

Seek and Find

DEAR READER,

You have just read the story of Bathsheba as perceived by one author. Is this the whole truth about the story of David and Bathsheba? Jesus said to seek and you will find the answers you need for life. The best way to find the truth is to look for yourself!

This "Seek and Find" section is designed to help you discover the story of Bathsheba as recorded in the Bible. It consists of six short studies that you can do on your own or with a small discussion group.

You may be surprised to learn that this ancient story will have applications for your life today. No matter where we live or in what century, God's Word is truth. It is as relevant today as it was yesterday. In it we find a future and a hope.

Peggy Lynch

THE TEMPTATION

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

The following spring, the time of year when kings go to war, David sent Joab and the Israelite army to destroy the Ammonites. In the process they laid siege to the city of Rabbah. But David stayed behind in Jerusalem.

Late one afternoon David got out of bed after taking a nap and went for a stroll on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." Then David sent for her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her. (She had just completed the purification rites after having her menstrual period.) Then she returned home. Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent a message to inform David.

2 Samuel 11:1-5

- In the spring, kings go off to war. Where was King David this particular spring?
- What did David do when he could not sleep?
- What did David find out about "the woman" he was watching? List everything he knew before he sent for her.
- David still had time to change the course of events. However, what course does David take?
- From the same verses, list what you learn about "the woman."
- From what little is told about the woman, would you describe her as a seductress, a victim, or something in between? Why?

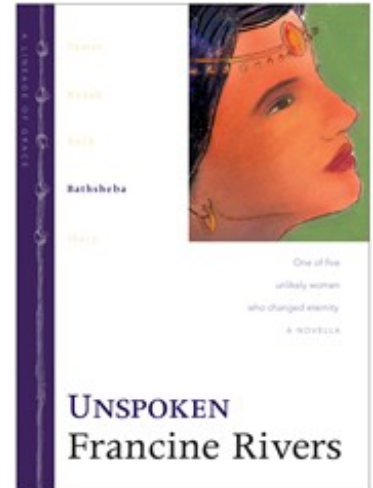
Find God's Ways for You

Read the following passage:

Remember, no one who wants to do wrong should ever say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else either. Temptation comes from the lure of our own evil desires. These evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death.

James 1:13-15

- Where do temptations come from and where do they lead?



Read the following verse:

Remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

- What does God say about temptation and what does He offer as a solution?
- Look again at 2 Samuel 11:1-5. List the ways of escape you can see that David ignored. Do the same for the woman.
- Think about times when you have been tempted. How have you responded and what kind of pattern do you see?

Stop and Ponder

- Look back at 1 Corinthians 10:13. Do you look for ways of escape?

THE COVER-UP

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

So David sent word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab and the army were getting along and how the war was progressing. Then he told Uriah, "Go on home and relax." David even sent a gift to Uriah after he had left the palace. But Uriah wouldn't go home. He stayed that night at the palace entrance with some of the king's other servants. When David heard what Uriah had done, he summoned him and asked, "What's the matter with you? Why didn't you go home last night after being away for so long?"

Uriah replied, "The Ark and the armies of Israel and Judah are living in tents, and Joab and his officers are camping in the open fields. How could I go home to wine and dine and sleep with my wife? I swear that I will never be guilty of acting like that."

"Well, stay here tonight," David told him, "and tomorrow you may return to the army." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. Then David invited him to dinner and got him drunk. But even then he -couldn't get Uriah to go home to his wife. Again he slept at the palace entrance.

So the next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and gave it to Uriah to deliver. The letter instructed Joab, "Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed." So Joab assigned Uriah to a spot close to the city wall where he knew the enemy's strongest men were fighting. And Uriah was killed along with several other Israelite soldiers.

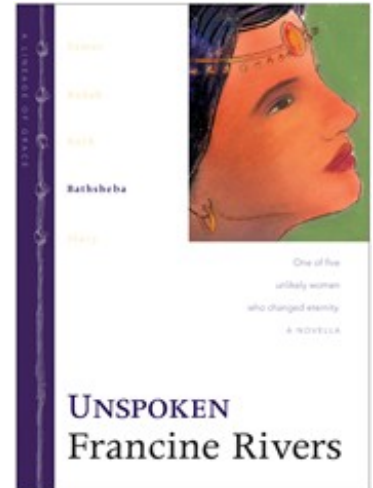
The Joab sent a battle report to David. He told his messenger, "Report all the news of the battle to the king. But he might get angry and ask, 'Why did the troops go so close to the city? Didn't they know there would be shooting from the walls? Wasn't Gideon's son Abimelech killed at Thebez by a woman who threw a millstone down on him?' Then tell him, 'Uriah the Hittite was killed, too.'"

So the messenger went to Jerusalem and gave a complete report to David. "The enemy came out against us," he said. "And as we chased them back to the city gates, the archers on the wall shot arrows at us. Some of our men were killed, including Uriah the Hittite."

"Well, tell Joab not to be discouraged," David said. "The sword kills one as well as another! Fight harder next time, and conquer the city!"

When Bathsheba heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. When the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to the palace, and she became one of his wives. Then she gave birth to a son. But the Lord was very displeased with what David had done.

2 Samuel 11:6-27



- Bathsheba sent a message to the king informing him she was pregnant. How did King David respond? What instructions did he give Uriah?
- What was the motivation for Uriah's actions?
- David writes a letter to Joab. In your own words, describe David's new plan and his attitude.
- How did Bathsheba react to her husband's death? What do you gather from her reaction?
- What happened to Bathsheba after her time of mourning was over?
- Contrast the actions and attitudes of David, Uriah, and Bathsheba.

Find God's Ways for You

Bathsheba chose to rely on David to take care of "the problem." David chose to handle things himself. And Uriah became the scapegoat.

- When you make wrong choices, what kind of pattern do you fall into?
- How have you helped cover up for other people?
- What impact have your choices had on others?
- What impact have other people's choices had on your life?

Stop and Ponder

There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.

Proverbs 14:12

- Where are you headed?

THE CONFESSION

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

So the Lord sent Nathan the prophet to tell David this story: "There were two men in a certain town. One was rich, and one was poor. The rich man owned many sheep and cattle. The poor man owned nothing but a little lamb he had worked hard to buy. He raised that little lamb, and it grew up with his children. It ate from the man's own plate and drank from his cup. He cuddled it in his arms like a baby daughter. One day a guest arrived at the home of the rich man. But instead of killing a lamb from his own flocks for food, he took the poor man's lamb and killed it and served it to his guest."

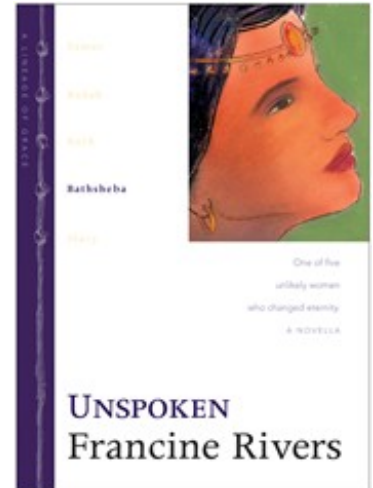
David was furious. "As surely as the Lord lives," he vowed, "any man who would do such a thing deserves to die! He must repay four lambs to the poor man for the one he stole and for having no pity."

Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! The Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'I anointed you king of Israel and saved you from the power of Saul. I gave you his house and his wives and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you much, much more. Why, then, have you despised the word of the Lord and done this horrible deed? For you have murdered Uriah and stolen his wife. From this time on, the sword will be a constant threat to your family, because you have despised me by taking Uriah's wife to be your own.'

"'Because of what you have done, I, the Lord, will cause your own household to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man, and he will go to bed with them in public view. You did it secretly, but I will do this to you openly in the sight of all Israel.'

Then David confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

2 Samuel 12:1-13a



- How does the Lord confront David?
- How does David view the man in the story?
- Why do you think Nathan had to bluntly tell David, "You are that man!"?
- As God lays bare the extent of David's sin, what does He say will happen to David's house and why?
- What further consequences will befall David's family?
- What is David's confession?

Find God's Ways for You

- Remember a time when someone confronted you about your actions or words or choices. How did you respond or react, and why?
- How quickly do you recognize sin in your life?
- What kind of consequences are you living with because of your own wrong choices or the wrong choices of someone close to you?
- When you face your own sin, do you hide it, handle it, or confess it?

Stop and Ponder

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of -everlasting life.

Psalms 139:23-24

- What do you need to confess to God right now?

FORGIVENESS

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

Then David confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

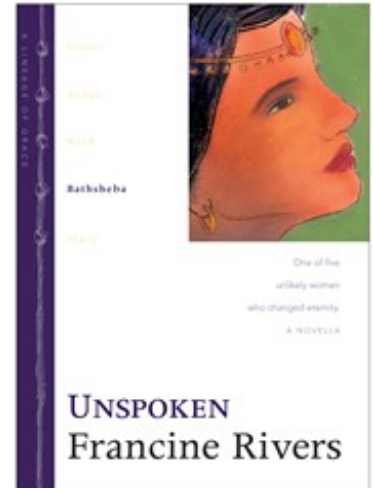
Nathan replied, "Yes, but the Lord has forgiven you, and you won't die for this sin. But you have given the enemies of the Lord great opportunity to despise and blaspheme him, so your child will die."

After Nathan returned to his home, the Lord made Bathsheba's baby deathly ill. David begged God to spare the child. He went without food and lay all night on the bare ground. The leaders of the nation pleaded with him to get up and eat with them, but he refused. Then on the seventh day the baby died. David's advisers were afraid to tell him. "He was so broken up about the baby being sick," they said. "What will he do to himself when we tell him the child is dead?" But when David saw them whispering, he realized what had happened. "Is the baby dead?" he asked.

"Yes," they replied. Then David got up from the ground, washed himself, put on lotions, and changed his clothes. Then he went to the Tabernacle and worshiped the Lord. After that, he returned to the palace and ate. His advisers were amazed. "We don't understand you," they told him. "While the baby was still living, you wept and refused to eat. But now that the baby is dead, you have stopped your mourning and are eating again."

David replied, "I fasted and wept while the child was alive, for I said, 'Perhaps the Lord will be gracious to me and let the child live.' But why should I fast when he is dead? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him one day, but he cannot return to me."

2 Samuel 12:13-23



What does God do with David's sin? And what is the good news about David's life?

- What shocking news does Nathan give David?
- What does David do and for how long?
- How does David react when the child dies?
- Where does he go and what extraordinary thing does he do?
- David's advisers were baffled by his actions. What comfort and hope motivated David?

Find God's Ways for You

Read the following verse:

If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.

1 John 1:9

- From this Scripture, what is God's promise? What is the condition of that promise?
- Have you experienced forgiveness? How do you know you've been forgiven? How willing are you to forgive others?

Read the following passage:

The Lord is merciful and gracious; he is slow to get angry and full of unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He has not punished us for all our sins, nor does he deal with us as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our rebellious acts as far away from us as the east is from the west. The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For he understands how weak we are; he knows we are only dust.--Psalm 103:8-14

- List everything you learn in this Scripture about how God deals with you and sin.

Stop and Ponder

Read the following passage:

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. For the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you through Christ Jesus from the power of sin that leads to death.--Romans 8:1-2

- Who owns you?

RESTORATION

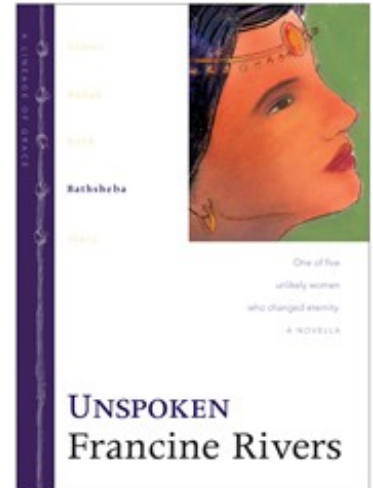
Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

Then David comforted Bathsheba, his wife, and slept with her. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved the child and sent word through Nathan the prophet that his name should be Jedidiah—"beloved of the Lord"—because the Lord loved him.

2 Samuel 12:24-25

- David confessed to God. David waited on God. David worshiped God. David believed God for the future. These steps lead to a restored relationship with God. What does David now do concerning Bathsheba?
- What did God do for Bathsheba?
- Who named the baby Solomon?
- What message did God send to Bathsheba through Nathan the prophet?
- God sent Nathan to confront David regarding his sin. What was the purpose of Nathan's visit to Bathsheba?
- From the above passage, what evidence do you find that Bathsheba also experienced a restored relationship with God?



Find God's Ways for You

- What does restoration mean to you?

Read the following passage:

Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ.--Galatians 6:1-2

- What role do we have in helping one another be restored to God?
- What attitude are you to have when others need to be restored?
- Are you seeking restoration? What steps do you need to take?

Stop and Ponder

God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.--Ephesians 2:8-10

- Are you a new creation?

BLESSINGS

Seek God's Word for Truth

Traditionally, Bathsheba is remembered for her adulterous affair with King David and is referred to as "the wife of Uriah." But let's recount how God remembers her. Read the following passages:

Then David moved the capital to Jerusalem, where he reigned another thirty-three years. The sons born to David in Jerusalem included Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon. Bathsheba, the daughter of Ammiel [Eliam], was the mother of these sons.

1 Chronicles 3:4b-5

- What did God do for Bathsheba?

Then Nathan the prophet went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, and asked her, "Did you realize that Haggith's son, Adonijah, has made himself king and that our lord David doesn't even know about it? If you want to save your own life and the life of your son Solomon, follow my counsel. Go at once to King David and say to him, 'My lord, didn't you promise me that my son Solomon would be the next king and would sit upon your throne? Then why has Adonijah become king?' And while you are still talking with him, I will come and confirm everything you have said."

1 Kings 1:11-14

- List everything that shows God's continued care for Bathsheba.

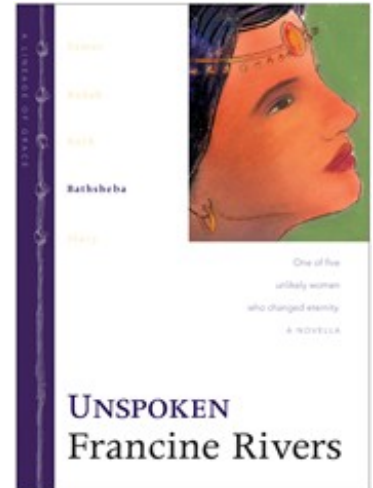
"Call Bathsheba," David said. So she came back in and stood before the king. And the king vowed, "As surely as the Lord lives, who has rescued me from every danger, today I decree that your son Solomon will be the next king and will sit on my throne, just as I swore to you before the Lord, the God of Israel."

Then Bathsheba bowed low before him again and exclaimed, "May my lord King David live forever!"

1 Kings 1:28-31

- How did David continue to support and comfort Bathsheba?

All the royal officials went to King David and congratulated him, saying, "May your God make Solomon's fame even greater than your own, and may Solomon's kingdom be even greater than yours!" Then the king bowed his head in worship as he lay in his bed, and he spoke these words:



“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who today has chosen someone to sit on my throne while I am still alive to see it.”

1 Kings 1:47-48

• How did God keep His promise to Bathsheba? What was David's response?

Young Woman: “Go out to look upon King Solomon, O young women of Jerusalem. See the crown with which his mother crowned him on his wedding day, the day of his gladness.”--Song of Songs 3:11

• What further joy did Bathsheba have?

Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon (his mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah). Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Mary was the mother of Jesus, who is called the Messiah.--Matthew 1:6, 16

• What ultimate blessing was bestowed upon Bathsheba?

Find God's Ways for You

- How do you think you'll be remembered?
- How would you like to be remembered?
- How has God blessed you?
- Trace God's hand of mercy in your life.

Stop and Ponder

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me in earnest, you will find me when you seek me. I will be found by you,” says the Lord.

Jeremiah 29:11-14a

• Jesus has found you. Have you found Him? He's waiting.

