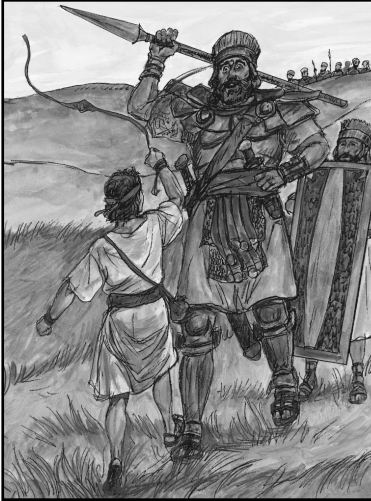


Chapter One
MEET DAVID THE SINNER



David was a great king over the people of Israel, God's people. For most of his life, he was faithful to God and led God's people to be faithful to Him too. When he was just a young man, he fought a giant of a man named Goliath who was making fun of God. The only weapon young David had at the time

was a slingshot and a stone—but he also had God on his side. God blessed David in many ways. David had everything anyone could want.

1. David was a _____ who ruled God's people _____.
2. God used David to defeat a _____ who was _____ of God.

(Check your answers on page 10)

Now read 2 Samuel 11:1-27 in your Bible. It tells about a very bad time in King David's life.

2 Samuel 11:1-27

David and Bathsheba

11 It was spring. It was the time when kings go off to war. So David sent Joab out with the king's special troops and the whole army of Israel. They destroyed the Ammonites. They went to the city of Rabbah. They surrounded it and got ready to attack it. But David remained in Jerusalem.

²One evening David got up from his bed. He walked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman taking a bath. She was very beautiful.

³David sent a messenger to find out who she was. The messenger returned and said, "She is Bathsheba. She's the daughter of Eliam. She's the wife of Uriah. He's a Hittite."

⁴Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him. And he had sex with her. Then she went back home. All of that took place after she had already made herself "clean" from her monthly period.

⁵Later, Bathsheba found out she was pregnant. She sent a message to David. It said, "I'm pregnant."

⁶So David sent a message to Joab. It said, "Send me Uriah, the Hittite." Joab sent him to David.

⁷Uriah came to David. David asked him how Joab and the soldiers were doing. He also asked him how the war was going.

⁸David said to Uriah, "Go home and enjoy some time with your wife." So Uriah left the palace. Then the king sent him a gift.

⁹But Uriah didn't go home. Instead, he slept at the entrance to the palace. He stayed there with all of his master's servants.

¹⁰David was told, "Uriah didn't go home." So he sent for Uriah. He said to him, "You have been away for a long time. Why didn't you go home?"

¹¹Uriah said to David, "The ark and the army of Israel and Judah are out there in tents. My master Joab and your special troops are camped in the open fields. How

could I go to my house to eat and drink? How could I go there and make love to my wife? I could never do a thing like that. And that's just as sure as you are alive!"

¹²Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day. Tomorrow I'll send you back to the battle." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next.

¹³David invited Uriah to eat and drink with him. David got him drunk. But Uriah still didn't go home. In the evening he went out and slept on his mat. He stayed there among his master's servants.

¹⁴The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab. He sent it along with Uriah. ¹⁵In it he wrote, "Put Uriah on the front lines. That's where the fighting is the heaviest. Then pull your men back from him. When you do, the Ammonites will strike him down and kill him."

¹⁶So Joab attacked the city. He put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest enemy fighters were.

¹⁷The troops came out of the city. They fought against Joab. Some of the men in David's army were killed. Uriah, the Hittite, also died.

¹⁸Joab sent David a full report of the battle. ¹⁹He told the messenger, "Tell the king everything that happened in the battle. When you are finished, ²⁰his anger might explode. He might ask you, 'Why did you go so close to the city to fight against it? Didn't you know that the enemy soldiers would shoot arrows down from the wall?' ²¹Don't you remember how Abimelech, the son of Jerub-Besheth, was killed? A woman dropped a large millstone on him from the wall. That's how he died in Thebez. So why did you go so close to the wall?' If the king asks you that, tell him, 'Your servant Uriah, the Hittite, is also dead.' "

²²The messenger started out for Jerusalem. When he arrived there, he told David everything Joab had sent him to say. ²³The messenger said to David, "The men who were in the city were more powerful than we were. They came out to fight against us in the open. But we drove them back to the entrance of the city gate. ²⁴Then those who were armed with bows shot arrows at us from the wall. Some of your special troops were killed.

Your servant Uriah, the Hittite, is also dead.”

²⁵David told the messenger, “Tell Joab, ‘Don’t get upset over what happened. Swords kill one person as well as another. So keep on attacking the city. Destroy it.’ Tell that to Joab. It will cheer him up.”

²⁶Uriah’s wife heard that her husband was dead. She sobbed over him. ²⁷When her time of sadness was over, David had her brought to his house. She became his wife. And she had a son by him. But the Lord wasn’t pleased with what David had done.

That’s a very sad story, isn’t it? David committed sins against God and against two people of God. First, he saw his neighbor’s wife and wanted to have her for himself. He slept with her and she became pregnant. Meanwhile her husband was with the army far from home.

What thoughts may have gone through David’s mind when he found out that Bathsheba was pregnant because of him? “I’ve got to figure out a way to make it look like I didn’t do anything wrong. I need to hide my sin. I want it to look like she is pregnant because her husband came home to be with her.” But that didn’t work. Bathsheba’s husband was a very loyal soldier, and even though he came home from the war, he didn’t sleep with his wife. Uriah could think about nothing but the war. He didn’t want to be with his wife when the rest of the army was still in battle. That’s when David came up with another terrible idea. “I’m going to send Bathsheba’s husband Uriah up to the front lines of the battle. I’ll order everyone to retreat and leave him alone up there to die.” Uriah died because of David’s order, and Bathsheba came to live with King David.

3. David slept with _____ and she became _____.
4. Her husband's name was _____. He was a _____ who was fighting in David's army.
5. Uriah came home but did not _____ with his wife. David thought he had to _____ what he had done. He sent Uriah to the _____ of the battle and Uriah was _____.

(Check your answers on page 10)

Maybe you can imagine how David felt. At first, he probably felt as if he had gotten out of a big problem—really two big problems, two big sins. But David wasn't fooling anyone. He certainly wasn't fooling God. The truth is, he wasn't even fooling himself. He was trying to hide the sins he had committed, and it wasn't working. People could tell that something was wrong. When you have a guilty conscience and know you did something wrong, it shows no matter how you try to hide it.

Have you ever tried to hide the guilt you feel? Maybe you can understand how David felt. He wrote about how he felt. We can find his thoughts in the book of Psalms. Did you know that David wrote more than half of the psalms in the Bible? Some of those psalms talk about how guilty David felt when he committed sins and tried to hide them from God. Psalm 32 is a psalm like that. As you listen to David tell you how he felt, see if you feel that way too sometimes. Maybe you do right now.

Psalm 32

¹Blessed is the one whose lawless acts are forgiven.
His sins have been taken away.

²Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord never counts
against him.

He doesn't want to cheat anyone.

³When I kept silent about my sin,
my body became weak
because I groaned all day long.

⁴Day and night
your heavy hand punished me.
I became weaker and weaker
as I do in the heat of summer.

David remembered how bad things were for him when he was guilty of those sins and tried to hide them from God and himself. He was afraid of God's anger. You can almost hear him saying in verse one, "God, it is so wonderful to know now that I am forgiven for the sins I have committed. Forgiveness is a blessing that I have felt many times, but I didn't feel it when I tried to hide my guilt. I didn't want anyone to know what I did. I wanted to keep silent. I didn't want to talk about it. But it hurt so much. I was getting old and tired carrying around that heavy weight of sins that I had committed. I wasn't strong enough to carry all that burden. All I could do is groan. I was trying to carry something that was way too heavy to lift. It never stopped. I felt this way all day long. At night I couldn't sleep because I always was carrying that weight. I couldn't ever put it down. And God, I thought about You, and I was afraid. Fear made the weight even heavier. How could I talk to You about my sins when I was trying to hide them from everyone, especially You?"

6. David tried to _____ his sins from _____ and from _____.
7. The guilt that David felt was like a heavy _____ that was too _____ for him to carry.
8. David felt the weight of his guilt both _____ and _____.

(Check your answers on page 10)

Do any of David's words sound familiar? Could David be talking about the way you feel sometimes? If you can make his words your words, then you're on your way to understanding the peace that you would like to have but that you just don't feel. We're going to be talking about forgiveness. David is going to tell us how God takes away all those terrible thoughts and feelings and removes all that weight that is too heavy for you to carry.



But first, are you ready to do what David did? Are you ready to admit that you're guilty of sin? All that suffering that David is talking about happens when you try to hide your sins from God. When you feel guilty and know that you are guilty of sin, you want to get rid of it, don't you? But where? How? David carried that guilt for the whole time Bathsheba was pregnant. He

wouldn't let go of it. You heard him tell what that was like. Maybe you know what it's like. The first step in getting rid of guilt is knowing that you can't carry it anymore. Then it's time to say, "God, I can't do this." Don't be afraid. God won't be angry with you. He will show you where to put all that guilt and get rid of it.

We have a lot more to learn about getting rid of guilt. God will teach you as David tells the story. Make sure you don't stop here. There are good things to come.

Answers to questions within Chapter One:

1. king, faithfully; 2. giant, making fun; 3. Bathsheba, pregnant;
4. Uriah, soldier; 5. sleep, hide, front, killed; 6. hide, God,
himself; 7. weight, heavy; 8. day, night.

Chapter One Test

1. David was a _____ who ruled God's people _____.
2. David slept with _____ and she became _____.
3. Her husband's name was _____. He was a _____ who was fighting in David's army.
4. David tried to _____ his sins from _____ and from _____.
5. The guilt that David felt was like a heavy _____ that was too _____ for him to carry.

(Check your answers on page 59)