

# 6

# Looking for a Leader

## Studies in Samuel and Kings

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*Discussion Starter:*

When you feel guilty, what do you do to hide it? What do you do about it?

### David's Failure

From the pinnacle of David's reign in our study last week, this study examines David's fall. It is a sad story of sin and deception, but through it we learn about a man alone before his God in confession.

#### Read 2 Sam 11:1-15

1. How many different kinds of sins does David commit in 2 Sam 11:1-15?
2. What *should* David have done at each point in the downward spiral of lust and deception?
3. How is Uriah's character contrasted with David's?

#### Read 2 Sam 11:26-12:14

4. What is the purpose of Nathan's story about the rich man, the poor man and the sheep (12:1-6)?
5. Even though God forgives David's sin (2:13), there will still be consequences for David stemming from his sin. What are they?

In 2 Sam 12:13 David acknowledges that he has sinned against the Lord. This statement forms a link with Psalm 51:4

**Read Psalm 51.** Note the heading to this Psalm says, *For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.* This is part of the original text of the Psalm.

6. Rewrite in your own words Ps 51:1-4. Some of your group may share what they have written. *Perhaps you might like to use your paraphrase as a private prayer of confession to God outside of your Group time.*
  
7. In both 2 Sam 12:13 and Psalm 51:4 David declares that he has sinned against the Lord. Why do you think he says this but does not acknowledge that he has sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, his other wives<sup>1</sup>, and the nation of Israel?
  
8. What is the basis of David's plea for forgiveness<sup>2</sup>? What is the basis of a New Testament Christian's plea for forgiveness? What difference might this make?
  
9. When you come to God to ask for forgiveness, what sorts of things to you pray? How might Psalm 51 be a helpful model? How might your answer to no.6 help?
  
10. *Optional:* What do you think is the significance of David's specific request that God not take his Holy Spirit from him (Ps 51:11)<sup>3</sup>? Is this a possibility for a New Testament Christian who sins?

*For next week: read 2 Sam 13-24*

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<sup>1</sup> Even though David had many wives, his sin with Bathsheba is still adultery because she is not married to David. Instead she is married to Uriah.

**For further thought:** David's polygamy poses some problems. Monogamy is the model for marriage embedded in creation (see Gen 2:24). Polygamy, although not uncommon in the Old Testament, is never endorsed by God. Instead, the reader notes many occasions where polygamous marriages are a source of grief for those involved. In the New Testament polygamy is clearly forbidden and disqualifies a person from participation in church leadership (Mat 19:3-9; 1 Tim 3:2). In David's day it appears that polygamy was common, especially for kings. These marriages formed multiple strategic alliances and diplomatic ties between families, clans or nations; the women being merely pawns in forming treaties and alliances. For examples of this see 1 Sam 18:17-27; 2 Sam 3:14; 1 Kings 2:15-22; 11:19; 2 Chr 8:11.

<sup>2</sup> Hint: See Ps 51:1, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Refer 1 Sam 16:14.