

TRY IT ON

WHAT FITS MY GRIEF?

The Grieving of Bathsheba & David

Some features to help you determine if you want to *TRY ON* the grief because the circumstances are similar to your own:

- Unexpected death of a spouse/friend
- Unexpected sickness/death of a child
- Terminal diagnosis
- Remorse for harmful decisions
- Crying out for mercy

Some feelings to help you determine if you want to *TRY ON* the grief because the emotions are similar to your own:

- Powerless
- Guilt
- Responsibility
- Loss
- Inevitability

A summary about what happened.

David caused the death of his friend in order to marry his friend's wife, Bathsheba. Still, he comforted Bathsheba while she mourned for her dead spouse, provided her with resources, and enabled her to give birth to a son. When confronted about what he did, he admitted his wrongdoing. After confessing what he had done, David and Bathsheba saw their son become sick, they heard the terminal diagnosis, and they wept together. With feelings of guilt and responsibility, David refused to eat, threw himself on the ground, and prayed for God to heal their son. When he saw some servants talking to themselves quietly, he asked if his son was dead. They confirmed that his son was dead. David admitted that he could not bring the child back to life. Then David washed, ate, went to the temple to pray to God, and then comforted Bathsheba so they could mourn together.



Some of the actions of Bathsheba & David that you can *TRY ON* to see if any fit you well:

- **Offer comfort** - When grieving the sickness or death of someone close to you, it can be helpful to remember that others are grieving too. You may find that you are comforted as you offer comfort to others. Consider who might benefit from the comfort you can provide. What comfort would you like to receive from others? How could you show that same comfort to someone else?
- **Weep with others** - Grief can be isolating. Sometimes it may be difficult to express your grief until you find someone to weep with you. When others weep with you, you may recognize how you are not alone and find that others can put words or actions to the grief you feel.
- **Confess the truth** - Feelings of regret can intensify grief. If you have done something hurtful, it can be helpful to confess your feelings of guilt. If you are not able to confess to the person you think you hurt, you can find a relative or friend. You can also confess your regret to God. Naming what is true from your point of view can bring forgiveness and help to move you and others into the act of grieving the loss instead of revisiting how the loss occurred. Confession can also help you accept the truth about whether you had a part in what happened or not.
- **Stay in a sacred space** - Like David it can be helpful to express your feelings in a sacred space. Going to a special place can restore your sense of purpose and belonging. Find a place that feels significant for you. You may find that sitting, kneeling, or laying on the ground enables your mind and body to express to God what you want God to do for you. You may even find that your emotions can be communicated through your posture. Linger in that space and take the time you need there.
- **Fast and Pray** - When hearing a difficult diagnosis or the news of a death, you may not feel like eating. If you decide to fast from meals like David, make sure that others are around so that you

do not deprive yourself too severely or unnecessarily. Fasting includes abstaining but can also include filling that time with other activities such as prayer, reading, discussing, etc. What would you find comforting in a time of fasting?

- **Wash and Eat** - After times of intense grief or prayers, there needs to be a replenishing and restoring. Washing can help you reset your appearance and mindset. Eating can replenish your body with needed nutrients and energy. Indulge without guilt in the food, amenities, or experiences that bring you and those close to you a sense of comfort.

Some of the phrases of Bathsheba & David that you can *TRY ON* to see if any feel right for you:

- How can I comfort you?
- Perhaps God will have mercy.
- This makes me angry.
- I confess that I sinned.
- I don't want to eat right now.
- Has the person died?

Some ideas you can *TRY ON* with a child:

- **Comfort others** - Ask your child to share the names of some of the people who may be grieving right now. Discuss together whether your child would like to show comfort to some of those people. What does your child think they might appreciate right now? How can you and your child give the comfort they may be needing or wanting?
- **Look for comfort** - You can look to others to find comfort both for yourself and your child. You can ask if your child would want to talk with a counselor, support group, or trusted friend. What information would bring comfort to your child and help ease any feelings of blame or fault that your child may be feeling. If it feels

like a burden to care for your child while you are also grieving, you can give yourself some space by looking to someone else to offer comfort and care for your child.

- **Linger together** - Encourage your child to pray or rest together. Allow your child to linger rather than rushing your child to another place. If there is a place and time that is pressing for you, prepare your child by saying something like, “We can spend a few more minutes here and then we need to go. We can come back at another time. I don’t want you to feel rushed.”
- **Wait to eat** - Invite your child to express emotions or desires before a meal. This can communicate to your child that the feelings that the child has is more important to you than the meal you have prepared or purchased. Asking your child if there are any prayers or comments that your child would like to offer before a meal with a larger group can be beneficial for your child and those gathered for the meal as well.

A summary of what happens next:

David and Bathsheba found some comfort in each other. They had another son whom they named Solomon meaning well-being, but God mentioned that he should be called Jedidiah because God loved him dearly. That son would become the next ruler and build a special place where all people could come and grieve and pray to God.

Where to find the *Grieving of Bathsheba & David*:

2 Samuel 11-12