

WALKING WITH INTEGRITY IN TIMES OF ADVERSITY

STUDY FIVE

The Integrity of a Loyal Husband

2 Samuel 11

Although deceived by the man he trusted most, Uriah died with honor. How magnificent was this man of integrity!

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

IN our study of walking with integrity, we've admired the courage of Daniel, the enduring obedience of Noah, the moral purity of Joseph, and the wisdom of Abigail. Each of these individuals proved their mettle in the fiery crucible of adversity.

Now, we come to a lesser-known man named Uriah, whose integrity shines like gold in his uncompromising loyalty. First, to his wife. But also to his nation, his king, and his Lord.

Uriah was a top-class soldier, named among David's mightiest warriors (2 Samuel 23:39). But it wasn't a military exploit that earned him his place in Scripture's integrity hall of fame. Uriah's character was proven at home rather than the battlefield, and the cause of his adversity came not from a sword-swinging enemy but from the person Uriah *least* expected: *his own king!*

Let's find out how Uriah earned his legacy of loyalty and, in the process, learn how we can keep our integrity, even when the people we most admire have completely lost theirs.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

We begin our study by opening our hearts to receive the truth God has for us in Scripture. In the following space, write down an invitation to the Lord to light your path through His Word.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Many years had passed since David and Abigail first met, which we learned about in our previous *Searching the Scriptures* study. David was young then, still on the run from King Saul. Now, David was middle-aged, sitting securely on his throne and enjoying the prestige of his position.

As king, David answered to no one and did whatever he pleased. He sent his commander, Joab, to fight the Ammonites while he “stayed behind in Jerusalem,” taking his ease (2 Samuel 11:1). By staying home, however, unaccountable David had made himself a target of a foe far more cunning and deadly than any enemy on the battlefield.

Lust overtook David when he eyed Bathsheba from his rooftop, sent for her, and “slept with her” (11:4). Their clandestine affair came to light “when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant” (11:5). Sadly, rather than confess his sin, David plotted a shameful cover-up involving Bathsheba’s loyal husband—Uriah.



Observation: Uriah, a Man of Integrity

As you observe the passage, follow the author’s progression of thought like stones along a path. With each step, observe Uriah remaining true to his convictions while David piled up one sin after another, taking him deeper and deeper into disgrace.



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David's First Cover-Up Attempt—2 Samuel 11:6–12

How did David first try to cover up his sin, according to *2 Samuel 11:6–8*?

According to *11:9–12*, what did Uriah do and what reasons did he give David the next morning? What character qualities did Uriah demonstrate?

David's Second Cover-Up Attempt—2 Samuel 11:13

What did David try next to soften Uriah's resolve, according to *2 Samuel 11:13*? What additional actions further demonstrated Uriah's character?

David assumed Uriah would give in to desire just as David had. But the king underestimated the strength of this loyal soldier's duty to God, his fellow soldiers, his commander, and even his king. So, David shifted tactics in his final and most contemptible plot.



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David's Final Cover-Up Attempt—2 Samuel 11:14–27

Exploiting Uriah's high sense of duty, David gave Uriah a letter to take to Joab, knowing Uriah would not open it. What treachery did Uriah deliver with his own hand, according to [2 Samuel 11:14–17](#)? What did Uriah do that demonstrated his character all the way to the end?

The appalling charade continued in the tragic aftermath when Joab sent word of Uriah's death to David. What sarcastic undertone do you observe in Joab's message to David, according to [11:18–25](#)? What hypocrisy drips from David's response?

How does the author conclude this dark chapter in [11:26–27](#)? Was David's cover-up scheme successful?

David never saw such integrity as in Uriah. Uriah was a better man drunk than David was sober. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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Interpretation: Uriah and David in Contrast

To interpret the passage, we seek to understand the meaning that the author intended for his original audience. A clue is revealed in the number of times the author refers to Uriah as “the Hittite,” a foreigner (2 Samuel 11:3, 6, 17, 21, 24).

Uriah was probably a descendant of the native Canaanite tribe, called the Hittites, who occupied the land prior to the conquest. He adopted the worship of Yahweh and was a loyal convert, evidenced by his reverence for the ark of the covenant and obedience to David.

In boldest strokes, the author contrasted the indecency of the king with the nobility of the foreigner to give the strongest warning that no one is above God’s moral law.

Review your observations of 2 Samuel 11:6–27 and, in the chart below, list the positive and negative traits of each man the author was emphasizing.

Uriah’s Positive Traits	David’s Negative Traits

David broke almost every one of the Ten Commandments (*Exodus 20:1–17*)! This sordid account ends with David sweeping the evidence of his broken commandments under the rug and marrying Bathsheba. Incident closed. *But was it, really?*

What truth does the author make in *2 Samuel 11:27* that every follower of God must understand?



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Summarize the lesson the author teaches through his contrast of Uriah's integrity and David's sin.

David's life looks like a rooftop. From tending Jesse's sheep to his sin with Bathsheba, the roofline goes up. From Bathsheba to the end of his life, it goes down. Why the downward trend? "The LORD was displeased with what David had done" (2 Samuel 11:27). No sin is secret. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Uriah's Good Name, David's Lingering Shame

The legacy of Uriah's loyalty lived on after his death . . . and so did the hangover from David's shameful deed.

How did David's sin detrimentally impact his life, according to [Psalm 32:3–4](#)?

[Psalm 51](#) records David confessing to God his sin with Bathsheba and asking Him for forgiveness. Which lines stand out to you as a model of confession for us when we sin?



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When we reach a certain level in life and everyone looks up to us, we can lose our self-awareness. Hypocrisy replaces what was once integrity and responsibility. Our minds play tricks on us when we become the “king.” Hypocrisy can take the place of integrity so easily. Be careful. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Application: Four Lessons to Ponder

Step back from Uriah’s portrait in the integrity hall of fame and ponder the lessons his life’s story teaches.

First, *we learn how magnificently a man of integrity and loyalty like Uriah can live his life.* In our day of moral darkness, a person of honorable character lights up the sky like a comet. How magnificent! Ask God to help you be the Uriah in your family, at work, and in your community.

Second, *we learn how hypocritically a person of importance and authority can hide his or her sins like David did.* When we receive promotions, people respect us and look up to us. Not once did Uriah question David or think his king capable of such evil. Learn from David’s tragic fall to stay accountable and humble for the sake of those who trust you.

Third, *we learn how treacherously a man under the authority of another like Joab can assist in his leader’s wrongdoing.* Joab was a coconspirator in Uriah’s death. He knew it was wrong to have the man killed. Be careful about blindly following a leader and not confronting his or her sin.

Fourth, *we learn how completely our God knows, sees, and hears everything about us.* We may be accountable to no one on earth, but all remain accountable to heaven.

What lesson from Uriah’s account do you find most fitting to your situation? What should you do this week to follow this principle?

Uriah’s voice calls out from his grave, urging us to stay loyal to our commitments and true to our convictions. We must never forget to whom we ultimately answer, not to any commander or earthly king but to Christ, our Lord.



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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, when I'm tempted to compromise my convictions and break my vows, remind me of Uriah's example of loyalty to the end. May those who look up to me find me faithful to my promises and bold to always do right, even when those I admire are doing wrong. In the end, all honor and praise for everything I do well goes to You, my King. In Jesus' name, amen.

