

From the Rabbi's Desk
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Insights into the Bible [15]

You Are the Man! (David and Batsheva) II Samuel 11:1-12:15



Sebastiano Ricci, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

Background to Our Story

King David's war against the Ammonites

♦ AI Overview

King David's war against the Ammonites (recorded in 2 Samuel 10-13) began after Ammonite King Hanun humiliated David's peace envoys by shaving their beards and cutting their garments. Fearing retaliation, Ammon hired Aramean mercenaries, but David's army, led by Joab, decisively won, ultimately conquering the Ammonite capital of Rabbah.



The "woman of Thebez"

♦ AI Overview

The "woman of Thebez" is a heroic, unnamed figure from the Hebrew Bible (Book of Judges). When the tyrannical warlord Abimelech besieged her city and attempted to burn the citadel, she dropped an upper millstone from the tower roof, fatally crushing his skull and liberating her people.

Her courageous act is recorded in the scriptures as an example of divine justice and unexpected deliverance. Key details of the event include:

- The Threat: Abimelech was a power-hungry ruler who had murdered 70 of his own half-brothers to seize power and was destroying towns that rebelled against him.
- The Stand: As Abimelech approached the stronghold's door to set it on fire, the woman took action from the roof, dropping the stone that cracked his skull.
- The Legacy: Mortally wounded and too proud to die at the hands of a woman, Abimelech ordered his armor-bearer to kill him. However, the woman's deed was so remarkable that it was remembered and recorded in history and later referenced in 2 Samuel.

Judges 9:50-55

⁵⁰ Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and he encamped against Thebez and took it. ⁵¹ But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women—all the people of the city—fled there and shut themselves in; then they went up to the top of the tower. ⁵² So Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he drew near the door of the tower to burn it with fire. ⁵³ But a certain woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. ⁵⁴ Then he called quickly to the young man, his armorbearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest men say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" So his young man thrust him through, and he died. ⁵⁵ And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed, every man to his place.

Cast of Characters - Who is Who in the story? (Part 1)

- David, king of Israel
- Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite
- Uriah, the Hittite
- Joab, the son of Zeruiah, the commander-in-chief of the army
- Nathan, the prophet
- The (different) messengers



י"א

וַיְהִי לְתִשְׁבֹּת הַשָּׁנָה לַעֲתָ 1 צָאָה הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וַיֵּשֶׁלַח דָּוִד אֶת־יֹאָב וְאֶת־עֲבָדָיו עִמּוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁחָתוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וַיִּצְּרוּ עַל־רֶבֶה וְדָוִד יוֹשֵׁב בִּירוּשָׁלַם: וַיְהִי 2 לַעֲתָ הָעָרִב וַיָּקָם דָּוִד מֵעַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ וַיִּתְּהַלֵּךְ עַל־גֵּג בֵּית־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֵּרָא אִשָּׁה רֹחֶצֶת מֵעַל הַגֵּג וְהָאִשָּׁה טוֹבַת מַרְאֶה מְאֹד: וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד וַיִּדְרֹשׁ לָאִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא־זֹאת בַּת־שִׁבְעָה בַת־אֱלִיעֶזֶר אִשְׁתִּי אֲוִרָהּ הַחֲתָנִי: וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד מַלְאָכִים וַיִּקְחָהּ וַתָּבוֹא אֵלָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּהּ וְהִיא מְתַקְדֶּשֶׁת מִטַּמְאָתָהּ וַתֵּשֶׁב אֶל־בֵּיתָהּ: וַתַּהַר הָאִשָּׁה וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתַּגֵּד לְדָוִד וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲנִי: וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶל־יֹאָב שֶׁלַח אֵלַי אֶת־אֲוִרָהּ הַחֲתָנִי וַיִּשְׁלַח יֹאָב אֶת־אֲוִרָהּ אֶל־דָּוִד: וַיָּבֹא אֲוִרָהּ אֵלָיו וַיִּשְׁאַל דָּוִד לְשָׁלוֹם יֹאָב וְלְשָׁלוֹם הָעָם וְלְשָׁלוֹם הַמֶּלֶךְ: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְאֲוִרָהּ רַד לְבֵיתְךָ וּרְחִץ רַגְלֶיךָ וַיֵּצֵא אֲוִרָהּ מִבֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וַתֵּצֵא אַחֲרָיו מִשְׁאֵת הַמֶּלֶךְ: וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֲוִרָהּ פֶּתַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת כָּל־עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָיו וְלֹא יָרַד אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ:

וַיִּגְדּוּ לְדָוִד לֵאמֹר לֹא־יָרַד אֲוִרָהּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־אֲוִרָהּ הֲלֹא מִדְּרֹךְ אֶתָּה בָּא מְדוּעַ לֹא־יָרַדְתְּ אֶל־בֵּיתְךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲוִרָהּ אֶל־דָּוִד הָאֲרוֹן וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּהֲוֶדָה יֹשְׁבִים בְּסָפוֹת וְאֲדֹנִי יֹאָב וְעַבְדֵי אֲדֹנִי עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה חֲנִים וְאֲנִי אָבוֹא אֶל־בֵּיתִי לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת וְלִשְׁכַּב עִם־אִשְׁתִּי חַיָּה וְתִי נִפְשֶׁךָ אִם־אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת־הַדָּבָר

הַזֶּה: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-אֹרִיָּה שֶׁב בְּזֶה גַם-הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר אֲשַׁלְחֶךָ וְיָשֹׁב אֹרִיָּה בִּירוּשָׁלַם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וּמִמָּחָרָת: וַיִּקְרָא-לּוֹ דָּוִד וַיֵּאכַל לֶפָנָיו וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ וַיֵּצֵא בָּעָרֶב לִשְׂכָב בְּמִשְׁכְּבוֹ עִם-עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָיו וְאֶל-בֵּיתוֹ לֹא יָרַד: וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַיִּכְתֹּב דָּוִד סֵפֶר אֶל-יֹאבָב וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּיַד אֹרִיָּה: וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּסֵפֶר לֵאמֹר הִבּוּ אֶת-אֹרִיָּה אֶל-מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה הַחֲזָקָה וּשְׁבַתְּם מֵאֲחֵרָיו וְנָפַת וָמָת: וַיְהִי בִשְׁמוֹר יוֹאב אֶל-הָעִיר וַיִּתֵּן אֶת-אֹרִיָּה אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יָדַע כִּי אֲנֹשִׁי-חַיִּל שָׁם: וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר וַיִּלְחֲמוּ אֶת-יֹאבָב וַיַּפֵּל מִן-הָעָם מַעַבְדֵי דָוִד וַיָּמָת גַּם אֹרִיָּה הַחַתִּי:

וַיִּשְׁלַח יוֹאב וַיַּגֵּד לְדָוִד אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה: וַיִּצְוּ אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ לֵאמֹר כִּכְלוּתְךָ אֶת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה לְדַבֵּר אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ: הִלֵּה אִם-תַּעֲלֶה חֶמֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאָמַר לְךָ מִדּוֹעַ נִגְשָׁתָם אֶל-הָעִיר לְהִלָּחֵם הֲלֹא יִדְעָתָם אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יָרוּ מַעַל הַחוּמָה: מִי-הִכָּה אֶת-אֲבִימֶלֶךְ בּוֹ-יִרְבֹּשֶׁת הַלֹּא-אִשָּׁה הִשְׁלִיכָה עָלָיו פֶּלֶח רָכָב מַעַל הַחוּמָה וַיָּמָת בַּתְּבִץ לָמָּה נִגְשָׁתָם אֶל-הַחוּמָה וְאָמַרְתָּ גַם עַבְדְּךָ אֹרִיָּה הַחַתִּי מָת: וַיִּלְךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיָּבֹא וַיַּגֵּד לְדָוִד אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחוֹ יוֹאב:

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-דָּוִד כִּי-גִבְרוּ עָלֵינוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֲלֵינוּ הַשִּׁגְחָה וְנִהְיָה עָלֵיהֶם עַד-פֶּתַח הַשָּׁעָר: וַיִּרְאוּ הַמוֹרָאִים אֶל-עַבְדֶּיךָ מַעַל הַחוּמָה וַיָּמָתוּ מַעַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְגַם עַבְדְּךָ אֹרִיָּה הַחַתִּי מָת: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּהֵתָאמַר אֶל-יֹאבָב אֶל-יָרֵעַ בְּעִינֶיךָ אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה כִּי-כִנָּה וְכִנָּה תֵּאכַל הַחֶרֶב הַחֲזָק מִלְחָמָתְךָ אֶל-הָעִיר וְהָרָסָה וְתִזְקָהּ: וַתִּשְׁמַע אִשָּׁת אֹרִיָּה כִּי-מָת אֹרִיָּה אִשָּׁה וַתִּסְפֹּד עַל-בַּעְלָהּ: וַיַּעֲבֹר הָאָבִל וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד וַיֵּאסְפֶה אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וַתַּהֲיִלּוּ לֹאֲשָׁה וַתֵּלֶד לוֹ בֶן וַיִּרַע הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה דָּוִד בְּעֵינָיו יְהוָה:

י"ב

וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת-נָתָן אֶל-דָּוִד וַיָּבֹא אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ שְׁנֵי אֲנָשִׁים הָיוּ בָּעִיר אַחַת עֹשִׂיר וְאַחַד רָאשׁ: לְעֹשִׂיר הָיָה צֹאן וּבָקָר הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד: וְלָרֶשׁ אֵין-כֹּל כִּי אִם-כִּפְּשָׁה אַחַת קִטְנָה אֲשֶׁר קָנָה וַיַּחֲזֶק וַתִּגְדֵּל עִמּוֹ וְעִם-בָּנָיו יַחֲזִקוּ מִפֶּתוֹ תֹאכֵל וּמִכֶּסֶׁת תִּשְׁתֶּה וּבְחִיקוֹ תִשְׁכָּב וַתַּהֲיִלּוּ קִבְּתָהּ: וַיָּבֹא הַלֵּךְ לְאִישׁ הָעֹשִׂיר וַיַּחְמַל לִקְחַת מִצִּיאָנוֹ וּמִבָּקָרוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת לְאִרְסֵת הַבָּאִל וַיִּקַּח אֶת-כִּפְּשַׁת הָאִישׁ הָרֶשׁ וַיַּעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ הַבָּא אֵלָיו:

וַיִּחַר-אַף דָּוִד בְּאִישׁ מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-נָתָן חֲיִי-הִנֵּה כִּי בּוֹ-מָוֶת הָאִישׁ הָעֹשֶׂה זֹאת: אֶת-הַכִּפְּשָׁה יִשְׁלַם אַרְבַּעַתַּיִם עֶקֶב אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְעַל אֲשֶׁר לֹא-חָמַל:

וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל-דָּוִד אַתָּה הָאִישׁ

כִּהֵתָאמַר יְהוָה אֵלֵהִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנֹכִי מִשְׁחָתִיךָ לְמִלְכָּה עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנֹכִי הַצִּלְתִּיךָ מִיַּד שְׂאוֹל: וְאַתָּה לָךְ אֶת-בֵּית אֲדֹנֶיךָ וְאֶת-נָשָׁי אֲדֹנֶיךָ בְּחִיקָךָ וְאַתָּה לָךְ אֶת-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה וְאִם-מַעֲט וַאֲסַפְּהָ לָךְ כִּהְיָה וְכִהְיָה: מִדּוֹעַ בָּנִיתָ אֶת-הַדָּבָר יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע (בְּעֵינֵינוּ) [בְּעֵינֵינוּ] אֶת אֹרִיָּה הַחַתִּי הַכִּיתָ בְּחֶרֶב וְאֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ לָקַחְתָּ לָּךְ לְאִשָּׁה וְאִתּוֹ הִרְגָתָ בְּחֶרֶב בְּגֵי עִמּוֹן: וְעַתָּה לֹא-תִסְוֹר חֶרֶב מִבֵּיתְךָ עַד-עוֹלָם עֶקֶב כִּי בְזַתְנִי וַתִּקַּח אֶת-אִשְׁתִּי אֹרִיָּה הַחַתִּי לְהָנוֹת לָךְ לְאִשָּׁה: כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַגִּבֹּר מִקִּים עָלֶיךָ רָעָה מִבֵּיתְךָ וְלִקְחָתִי אֶת-נִשְׁיֶיךָ לְעִינֶיךָ וְנִתְּמִי לְרַעֲיָה וְשָׁכַב עִם-נִשְׁיֶיךָ לְעֵינֵי הַשָּׁמַשׁ הַזֹּאת: כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ בְּסֶתֶר וְאֲנִי אַעֲשֶׂה אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה גִּבְדִּי כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגִבְדִּי הַשָּׁמַשׁ:

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-נָתָן חֲטָאתִי לַיהוָה

וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל-דָּוִד גַּם-יְהוָה הָעֹבֵר חֲטָאתְךָ לֹא תָמוֹת:

אָפֶס כִּי-נִגָּץ נִצַּלְתָּ אֶת-אֲבִיכָּי יְהוָה בַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה גַּם הֵבִן הַיְלֹד לָךְ מוֹת וָמוֹת: וַיִּלְךָ נָתָן אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וַיִּגַּף יְהוָה אֶת-הַיְלֹד אֲשֶׁר יִלְדָה אִשְׁת־אֹרִיָּה לְדָוִד וַיָּאֲנָשׁ:

II Samuel Chapter 11

¹ It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

? Why did David remain in Jerusalem?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

² Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman *was* very beautiful to behold. ³ So David sent and inquired about the woman. And *someone* said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly impurity.) Then she went back home. ⁵ And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I *am* with child."

? Why did King David sleep with Bathsheba?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Bonus ? Why did Bathsheba sleep with King David?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

? Why is it important to know that she was purifying herself from her monthly impurity?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Extra Bonus ? Why did Bathsheba send word to King David that she was with child?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

⁶ Then David sent to Joab, *saying*, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah had come to him, David asked how Joab was doing, and how the people were doing, and how the war prospered. ⁸ And David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah departed from the king's house, and a gift *of food* from the king followed him. ⁹ But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ So when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

? Why did King David encourage Uriah to go back to his home?

Extra Bonus ? ? How do we know that King David knew his action with Bathsheba was reprehensible?

¹¹ And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing."

¹² Then David said to Uriah, "Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³ Now when David called him, he ate and drank before him; and he made him drunk. And at evening he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

Bonus ? Why did King David make Uriah drunk?

Bonus ? Why did Uriah drink with King David when he had said before, "Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink..."?

¹⁴ In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵ And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die." ¹⁶ So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there *were* valiant men. ¹⁷ Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And *some* of the people of the servants of David fell; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

Bonus ? Why did King David send the letter to Joab by the hand of Uriah?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

¹⁸ Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war, ¹⁹ and charged the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling the matters of the war to the king, ²⁰ if it happens that the king's wrath rises, and he says to you: 'Why did you approach so near to the city when you fought? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? ²¹ Who struck Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman who cast a piece of a millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go near the wall?'—then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

²² So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent by him. ²³ And the messenger said to David, "Surely the men prevailed against us and came out to us in the field; then we drove them back as far as the entrance of the gate.

²⁴ The archers shot from the wall at your servants; and *some* of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

²⁵ Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.' So encourage him."

²⁶ When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. ²⁷ And when her mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

? Why did Bathsheba mourn for her husband?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Bonus ? Why did Bathsheba become King David's wife?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

II Samuel Chapter 12

¹ Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. ² The rich *man* had exceedingly many flocks and herds. ³ But the poor *man* had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴ And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

? In what role was Nathan approaching King David here?

Bonus ? Why did Nathan the Prophet tell King David a story about the poor man and his little ewe lamb as opposed to confronting him directly?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

⁵ So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! ⁶ And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

Bonus ? King David reacts to the story in a twofold way: 1) "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! 2) And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and

because he had no pity.” Please explain King David’s twofold reaction.

⁷ Then Nathan said to David, “You *are* the man!

Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ I gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your keeping and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if *that had been* too little, I also would have given you much more! ⁹ Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife *to be* your wife and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.

Bonus ? What does the reference to “...and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon” come to add?

¹⁰ Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’ ¹¹ Thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. ¹² For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.’”

? How would King David be punished, according to Nathan, the prophet?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

¹³ So David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.”

And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

Bonus ? How do we know that David’s confession is sincere?

¹⁴ However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also *who is* born to you shall surely die.” ¹⁵ Then Nathan departed to his house.

And the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s wife bore to David, and it became ill.

Bonus ? How did David “give great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme”?

Extra Bonus ? If Nathan, the prophet listed David’s punishments above (verses 10-12), why does he get an extra punishment after his admission? Extra Bonus ? Why was David punished (specifically) with his son’s death?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____



Wrapping Up: Cast of Characters - Who is who in the story? (Part 2)

- David, king of Israel – the main hero of our story. He messes up big time but accepts responsibility and the consequences of his actions.
- Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite – in a different story she could have acted differently, but in our story, things happen to her.
- Uriah, the Hittite – the victim. He is in the wrong place at the wrong moment.
- Joab, the son of Zeruiah, the commander-in-chief of the army – he follows orders without questioning them.
- Nathan, the prophet – the admonisher. He does what is expected from him.
- The (different) messengers – they carried messages and never knew there was a problem.

Did Bathsheba Sin?

◆ AI Overview

Whether Bathsheba sinned is the subject of intense theological debate. While the Bible strictly condemns King David for adultery and murder, it never explicitly states that Bathsheba committed a sin or initiated the act. Perspectives on her involvement generally fall into three categories:

- **She was a victim of abuse of power:** Many scholars argue Bathsheba was a victim of "power rape". As a female subject in ancient Israel, she had no authority to refuse a summons from the King, making the encounter a forced power imbalance rather than consensual adultery.
- **She was a consenting participant:** Others interpret the text as consensual adultery, pointing out that the Bible does not record her actively resisting. Some early Christian commentators even viewed her bathing as a deliberate seduction, though this is heavily contested by modern theologians.

Did Bathsheba Sin? (Jewish Perspective)

◆ AI Overview

From a traditional Jewish perspective, Bathsheba did not commit a sin. Rather, rabbinic tradition views her as a victim of circumstance and an ultimately righteous woman.

Traditional and scholarly interpretations of the biblical narrative clarify this perspective:

- **Victim of Power Dynamics:** The Talmud (*Sanhedrin 107a*) frames Bathsheba's involvement with King David as non-consensual. As a subject summoned by an absolute monarch, while her husband was away at war, she yielded to his advances out of fear for her own life and her husband's safety.
- **The "Stolen Lamb" Metaphor:** When the prophet Nathan confronts King David about his actions, he uses a parable of a rich man who steals a poor man's only sheep. In Jewish exegesis, this portrays David as the sole wrongdoer who took what was not his, while Bathsheba is viewed as the innocent victim.
- **Technicalities of Adultery:** While David's conduct was considered deeply unethical, some Talmudic opinions (e.g., *Shabbat 56a*) note that, legally, Jewish soldiers historically provided their wives with conditional divorces before going to war to protect against their wives becoming permanently bound (*Agunot*). Even so, Bathsheba herself is not held culpable.
- **Torah Observance:** The narrative depicts Bathsheba as a strictly Torah-observant woman. She was bathing to complete the required *mikveh* (ritual purification) after her menstrual cycle, a detail that further underscores her piety.

Appendix # 2



The Jews Are Coming

◆ AI Overview

The Jews Are Coming (Hebrew: HaYehudim Ba'im / היהודים באים) is a highly acclaimed and controversial Israeli sketch comedy television series that satirizes Jewish history. The show first aired in November 2014 and concluded its run in August 2024.

Content and Style

The series uses sharp parody, dark comedy, and sarcasm to dissect major historical, religious, and political narratives. Sketches span a massive timeline, covering:

- Biblical accounts and stories from the Tanakh.
- The history of the Jewish Diaspora.
- The early Zionist movement and British Mandate eras.
- Modern Israeli culture, political milestones, and societal friction.

Rather than focusing on fast-moving daily political gossip like traditional satirical shows, it deconstructs foundational cultural myths and historical events to comment on contemporary social issues

King David and the poor man's sheep - HaYehudim Ba'im

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3erFXq6n68>



Reception and Controversy

The show is widely praised for its clever writing and educational value, and some secular schools in Israel even use clips to engage students in history lessons. However, it has faced major backlash. Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox groups, alongside various conservative public figures, have heavily criticized the show, calling its depictions of biblical figures blasphemous and offensive to the Jewish faith

Appendix # 3

Hallelujah, by Leonard Cohen song

(With appreciation to Cheryl Meyer for the connection)

◆ AI Overview

"Hallelujah" is a masterpiece song written and composed by Canadian singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen. It was originally released on his album Various Positions in December 1984. The track is widely recognized as one of the most covered and culturally significant anthems in modern music history.

I've heard there was a secret chord
That David played and it pleased the Lord
But you don't really care for music, do ya?
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth
The minor fall, the major lift
The baffled king composing Hallelujah

Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah

Your faith was strong, but you needed proof
You saw her bathing on the roof
Her beauty and the moonlight overthrew her
She tied you to a kitchen chair
She broke your throne and cut your hair
And from your lips, she drew the Hallelujah

Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah

I did my best, it wasn't much
I couldn't feel, so I tried to touch
I've told the truth, I didn't come to fool ya
And even though it all went wrong
I'll stand before the Lord of Song
With nothing on my tongue but Hallelujah

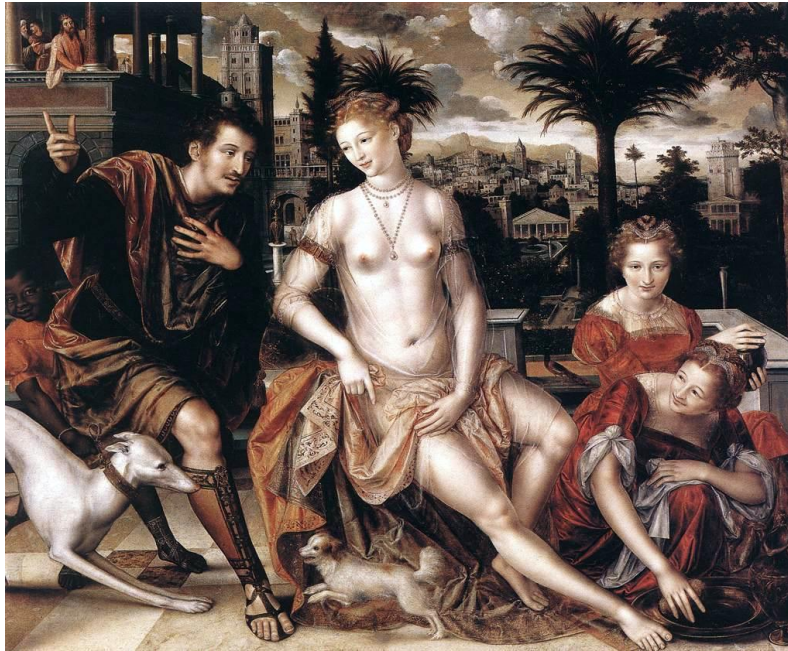
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah

? Which layer of interpretation is Leonard Cohen adding to our story?



David and Batsheba through Art or "Art as Interpretation"

? How are David and Bathsheva depicted in the artistic renditions below?



David and Batsheba, by Jan Massijs or Jan Matsys (c.1510 – 8 October 1575)



Bathsheba is a painting of 1636–1637 by the Baroque painter Artemisia Gentileschi, with contributions by Viviano Codazzi (who painted the architecture at the top left of the painting) and Domenico Gargiulo (who painted the landscape).



Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-1669), Bathsheba with King David's Letter (1654)
Musée du Louvre, Paris.



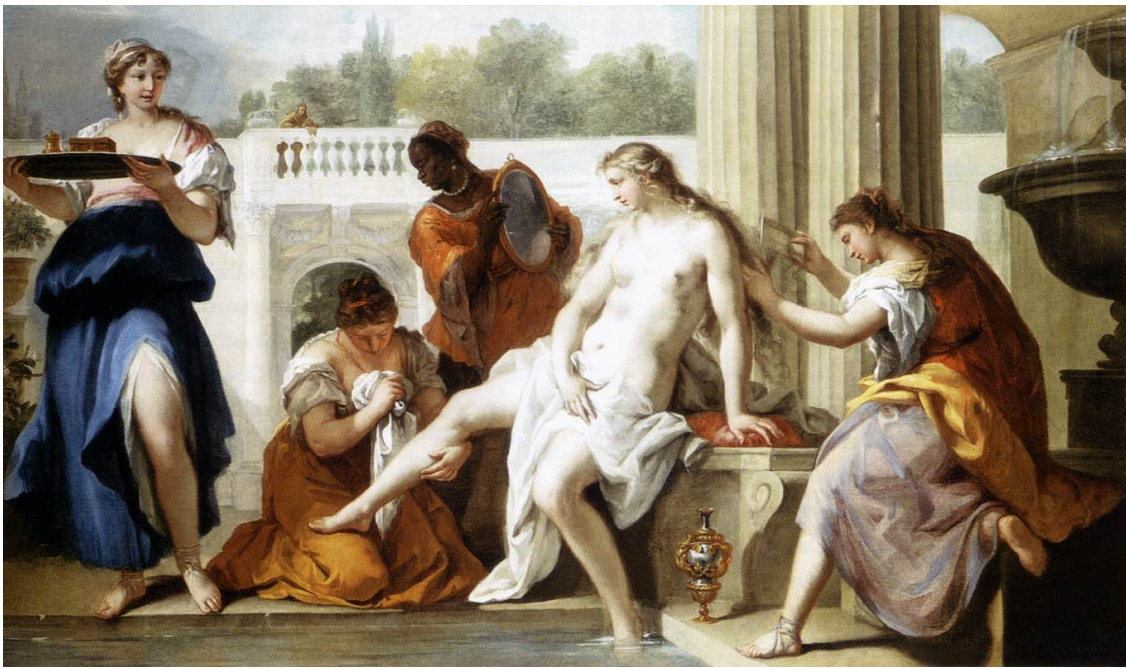
David and Bathsheba, by Georg Pencz (German, Wroclaw ca. 1500–1550 Leipzig)



Bathsheba at the Fountain is a painting by Peter Paul Rubens completed around 1635



Bathsheba, by Jean Leon Gerome (1889).



Bathsheba at Her Bath, Sebastiano Ricci (1720). Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest.



Bathsheba, Sebastiano Ricci, 1725, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin