myriads of American young people into occult teachings without understanding of the dangers of being dragged away from God.*

*God forbids sorcery, witchcraft, mediums and spiritists (occult activities). Read Leviticus 19:31 and 2 Chronicles 33:6. The occult has a pull that can trap people who may get involved out of curiosity.*

*7. David was king over Judah for seven and a half years in Hebron and then over all Israel for thirty three years. David captured Jerusalem and built his palace there. Jerusalem became known as the City of David (pg. 91).*

*8. David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and placed it in a tent. He desired to build a house for God and the Ark. God gave him a promise that he would have a son who would be king after him, and through that son, the house and kingdom of David would be established for ever (2 Samuel 7:15-16).*

*\*This was speaking of his family line descending to Jesus, King of the Jews.*

*9. God promised David that his son would build a house for God, where the Ark would be placed.*

*10. Eliam (e li' am), and his wife had a baby girl, Bathsheba, about the time David was first anointed by Samuel. When grown, Bathsheba became the wife of Uriah, one of David's most loyal soldiers. Uriah's name means Jehovah is Light (pg. 92).*

*Eliam and Uriah were both “mighty men” – part of David’s 37 bravest soldiers (2 Samuel 23:34, 39). Eliam’s father, Bathsheba’s grandfather, was Ahithophel whom later betrayed David. Another name in the Bible for Eliam is Ammiel; another name for Bathsheba is Bathshua.*

11. *The LORD gave David victory wherever he went. David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people (2 Samuel 8:14-15).*

### **Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5**

12. *David reached a point one year in the spring, when he did not go out to battle, but sent his men to war without him. Why do you think he chose not to go? He may have become self-satisfied and self-reliant, not depending on God to direct him. His men were good and he trusted them to win the battle.*

**Consider:** *Are there times when you feel confident of your abilities and don’t ask God to help with a task? Perhaps you get busy and don’t take time to pray. When this happens, be careful. Temptation may be at your door.*

13. *David was not alert or prepared for the battle that threatened and overtook him (pg. 92). He was walking in the roof garden of his palace and saw a beautiful woman bathing. “David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, ‘Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, and the wife of Uriah the Hittite’” (v. 3)?*

14. *How did David know her father and her husband? They were both part of his mighty fighting men, away at war.*

**Discuss:** *This should have set off a warning bell for David. Do we ever receive warnings that we ignore?*

15. *David sent messengers for her. What did Bathsheba do? She came to him and he slept with her. Then she went back home.*

**Discuss:** *Do you think she could have refused David? It would take a strong woman to go against the wishes of the king but with God's help it could have been done.*

\*Perhaps she could have resisted by appealing to his sense of loyalty and gratitude to her father and husband for their faithful service. *"It is better to obey God than man" (Acts 5:29). "If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea" (Isaiah 48:18).*

16. *The Bible clearly teaches that adultery (a sexual union between a married man or woman with someone he or she is not married to) is sinful. "You shall not commit adultery. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (Exodus 20:14 & 17b).*

\*The punishment by law for both the man and the woman caught in the act of adultery was death (Deuteronomy 22:22).

17. *Sexual union between unmarried people is also considered sinful (pg. 94). Morality, or right and wrong, is not determined by the voice of society but by the voice of God. "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man [or woman] commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually, sins against his own body . . . Therefore honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:18, 20b).*

\*God's design and plan is for sexual union between a man and his wife only. He gives people strength and ability to restrain themselves with the Holy Spirit's control. David however, did not seek God's control and direction in this instance.

18. *Bathsheba sent word to David that she conceived and was pregnant. "And you may be sure that your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23).*

## **Read 2 Samuel 11:6-13**

19. *Who was dishonorable and who was honorable in this passage of scripture and why?*

*Dishonorable - David. He pretended to call Uriah home for a war update. He encouraged Uriah to go home to wash his feet and rest after his long trip. When he did not go, David made him drunk, hoping Uriah would go and sleep with Bathsheba and never know David had committed adultery with her.*

*Honorable - Uriah. He refused to go home, sleep with his wife and be comfortable. He said he would not do such a thing when his fellow soldiers were camped in the open fields of battle.*

*“Woe to the obstinate children,’ declares the LORD, ‘to those who carry out plans that are not mine, forming an alliance, but not by my Spirit, heaping sin upon sin” (Isaiah 30:1).*

*\*When we live with unconfessed sin, and rely on our own strength and wisdom for answers, it short-circuits our relationship with God and we do not honor Him.*

## **Read 2 Samuel 11:14-27**

20. *How did David get rid of Uriah? He sent him back to the battle with a letter to Joab to put Uriah in the front lines where he would surely be killed. When their enemy came out to fight, some of David’s men fell, including Uriah who died.*

**Discuss:** *David now had to give account to God for the sins of adultery, deceit and murder. Why do you think God inspired the writer (possibly Nathan or Gad) to include this story in 2 Samuel? So we can see what happens when God’s people sin. Nothing is hidden from God.*

\* David's own son, Solomon, (yet to be born to Bathsheba) wrote: "There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers (Proverbs 6:16-19). David and Bathsheba probably, at some point, shared the story with Solomon, of how they had disobeyed God. He later wrote this and most of the other proverbs.

21. *How did Bathsheba respond to the news of Uriah's death? We do not know much about how she felt; only that she put on her widow's clothes and "mourned". We can only imagine her pain and guilt. Do we know what David told her about Uriah's death or David's part in it? No. At the end of her mourning, what did David do? Had Bathsheba brought in to his home and she became his wife and bore him a son.*

### **Read 2 Samuel 12:1-14**

22. *By telling David a simple parable, the prophet Nathan confronted him with his sin. He was brought face to face with God's commands for holy living and was found guilty. "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). "But if a man schemes and kills another man deliberately . . . put him to death" (Exodus 21:14). God stayed the death penalty. David would not die, but their baby would.*

**Discuss:** *In verse 9, God says, "Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what was evil in his eyes?" Are we aware that when we disobey God's word and sin, we actually despise the command to obey. As we sin, we rebel against God and His command. Can anyone think of an example of that?*

23. *The consequences of David's and Bathsheba's sin were devastating and they had to live with them. Can you list them?*

v. 10 – The sword will never depart from David's house (much bloodshed).

v. 11 – One close to them will lie with David's wives in broad daylight.

v. 14 – Their baby will die.



24. If we could train our mind to think of the consequences before we act, we might not be so quick to make a wrong decision. God's Spirit desires to engage our mind and give us Scripture that will empower us to take a different path (pg. 99).

25. What was Nathan's response when David confessed his sin (v. 13-14)? The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.

**Discuss:** *Some, who claim to be Christians, think lightly of sin. They may say, "God won't care if I do that. The Bible says that if we confess it, God will forgive it." What is there in verse 14 they are overlooking? Their actions give God's enemies fuel for contempt or to ridicule God.*

*"If you love me, you will obey what I command. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:15, 21).*

### **Read 2 Samuel 12:15-23**

26. How long did David fast and pray? 7 days Why? In hopes that his child might live. Why did he stop? His child died. Where was the first place he went after his child died? He went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Psalm 51 was written by David in connection with the Prophet Nathan's visit and David's repentance.

27. David exclaimed in v. 23, "Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." What do you think he meant by that? The baby was gone. He could do nothing to bring him back. One day his body would join his in the grave but his soul would join him in heaven.

\*David's statement here indicates he believed that his baby would be in heaven and one day he would join him there. Jewish babies were circumcised at eight days of age, as a token of the covenant with God. David and Bathsheba's baby died at seven days of age, therefore no circumcision. Some believing families bring their babies/children to be baptized, other believing families bring children to be dedicated. Baptism alone does not save (Mark 16:15, 16). In either case the parents covenant with God to teach their child biblical standards and prepare him or her to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. In doing this, the parents are asking the church to pray for and support them and their child toward this end (Mark 10:13-16). I believe the souls of aborted babies go to be with the LORD.

**Discuss:** *Do you have any children in heaven? Have you had any miscarriages?*

28. *Bathsheba experienced three crises in about two years. What were they?*

- a) The act of adultery with David and consequent conception
- b) The death of her husband, Uriah
- c) The death of her child

*She found comfort, forgiveness and courage to go on with her life.*

29. *David had four sons with Bathsheba after the baby died. They were Solomon, Shammua, Shobab, and Nathan (1 Chronicles 3:5). Solomon is the son who would follow David as king and build the temple as a house for God and for the Ark (1 Samuel 7:15-16).*

\*It is interesting that they named their last son after the Prophet Nathan, who confronted David about his sin.

30. *David was a musician and one can picture him, sitting with Bathsheba and their sons in a quiet place, singing Psalm 32:1-7, 10-11. Write your favorite portion from this passage of scripture.*

"You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance" (Ps. 32:7).

31. When David was old and feeble, Bathsheba reminded him of the promise that Solomon was to be king after him. That day David made Solomon king of Israel (pg. 102).

32. Bathsheba is mentioned in the “royal” genealogy of Christ (pg. 102): David was the father of Solomon whose mother had been Uriah’s wife (Matthew 1:6). David’s and Bathsheba’s son Nathan is listed in the “human” genealogy of Christ through Mary: “Nathan, the son of David” (Luke 3:31). Joseph came through Solomon’s line and Mary came through Nathan’s line.

### **Personal Application**

33. The book lists three issues that arise from this study. Name them and give a brief summary.

- a) Spiritual adultery - Unfaithfulness to God by not obeying His commands and going to ungodly sources for help.
- b) Physical adultery - Yielding my body to someone whom I am not married to.

\*Physical involvement of Proverbs 6:17-19. Yielding ourselves to sin is detestable to the Lord. Rather, live Romans 12:1-2.

- c) Victory or defeat - We are in a spiritual battle. Our enemy tries to get us to live in disobedience to the teachings of God’s Word. We must put on the spiritual armor of Ephesians 6:13-17 to consistently resist the devil.

34. Each one must make sure his/her armor is in place (pg. 104-105).

*Our spiritual armor consists of:*

Belt of truth – *I am to speak and live the truth.*

Breastplate of righteousness – *My heart is covered with Christ’s righteousness and He strengthens me to live a life that pleases God.*

Shoes of the Gospel of peace – *I am at peace with God and other believers because I stand firmly in Jesus Christ, my peace giver. I carry the Gospel (good news) of hope and peace to a needy world.*

Shield of faith – *My faith in God and His deliverance shields me from Satan’s fiery darts.*

Helmet of salvation – *When my mind is controlled by the Word of God, I am saved (or kept) from holding on to evil thoughts.*

*The armor includes two offensive weapons:*

Sword of the Spirit – *the Word of God, spoken or written; an armory filled with swords for spiritual battle, and*

Prayer – *Communicate with God in praise and about troubles and temptations. He gives us power to resist the enemy and our own lusts and selfishness.*

*We bring pleasure to God when we need Him and trust Him. If we, as individuals, trust Him with our whole being and confess our sins and failures to Him as soon as we become aware of them, we will experience a beautiful relationship with Him.*

***Exercise:*** *If there are practices in your life that are not pleasing to God, confess them now, experience God's forgiveness and be washed clean in your soul by Jesus' precious blood.*

## **Prayer**