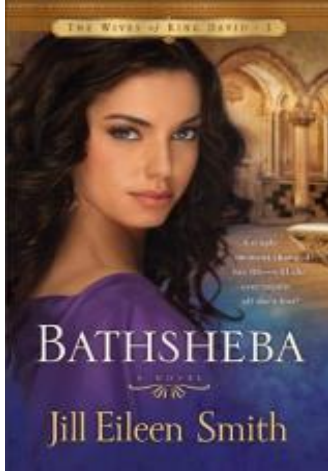


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# Bathsheba: The Wives of King David, Book 3

by Jill Eileen Smith

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## About the Book

Bathsheba is a woman who longs for love. With her devout husband away fighting the king's wars for many months at a time, discontent and loneliness dog her steps--and make it frighteningly easy to succumb to King David's charm and attention. Though she immediately regrets her involvement with the powerful king, the pieces are set in motion that will destroy everything she holds dear. Can she find forgiveness at the feet of the Almighty? Or has her sin separated her from God--and David--forever?

With a historian's sharp eye for detail and a novelist's creative spirit, Jill Eileen Smith brings to life the passionate and emotional story of David's most famous--and infamous--wife. Smith uses her gentle hand to draw out the humanity in her characters, allowing readers to see themselves in the three-dimensional lives and minds of people who are often viewed in starkly moralistic terms. You will never read the story of David and Bathsheba in the same way again.

## Discussion Guide

1. The story begins with Bathsheba carrying out her ritual purification with her husband, Uriah, standing guard. How does his adherence to the law and Bathsheba's desire for her husband set the stage for the rest of the story?
2. Bathsheba's husband and father are warriors and often gone to fight the king's battles. How does Uriah treat his position as captain in the king's army? How does Bathsheba respond to yet another war? Have you ever been discontented with your life?

**3.** Soon into the story something happens in King David's life to cause him grief, making him decide to stay home from the battle. His men do not agree with his decision, while Bathsheba thinks he is entitled to have time to grieve. Do you agree with Bathsheba's assessment? Have you ever been in a situation where you had to keep working despite trauma in your life? Has there ever been a time when you were not allowed to grieve?

**4.** Bathsheba meets David as they both stand on their rooftops watching the troops march off to war. David is still grieving and Bathsheba is already mourning the many months Uriah will be away, her loneliness already setting in. When David speaks to her, she can't help feeling drawn to him, but the attraction scares her, though she senses she has nothing to fear from him. Have you ever entertained a relationship that should have been chaste but you knew deep down could lead to more if you let it? What might Bathsheba have done to walk away sooner than she did?

**5.** At one point in the story, Bathsheba realizes that like her father, Uriah expects her to blindly obey the men in authority over her. How does this attitude contribute to her future temptation? Have you ever faced a situation where you were expected to obey without thinking, without considering the consequences or whether the thing was right or wrong?

**6.** Uriah, like her father, is protective of Bathsheba, but they carry their protection too far, making her feel stifled and imprisoned. How does over-protectiveness tend to backfire? What is it about human nature that rebels against being emotionally smothered?

**7.** War comes again and Bathsheba pouts about Uriah's leaving. He confronts her about her attitude, then storms out and eventually leaves for battle without further discussion. Is there ever a good time to walk away without resolution to a problem? How did Bathsheba's attitude make Uriah feel? Do you think she was being selfish or just blinded by her loneliness? How would having a child have changed the dynamics of their relationship?

**8.** When spring came again, so did war. This time David had taken more concubines, and stayed home a second time. He is restless and moody and dissatisfied until he sees Bathsheba bathing in her courtyard. How did he react to what he saw? Why do you think he made the decision he did rather than walk away?

**9.** Bathsheba obeys David's summons, feeling trapped the minute she enters his rooms, yet drawn to his wooing her. How have her past feelings made her vulnerable for this moment? Could she have done anything different to guard her heart?

**10.** Bathsheba discovers she is pregnant. David handles the situation in all the wrong ways, committing some heinous sins. What might the outcome have been had he acted more nobly? Should he have risked his throne to tell the truth? Have you ever been in a situation that you thought would be improved by lying?

**11.** Of course, all of the king's plans do not turn out as he'd hoped, and by the time the child is born, God is forced to step in and act, to get David to see his sin. Nathan the prophet shows up and tells David a story. How does the use of story help David see his own sin? How do you think God uses story today?

**12.** The death of the child devastates both David and Bathsheba. Even after God forgives them and gives them Solomon, they never quite escape the sword, that God said would never depart from their house. What consequences immediately followed Solomon's birth? What trouble did God raise up in David's own house?

13. Absalom's rebellion was one of the biggest blows David suffered in all of his adult life. He mourned this son's loss like no other. Have you ever known the pain of separation from one you loved? Have you ever blamed yourself for the choices of an adult child? Was David directly responsible for what Absalom did? How can we learn from David and Absalom?

## Author Bio

Jill Eileen Smith is the bestselling author of the *Wives of King David* series, the *Wives of the Patriarchs* series, and the ebook novella *THE DESERT PRINCESS*, book 1 in the *Loves of King Solomon* series. Her research has taken her from the Bible to Israel, and she particularly enjoys learning how women lived in Old Testament times. When she isn't writing, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends. She can often be found reading, testing new recipes, grabbing lunch with friends, or snuggling Tiger, her little writing buddy who chews her fingers as she works. She lives with her family in southeast Michigan. She loves hearing from her readers.

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