Bible Study Questions for
*Bathsheba: A Novel*
by Jill Eileen Smith

1. How are we first introduced to Bathsheba in the Bible? (2 Samuel 11:1-2)

2. In the first verse of 2 Samuel 11, it says “In the spring, at the time when kings went out to war...” Why do you think David did not join his men? Had he ever sent them to war without him before? (See 2 Samuel 10:7-19)

3. If you look carefully at the verses (2 Samuel 11:2), where does it say Bathsheba was bathing? Where was David standing?

4. When David discovers that Bathsheba is married to one of his captains, what does he do? Why do you think he sent for her anyway?

5. When Bathsheba discovers she is pregnant, she sends David a message. What did it say? What was the penalty under the law for adultery? (Leviticus 20:10)

6. What do you think Bathsheba expected David to do? If Uriah had gone home, what might the outcome have been?

7. David attempts to convince Uriah to go home and sleep with his wife, to cover their sin. When Uriah refuses, David signs his death warrant, expecting that this will fix the situation. God, through the prophet Nathan, accuses David of murder. What was the penalty for murder? (Numbers 35:16-19; 31)

8. According to Numbers 35:31, the law demanded that no ransom should be given for the life of a murderer. David deserved to die, yet God forgave him. His son, in a sense, paid the ransom for David’s sin. Why is this significant?

9. What consequences followed David’s actions? (Read 2 Samuel 12, particularly 12:10-13)

10. How were these consequences carried out? (See 2 Samuel 13; 16:21-22; 18; 1 Kings 2:22-25) How many sons of David died in all? How does this connect with David’s curse on the man who stole his neighbor’s lamb and God’s judgment?

this teach you about God’s grace?

12. At the end of David’s life, he hesitates in naming his son Solomon king, though he had apparently promised Bathsheba that Solomon would follow after him on the throne. (See 1 Kings 1:11-53) Why do you think he waited to act?

What happened to cause him to finally make a decision? Do you ever put off something you know is right until it is too late?

13. Solomon rules in David’s stead and one day God visits him in a dream. What one thing does Solomon request? (1 Kings 3:3-9) How did God respond to Solomon’s request? (1 Kings 3:10-14)

14. Proverbs 31 claims to be instructions to King Lemuel (often thought of to be Solomon) from his mother. Assuming that King Lemuel is Solomon, what does this proverb tell us of Bathsheba’s character?

Author’s Note: Bathsheba’s story is one of heartache and tragedy, of sin and forgiveness, of grace and transformation. From adulteress to mother of kings, to ancestor of God’s own Son, Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, wife of David, mother of Solomon, lives as a picture of God’s redeeming love. May her story bless you as she has blessed me.