

Hallelujah - Leonard Cohen (1984)

Well I've heard there was a secret _____
That _____ played and it _____ the Lord
But you don't really _____ music, do you?
Well it goes like this:
The fourth, the fifth, the _____ fall and the _____ lift
The **baffled** king _____ Hallelujah

Well your faith was strong but you needed _____
You saw her bathing on the _____
Her beauty and the _____ **overthrew** ya
She tied you to her _____ chair
And she broke your _____ and she cut your hair
And from your _____ she drew the Hallelujah

You say, "I took the Name in _____
I don't even _____ the Name"
But if I did, well really, what's it to you?
There's a _____ of light in every word
It doesn't _____ which you heard
The holy or the _____ Hallelujah

I did my best, it wasn't much
I couldn't feel, so I tried to touch
I've told the _____, I didn't come to fool you
And even though it all went _____
I'll stand _____ the Lord of Song
With nothing on my _____ but Hallelujah

**vain, blaze, truth, tongue, matter, broken, before,
proof, roof, moonlight, kitchen, throne, lips, chord,
David, pleased, care for, minor, major, composing,
know, wrong**

📖 Leonard Cohen was the grandson of two well known Canadian **rabbis**¹. His Lithuanian-born mother was the daughter of a Talmudic writer. His paternal grandfather, whose family had moved from Poland to Canada. His parents gave him the Jewish name Eliezer, which means 'God is help'. The family observed Orthodox Judaism. "I had a very Messianic childhood. I was told I was a **descendant** of Aaron, the high priest."

📖 In Hebrew, the word *hallelujah* means to **rejoice** in **praising** God.

📖 The song refers to the story of King David and Bathsheba. Bathsheba was King David's most famous and controversial wife, in part because their marriage came after an **illicit** extramarital affair.

📖 *The Guilt of David*: David sent his army out to war, but he himself stayed behind in Jerusalem. Obviously, David was secure enough on his throne that he no longer had a need to go to war to prove his military **proWess**²; he could send his generals instead. Thus King David was relaxing on a palace balcony above the city when he spied a beautiful woman taking a bath. Through his messengers, David learned that she was Bathsheba, wife of Uriah the Hittite, who had gone to battle for David. *One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the*

¹a Jewish scholar or teacher, especially one who studies or teaches Jewish law.

² skill or expertise in a particular activity or field.

daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. Then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

David's sin in their affair to be greater for two reasons. Once he found out Bathsheba's identity, he knew that she was married and he had sent her husband off to war. Clearly, a **liaison**³ with her would violate the seventh commandment against **adultery**, and a king of Israel was supposed to be a religious leader as well as a political leader.

Not long after Bathsheba and David committed adultery, Bathsheba sent a message to David telling him she was pregnant. Now the pressure was really on the king, who might have **concealed**⁴ his affair with Bathsheba, but couldn't hide her pregnancy for long. Instead of **owning up**⁵ to the liaison and making **restitution**⁶, David took an even more sinful approach to the crisis. He recalled Uriah from the front, supposedly to give him a report on the battle, and then told him to take some leave and visit his wife. But Uriah didn't go home; he stayed within the palace barracks. David asked Uriah why he didn't go home, and loyal Uriah replied that he wouldn't dream of having a **conjugal**⁷ visit when David's army at the front has no such opportunity. Next, David invited Uriah for dinner and got him drunk, figuring that intoxication will arouse

³ a sexual relationship, especially one that is secret or illicit.

⁴ kept secret; hidden.

⁵ To make a full confession or acknowledgment

⁶ recompense for injury or loss.

⁷ /'kɒndʒʊg(ə)l/ relating to marriage or the relationship between a married couple.


Uriah's desire for Bathsheba. But David was **foiled**⁸ again; drunk though he was, honorable Uriah returned to the barracks and not to his wife.

At this point David was desperate. In verse 15, David is described writing a letter to his general, Joab, telling him to put Uriah on the front lines where the fighting is fiercest, and then to withdraw, leaving Uriah undefended. David sent this letter to Joab by Uriah, who had no idea that he was carrying his own death sentence.

Sure enough, Joab put Uriah on the front lines and he was killed. After a mourning period, Bathsheba was brought to the palace to become the latest of King David's wives, thus assuring the legitimacy of their child.

David thought he **pulled off**⁹ this **caper**¹⁰ until the prophet Nathan came to visit him. Nathan told the powerful king a tale of a poor shepherd whose lamb was stolen by a rich man. David flew into a rage, demanding to know who the man was so that he could exact judgment on him. Nathan calmly told the king: "You are the man," meaning that God had revealed to the prophet the truth of David's adultery, **deceit**¹¹, and murder of Uriah.

Even though David had committed sins worthy of execution, said Nathan, God instead exacted judgment upon David and Bathsheba's newborn son, who subsequently died. David consoled Bathsheba by getting her pregnant again, this time with a son the named Solomon.

 King David struggles with **lusting** over a woman. He kills her husband and thus does the dirty deed. Possibly this


⁸ frustrate the efforts or plans of.

⁹ succeed in achieving or winning something difficult.

¹⁰ outlandish crime spree, or a wild activity.

¹¹ the action or practice of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth.

Hallelujah is a **corrupted** Hallelujah. It's about sacrifice and love. King David sacrificed his morals and his relation with God by killing a man to obtain love. The woman doesn't realize how great David's sacrifice was through breaking his relation with God by displeasing him. He is **baffled** by the dark love that came from his **bloodshed**. King David being stripped of his morals. It could also be possible that Cohen sings "she broke your throne, and cut your **heir**." In the Bible Solomon (King David's son) was hurt by his father's actions.

 It is a **refrain** worthy of times of celebration, of mourning, of regret, of **catharsis**, and reconciliation. It's a story of broken love, remembered and **mourned**, guilt, **penance**, and of finding peace in the **vicissitudes** of brokenness.

**corrupted, catharsis, vicissitudes,
mourned, refrain, lust, outdrew, arch,
overthrew, baffled, adultery,
descendant, rejoice, praising, illicit**

1. _____ a curved symmetrical structure spanning an opening and typically supporting the weight of a bridge, roof, or wall above it.
2. _____ remove forcibly from power. /æʊvə'θrəʊ/
3. _____ (of a person or event) attract a larger crowd than (another person or event).
4. _____ feel or show great joy or delight.
5. _____ express one's respect and gratitude towards (a deity), especially in song.

6. _____ have strong sexual desire for someone.

7. _____ totally bewildered or perplexed.

8. _____ the killing or wounding of people, typically on a large scale during a conflict.

9. _____ feel or show sorrow for the death of (someone), typically by following conventions such as the wearing of black clothes.

10. _____ the principle of separation of the state from religious institutions.

11. _____ the process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions.

12. _____ a change of circumstances or fortune, typically one that is unwelcome or unpleasant.

13. _____ voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not their spouse.

14. _____ cause to act dishonestly in return for money or personal gain; cause to become morally depraved.

15. _____ punishment inflicted on oneself as an outward expression of repentance for wrongdoing.

16. _____ a person legally entitled to the property or rank of another on that person's death.

17. _____ a repeated line or number of lines in a poem or song, typically at the end of each verse.

18. _____ a person, plant, or animal that is descended from a particular ancestor.

19. _____ forbidden by law, rules, or custom.