

Uriah the Loyal Soldier

(Lesser Known Characters)
Ուրիա՝ Հաւատարիմ Ջիւնուորը
(Ոչ Հանրածանօթ Անձնաւորութիւններ)

2 Samuel 11:1-27

Last Sunday I started a new series before Rally Sunday; those sermons are about Biblical characters who are not necessarily well known. Some of those characters have set great examples in faith. Yet the others have not lived exemplary lives and have made some bad choices. The Bible did not delete those names.

Last Sunday it was a Rhoda, a non-Jewish servant girl who was nobody in those days. Yet God used her. She was a woman of prayer. I asked where is your role in the kingdom of God?

Today I take you to the Old Testament. King David's stories have been my sermon topics for many years. We learn from **David's bravery** when he faces **Goliath the giant**. We learn from **David's obedience to God** when **Saul was trying to kill him**. We read his psalms where **he praises God, cries out to Him, prays, even mourns and laments**.

However, this morning we will learn tough lessons from David's mess; yes literally **wrong decision**, which ruined his life, and the lives of many. Also we will learn how David tried to cover his terrible sin, which ended up killing a loyal and faithful soldier called **Uriah**.

Uriah (God is my Light) was an ordinary soldier in David's army. He is a Hittite, which means not Hebrew. But he had a Hebrew name, and his loyalty was to Yahweh. (**Ur** : light and **iah**, Yah, abbreviation of Yahweh). He was a loyal soldier of God.

While serving in David's army, Uriah received an unusual call to go back home. He was not aware that during his absence, a tragedy had happened concerning his wife Bathsheba.

What was the problem?

King David sent his army to the battlefield but he did not go himself. On the contrary, he stayed back in Jerusalem and had too much leisure time. One night he saw a woman called Bathsheba taking a bath. His lustful desires intoxicated him and led him to make sinful and awful decisions. First, he asked Bathsheba to visit him then he slept with her. She became pregnant with David's child. To cover all this, David asked the commander of the army to send her husband Uriah back home to Jerusalem. David thought Uriah would visit his wife and this way the pregnancy issue would be quietly covered. Did it? No, it did not...

Are you stunned by this? Are you shocked? David, the warrior who killed Goliath; he is ready to do anything to cover his sin. Do we also fall in this trap as well? Strange, instead of dealing with sin, we cover it.

The contrasting character in the story is Uriah.

Here we find Uriah's Godly characteristics.

In order to cover his sin, David is doing everything possible so Uriah would have **an intimate relationship with his wife**.

-Welfare (shalom) of the Army

Then David sent to Joab, saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare (shalom) of Joab and (the shalom) of the people and the state (shalom) of the war. (2 Sam 11:6-7 NSAB)

Three times David is asking how is welfare everybody? How are commander Joab, the soldiers, and the situation on the field? The word "**welfare**" in Hebrew is "**shalom**." Really, David is far away from shalom. What shalom?

- Plot One: The cover up solution for the pregnancy of Uriah's wife:

"Go down to your house and wash your feet" (Relax, take your time). And Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. 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. (2 Samuel 11:8-9 ESV)

As you see, Uriah did not go home to his wife.

When David asked Uriah why he did not go home his answer was:

“The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.” (2 Samuel 11:11 ESV)

Speaking of loyalty, **loyalty to God** (the Ark of Covenant), and **loyalty to David’s army and commander Joab**, and **Loyalty to the commander in chief King David**.

- Plot two: David tries again

David, who was called “a Man After God’s Own Heart” hardens his heart. He invites Uriah for food and drink hoping he would get drunk and go to his wife. **Here is the irony: the drunken Uriah is better than the sober David**. Even under the influence, Uriah remains focused and does not go to his own house. Instead he sleeps at the door of the king’s house with the servants of his lord.

Who is this man, Uriah?

-Uriah, the faithful, the loyal soldier.

- a. Loyal to God. He was defending the Ark of the Lord, which was in the tents.
- b. Loyal to the chief of the Army (Joab) and soldiers who were in the field.
- c. Loyal to David’s soldiers of around the palace. (President’s personal bodyguard)

-Uriah’s heart is in its right place.

David’s heart “a Man After God’s Own Heart” **was** in the right place, not in this event.

Anyone can fall. Jeremiah says:

The heart is more deceitful than all else

And is desperately sick,

Who can understand it? (Jer 17:9) No one is immune from sin.

-Uriah did not lose his focus and purpose. Uriah was focused on his mission.

In other words, his priorities are in the right place. Where are your priorities?

In New Testament, I read passage written by Peter.

¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. ¹⁵But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. ¹⁶Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. (1 Peter: 4:12-16 ESV)

Loyalty and faithfulness to God is a priority in my life and I urge you to take this seriously in your lives. This means temptations can come and visit us. Those temptations can be anything, from sexual temptations to materialism, to fame, to gossip, to other idols, and more... What I see in Uriah, (the man who is enlightened by God) a focused man who knows who he is and what his priorities are.

I have preached many sermons about David but I have never seen this passage from this viewpoint. I found a man who has clear principles and priorities. He stayed focused on his responsibilities, although the man of God, David tried everything to deceive him.

Well, the end of the loyal and faithful man Uriah was tragic. Death.

David sent him to the worst spot of the war zone so that he would be killed and he would have an excuse to marry Bathsheba. Uriah, was killed in action (Read the details).

I am thankful that the author did keep this tragic story in the Bible. Uriah means **"God is my Light"** and there is no darkness in the light. It is recorded that **what David displeased the Lord, and I know what Uriah did pleased the Lord.**

To be faithful to God can be costly. Are we ready to stay loyal by keeping our vows even if it is costly?

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ²so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. (1 Peter 4:1-3 ESV)

Jesus obeyed to his father, and his faithful journey on this earth led him to be crucified. **Costly demonstration of unconditional love** from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Where is your loyalty?