

STUDIES IN SAMUEL
CHAPTER 10 IN REVIEW

1. What king died in Ammon? _____
2. What was the name of the new king? _____
3. What officers of David's were treated shamefully by the Ammonites? _____
4. Where did David's officers tarry before returning to Jerusalem? _____
5. What other people joined the Ammonites to fight Israel? _____
6. Who led David's men against Ammon? _____
7. What other captain led part of David's men? _____
8. Who won the battle? _____
9. Did David himself go to the battle? _____
10. How many horsemen did David slay? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 11

- Vv. 1- 5 *David's sin with Bathsheba.* David was in Jerusalem while his army was besieging Rabbah in Ammon. He was attracted to Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, one of his soldiers. He brought her to his court and committed adultery with her.
- Vv. 6-11 *David's attempt to cover his sin.* In an effort to hide the fact that Bathsheba was to bear a child which David had fathered, he called Uriah to Jerusalem from the field of battle. He attempted to get him to go to his own house while he was in Jerusalem, but Uriah refused and thwarted David's attempt to make it appear that the child was Uriah's.
- Vv. 12-21 *Uriah killed in battle.* A last desperate effort was made by David. Uriah carried instructions back to Joab which resulted in his own death. Uriah was sent to the front of the battle near the city walls, and then Joab

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ordered the other troops to withdraw. Uriah fought valiantly on and was killed.

Vv. 22-27 *Bathsheba becomes David's wife.* As a widow, Bathsheba was free to marry David. After the period of mourning for Uriah was ended, Bathsheba became David's wife.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *In idle brain is the Devil's workshop.* The armies of Israel were in the field, but their leader was at home in Jerusalem. In this period of idleness, David was lured into a trap which meant the ultimate downfall of his period of prosperity. No doubt he may have wished many times that he had been in the field of battle rather than free to walk on the walls of his palace in Jerusalem. We need to be busy for the Lord, lest in our periods of laxity we are led into sin.
2. *Sin bears compound interest.* After adultery came the enticing of a man to become drunk and ultimately the committing of murder. One sin led to another. As it was with David, so it is often in the everyday life of a Christian. The wages of sin, of course, is death (Romans 6:23b).
3. "*So they wrap it up*" (Micah 7:3). The devious ways of a sinner are so intertwined and so interwoven that it is difficult to discern his path. David's sinful ways were so camouflaged that the man on the street did not know what was happening. Only the pure white light of God renders accurate judgment on such devious ways.

2. David's Sin With Bathsheba, 11:1-27.

David's Sin With Bathsheba. 11:1-5

And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that David sent Joab,

and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and beseiged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

2 And it came to pass in an eventide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman *was* very beautiful to look upon.

3 And David sent and inquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, *I am* with child.

1. *When did the kings go out to battle? 11:1*

Certain seasons of the year were not suited to the most efficient prosecution of a campaign. At the right time during the year the kings would ordinarily go forth to battle. When this most suitable season came around, David set out to settle his score with the Ammonites.

2. *Where was Rabbah? 11:1 b*

Rabbah was the chief city of Ammon. It lay twenty miles east of the Jordan and was east by north of Jericho. The city is first mentioned in the Bible as the location of the bed of Og (Deuteronomy 3:11). The land around the town was not included in the territory at Aroer which faced Rabbah (Joshua 15:25). Joab had pursued the Ammonites to this point at the conclusion of the first campaign against the Ammonites. The city became the main point of attack at the beginning of the second campaign.

3. *Why did David tarry in Jerusalem? 11:1 c*

David had gone against the Syrians and Ammonites only because it appeared that a major coalition was being formed against the Israelites by the united powers of their enemies

east of the Jordan. When Israel had successfully beaten the Syrians and the Syrians had demonstrated that they were afraid to enter into another league with the Ammonites, David must have felt that he was not needed on the field of battle. Later on in his career, David was subjected to some very fierce treatment at the hands of the enemies, being rescued once and again by his valiant mighty men. These people thereafter insisted that he not go into battle with them any more (II Samuel 21:17). Joab did not let David go into the battle against Absalom, and at that time he said that the enemy would rather kill David than kill hundreds of them (II Samuel 18:3). Since David had been away from his capital while he led the former campaigns, his services were likely more needed with regard to the affairs of state than on the battlefield, and for that reason he must have remained in Jerusalem while Joab led the army against Rabbah.

4. *In what way was Bathsheba washing herself? 11:2*

From the mention of the fact that she was purified from her uncleanness (verse four), Bathsheba's washing must have been one of ceremonial nature. In Jesus' day, the Jews had many practices of ceremonial nature. Mark says that the "Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables" (Mark 7:3, 4).

5. *Who was Uriah? 11:3*

This man's name means "Jehovah is my light." Uriah was a great foreign warrior in the service of David. He was a man of fixed purpose. Through the narrative we can well imagine that he exhibited great loyalty to his fellow soldiers on the field of battle as well as off. As a Hittite, he was a descendant of Heth, a descendant of Canaan (Genesis 10:15).

6. *Who was Bathsheba? 11:3*

Bathsheba is called Bath-shuah in I Chronicles 3:5. She is introduced as the daughter of Eliam, or Ammiel. According to II Samuel 23:32, Eliam was the son of Ahithophel, the Gilonite. Ahithophel entered into Absalom's revolt against David and became his counselor (II Samuel 17:1). If he were the grandfather of Bathsheba, he may have had a settled hatred for David on account of his associations with Bathsheba. This animosity may explain why he aided Absalom in his rebellion. Bathsheba was already married; she was the wife of Uriah, the Hittite, one of David's valiant soldiers.

7. *Why is this sin recorded? 11:4*

Strange is the action of David. Holy men of God writing as they were moved of the Holy Spirit would not be so dishonest as to attempt to cover up for the subject of their narrative. The truthfulness of the narratives is upheld by the fairness exhibited. Men today can only sit and ponder the terrible results of sin coming into their lives. This happened to David. David's sin with Bathsheba was intensified by his purpose to send Uriah into the thick of the battle. David ordered Joab to get rid of Uriah. Joab was strong-minded and daring, and although he was not always easily controlled, he was faithful to David. Because he must have realized that some sin or some intense hatred lay back of David's action, he was constrained to do David's bidding.

David's Attempt to Cover His Sin. 11:6-11

6 And David sent to Joab, *saying*, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's

house, and there followed him a mess of *meat* from the king.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from *thy* journey? why *then* didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? *as* thou livest, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

8. *Why did David send for Uriah? 11:6*

David called Uriah back from the battlefield in an effort to have him in Jerusalem at a time when the public would think that the child born to Bathsheba was fathered by Uriah. It was the desperate effort of a desperate man to cover up his sin. David underestimated the valiant nature of Uriah. He thought that he would be glad to have a furlough from the battlefield and that he would go down to his own house as a matter of course. Little did David realize the outcome of this move on his part. It marked the turning point in his life. From this point forward his reign was marked with adversity and hardship. His first false move was to send for Bathsheba and to lay with her. His second false move was to call Uriah back from the battlefield; ever after this his hand seems to shake as he holds the reins of government.

9. *What inquiries did David made of Uriah? 11:7*

David made general inquiries about the outcome of the fighting. He asked how Joab was conducting the campaign. He asked how the soldiers were getting along, and in general he asked if the war was going in Israel's favor.

David was evading the real issue which was before him; he made these normal inquiries in order to cover up his fiendish purposes.

10. Why did Uriah disobey the king? 11:8

David told Uriah to go down to his house and to enjoy a bit of leave from the hardships of the battlefield. No significance should be attached to his telling him to wash his feet; it would be the normal way of relaxing and preparing to enjoy normal domestic and civilian life. The privilege of bathing was often denied men on the field of battle, and he thought that Uriah would relish this routine convenience. David tried to show his goodwill towards Uriah by sending a mess of meat to his home for his meal. Uriah went out from the king's house, but he slept at the entrance with the guards of the palace and did not go down to his own house. Uriah was a loyal subject of his king; he was also a faithful soldier, unwilling to forsake his companions in the field and to enjoy the pleasures of civilian life while his comrades were fighting.

11. Why did David's servants report Uriah's actions? 11:10

David's servants could hardly have known the purposes of the king in telling Uriah to go to his house. His affair with Bathsheba was not generally known at that time. But Uriah's actions had been very strange; one would hardly expect a soldier to sleep with the guards of the palace when he had the opportunity to go down to his own house. When David heard what Uriah had done, he called him back to his palace and asked him about his activities.

12. What reason did Uriah give for his actions? 11:11

Uriah said that the men of Israel and Judah were out in the battlefield living in tents. He also made mention of the Ark abiding in a tent. It is doubtful from this reference that the Ark was really taken into battle. When the sons of Eli had carried the Ark into battle against the Philistines, the results were catastrophic. The Philistines stiffened their resistance and not only beat the Israelites

but captured the Ark itself (I Samuel 4:10, 11). David had given this reason for wanting to build the temple. He said that the Ark of God was dwelling within curtains (II Samuel 7:2-6). Uriah said that Joab and the other captain of the hosts were encamped in the open fields. He, therefore, felt it quite out of place for him to go down to his own house to enjoy the good food that was provided for him and to enjoy his wife's company. Uriah abhorred the idea of his doing anything like this.

Uriah Killed in Battle. 11:12-21

12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here today also, and tomorrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*.

17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,

20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city

when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

13 Why did David keep Uriah for two more days? 11:12

David dismissed Uriah from his presence for the time being, but asked him to stay in Jerusalem for the rest of that day and for the next day. David evidently needed time to collect his thoughts and to devise a plan. David's new plan was as wicked as his first. He conceived the idea of having Uriah to eat and to drink with him. He encouraged him to drink intemperately and then dismissed him from his presence. Even though Uriah was in a drunken state, he still did not go down to his own house. He went out to sleep with the guards of the palace, the servants of David. The old rabbis of Israel said that the soldiers divorced their wives when they went out to battle. No evidence can be gathered to support this from the Scripture, but it is true that a man who had recently married was exempted from going to battle (Deuteronomy 20:7). The apostle Paul also stated a general truth when he said, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him, who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Timothy 2:4). Uriah was of this mind. As long as he was engaged in a battle, he did not want to divert his attention to domestic affairs. David was completely stymied by Uriah's actions.

14. What was David's final plan? 11:14

David wrote a letter to Joab, the captain of his army, and sent it back to the commander by Uriah himself. In the letter he wrote that Joab should send Uriah in the place where the battle was most severe. Joab was then to

order the rest of the men to withdraw, leaving Uriah to fight and die. David hoped that Uriah would be killed and then he would be free to marry Bathsheba. When the child was born, it would be thought to be the legitimate child of David and Bathsheba.

15. *Why did Joab comply? 11:16*

Joab was an unscrupulous soldier but completely loyal to David. Joab was David's nephew and therefore inclined to do his uncle's bidding, even had David not been king. Joab himself had killed Abner without just cause, and he was not above murdering in order to achieve the ends he had in mind. Joab therefore took careful note of the city and of the battle. He assigned Uriah to a place where he knew the most capable soldiers of the Ammonites were defending their town. As Israel drew near, the men of the city fought fiercely. Some of the Israelites were killed, and Uriah was among them. David's scheme was succeeding.

16. *How did Joab send the news to David? 11:18*

Joab sent a messenger from the battlefield to Jerusalem to tell David about the outcome of the battle. He gave the messenger only general news; since he could hardly justify sending a messenger all the way back to the king simply to tell him that Uriah was dead. Joab carefully instructed the messenger to observe the king's reaction; and if he became angry when he learned that the Ammonites had defeated Israel in the battle near the city, he was to give him additional news. This additional news would include the fact that even Uriah was killed. All of this was done to prevent arousing the suspicions of the messenger—or anybody else.

17. *Who was Abimelech? 11:21*

The folly of Abimelech was well known in Israel. He was Israel's first king. He had seized the throne unlawfully in the days of Gideon. The people of Israel wanted Gideon to rule over them, but Gideon had refused and

reminded the people that God was their king. Abimelech had gone to Thebez to put down a revolt there. A strong tower was in the city, and some of the men fled to it along with their women and children. As Abimelech drew near to the city to fight against them, a certain woman dropped a piece of millstone on his head and crushed his skull (Judges 9:53). Such action was poor military strategy, and Joab expected David to mention this when he became furious over the way the battle had gone at Rabbah.

Bathsheba Becomes David's Wife. 11:22-27

22 So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and *some* of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

18. What was David's reaction? 11:25

When David got the full message delivered by the man sent by Joab, he sent word back to Joab in order to allay any suspicions which may have been aroused. He told the

messenger to assure Joab that the king understood the reason for the strategy. He urged him not to be displeased on account of the outcome of the battle and became quite philosophical as he said, "For the sword devoureth one as well as another." He sent word then that they should fight more valiantly against the city and overthrow it. Such would have been the normal message of a good king to a valiant soldier, and probably the messenger did not suspect anything.

19. *What was the apparent outcome of the matter?*
11:26, 27

Bathsheba entered into the usual period of mourning for her husband. Her mourning may have been sincere, for she was a victim of circumstances to a great degree. After the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to his palace. Bathsheba became his wife, and the child which was to be born would have been considered as theirs rightfully. The final verses of the chapter point out the true circumstances. What they had done was a sin against God. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13).

CHAPTER 11 IN REVIEW

1. What city of Ammon did Israel besiege? _____
2. Where did David abide? _____
3. Who was Bathsheba's husband? _____
4. What was her father's name? _____
5. What was Uriah's nationality? _____
6. How many nights did Uriah spend in Jerusalem? _____
7. How was Uriah killed? _____
8. What man in Israel's earlier history had died beneath a city wall? _____

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9. Did Bathsheba mourn for her husband? _____
10. Did David marry Bathsheba? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 12

- Vv. 1-6 *Nathan's parable.* Nathan came into David's presence to tell him a story that brought out a great truth. The story so intrigued David that he was caught in his own judgments.
- Vv. 7-23 *God's judgment.* Nathan delivered to David the judgment of God upon David's sin. David was not able to hide his sin from God. The child born to David and Bathsheba out of their adulterous union was smitten. Eventually it died.
- Vv. 24-25 *The Birth of Solomon.* David repented of his sin and God blessed his marriage with Bathsheba. Solomon's other name, Jedidiah, means "Beloved of the Lord."
- Vv. 26-31 *The final siege of Rabbah.* The armies of Israel were finally victorious over the Ammonites. The citizens of Rabbah, their leading city, were besieged and finally put under the strictest kind of servitude. We can well imagine that David may have wished he had never heard of the country of Ammon.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *A beam in the eye* (Matthew 7:1-5). David wanted to punish a man who had killed another man's lamb. He did not realize that Nathan was talking about him, but he was one who was guilty of a far greater sin.
2. *"Thou are the man"* (v. 7). The apostle Paul urged the preachers of the gospel to be sure that they did not