

**2Samuel 11:1 ¶ 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 besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.**

The opening verse indicates a continuation of the narrative from the previous chapter. David did not go to seek retribution against Ammon right away; he waited until the year had expired, until the season changed (to Spring), and the weather was once again conducive to fighting battles with the enemy.

The NIV Commentary provides this insight: “Springtime, which marks the end of the rainy season in the Middle East, assures that roads will be in good condition (or at least passable), that there will be plenty of fodder for war horses and pack animals, and that an army on the march will be able to raid the fields for food.”

Instead of leading his men in battle, as was expected according to custom, David sent his army out under the command of Joab, his military commander. Their purpose—to destroy the children of Ammon and set siege to Rabbah, the capital city (current day Amman), about 40 miles east of Jerusalem.

I liked this quote from John Trapp: “While Joab is busy in laying siege to Rabbah, Satan is to David, and far sooner prevailed.”

**2Samuel 11:2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, 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.**

**2Samuel 11:3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?**

**2Samuel 11:4 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.**

**2Samuel 11:5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I *am* with child.**

One evening David got up to take a walk on the roof of his house. From his roof he saw a beautiful woman taking a bath. David immediately determined to find out who she was and was told that it was Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite. That she belonged to another man did not deter David from his lust; he sent for her and was intimate with her and sent her home.

Uriah was one of David’s mighty men; Eliam was one of David’s mighty men; and Ahithophel, one of David’s top advisors, was her grandfather. Both Uriah and Eliam were among David’s top 37 warriors, and Ahithophel was his top counselor.

*2 Samuel 23:22–39 “These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men. He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to*

*the first three. And David set him over his guard. Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty...Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, ...Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all."*

*1 Chronicles 27:32–34 "Also Jonathan David's uncle was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe...And Ahithophel was the king's counselor...And after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king's army was Joab."*

It seems that David did not return the same loyalty to his men that they gave to him.

It is noted that Bathsheba was "purified from her uncleanness." I take this to be a reference to her monthly menses and the required seven days of purification that followed, the time in which a woman is most fertile. We are told that she conceived and told David once she knew—probably a couple of months later, possibly sooner.

One can't help but think that Bathsheba knew she was visible to the king. Did she want him to see her? Was she expecting him to send for her? After all, she knew that he had several wives and was not committed to just one wife. We read nothing of her attempting to refuse his advances.

Guzik made some good comments: "David's sin was not in *seeing* Bathsheba. It was unlikely that he expected or planned to see her. David's sin was in *choosing* to keep his eyes on an alluring image after the sight came before his eyes....David's many wives did not satisfy his lust. This was because you can't *satisfy* lusts of the flesh, because they are primarily rebellious assertions of self. It wasn't so much that David wanted Bathsheba; it was that he would not be satisfied with what God gave him."

**2Samuel 11:6 ¶ And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.**

**2Samuel 11:7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.**

**2Samuel 11:8 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.**

**2Samuel 11:9 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.**

David set about to see if he could arrange circumstances to make it look like the baby was Uriah's. He sent a message to Joab asking him to send Uriah to him. When Uriah arrived, David asked for a status report on the situation at the battlefield. After hearing Uriah's report, he told him to go home and get cleaned up (and relax a little seems to be implied). David then had them send some food to Uriah's home. Uriah did not do what he was told; he chose to sleep with the king's servants instead of going home.

**2Samuel 11:10** 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?

**2Samuel 11:11** 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.

When David heard that Uriah had not gone home, he questioned him. He didn't understand why he did not go home (to see his wife is implied I think). Uriah explained that his conscience wouldn't allow him to enjoy the luxuries of home and the pleasure of sleeping with his wife while the ark and the troops of Israel were required to live in tents. He refused to take advantage of his situation.

I liked this application from Guzik: "Uriah is a good example of how Christians should conduct themselves as fellow-soldiers in the spiritual battle. *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another.*"

You would think David's conscience would have really been bothering him by now. We have seen him so desirous to honor the LORD throughout most of his life. But now the flesh and pride have taken over; he determines to cover his sin no matter the cost.

**2Samuel 11:12** And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

**2Samuel 11:13** 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.

David told Uriah to stay one more night, and he could go back to join the troops the next day; and he did. That day, however, when he joined David in a meal, David got him drunk. I guess David thought that the effects of the alcohol would affect his thinking and result in his going home. It did not work out as David hoped. Uriah again spent the night among David's servants.

**2Samuel 11:14** ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah.

**2Samuel 11:15** 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.

**2Samuel 11:16** And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*.

**2Samuel 11:17** And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

David was desperate and was now willing to resort to murder. He wrote a letter to Joab for Uriah to carry back with him. He knew he could trust Uriah with the message. Sadly, David's character did not measure up to Uriah's.

The message instructed Joab to set Uriah in the most dangerous part of the fight and leave him to be killed. Joab didn't hesitate to follow the king's command. I guess a murderer is not quick to question another murderer. Uriah was killed in battle along with some others of David's valiant men. David no longer had to fear Uriah finding out that he had betrayed him and slept with his wife.

**2Samuel 11:18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;**

**2Samuel 11:19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,**

**2Samuel 11:20 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?**

**2Samuel 11:21 Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a 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.**

Joab then sent a messenger to David to report on the status of the war. He knew that the report could make David angry. As a skilled commander, he would wonder why they had gotten so close to the city walls, placing the men in reach of the archers and stone throwers. Didn't they remember that Abimelech, son of Gideon, was killed by a woman who dropped a millstone on him from atop the wall? So he told the messenger to answer that Uriah the Hittite was among the dead.

**2Samuel 11:22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.**

**2Samuel 11:23 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.**

**2Samuel 11:24 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.**

The messenger came to David and gave his report. I guess he could see David's anger rising, so he went ahead and reported that Uriah was among the dead.

**2Samuel 11:25 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.**

David then sent the messenger back to Joab with his own message. He basically told Joab not to fret over the loss of men because that was to be expected in battle. He then encouraged him to intensify their efforts against the city and gain the victory.

Did David really think he had gotten away with murder? He had not only effectively murdered Uriah, but also the men that died by his side. I can't help but be reminded of his own words as recorded in the psalms.

*Psalms 94:11 "The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man...."*

*Psalms 139:2 "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off."*

*Psalms 139:23 "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:"*

John Trapp made a good observation: "David was better while a servant than when a king; for being a servant, he feared to kill Saul his adversary, but becoming a king, he basely slew his most faithful friend and dutiful subject."

**2Samuel 11:26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.**

**2Samuel 11:27 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.**

When Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, heard that her husband was dead, she grieved. After allowing for an appropriate time of mourning, David sent for Bathsheba and made her his wife. In time, a son, the result of their adultery, was born.

The IVP Old Testament Commentary notes that the "standard period of mourning was seven days."

Though we can know this without being told, what David had done grieved (from the Hebrew for "displeased") the LORD. That really jumped out at me. The LORD loved David, and in choosing him to be Saul's successor had declared him to be a man after His own heart. At this point in time that heart connection had been broken. I believe it is the same response God has each time one of us who have become His sons and daughters in Jesus choose to act in disobedience to His word. The LORD is more grieved than angry.