

November 27, 2016  
Sunday Morning Service  
Series: The Life of David  
Community Baptist Church  
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Greer, SC 29650  
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*To Ponder . . .*

Questions to ponder as we prepare to hear from 2 Samuel 13.

1. Describe Jonadab's character based on the evidence of this chapter.
2. How do we avoid troublemakers like Jonadab and still have a witness for Christ to needy sinners?
3. What would you have done if you were David who heard the news about Amnon's crime?
4. What would you have done to help Tamar?
5. What lessons did we learn from this story?

### **PROMISED CONSEQUENCES OF SIN 2 Samuel 13:1-39**

The first promised consequence of David's sin was the death of the child born through adultery. God had promised that exact consequence through Nathan the prophet. The rest of the promised consequences were a little less precise. But there is little doubt that as they came to fruition in David's life, he was convinced that these things were not coincidental.

God is so very gracious to forgive sin. God is merciful, often withholding the full extent of punishment sin deserves. Indeed, if God poured out all the wrath that sin deserves the entire creation would cease to exist immediately. God is so kind that often through the

process of meting out consequences He uses those times to instruct and train us His children. However, the Bible still reveals that God allows consequences to sin.

It appears from the Bible evidence that often as God allows various kinds of consequences to come to bear, that the whole process looks so normal that it might be difficult to conclude that this is actually God's will at work. Such is the case in our story. In a way this looks like a sad story about a dysfunctional family. We are all familiar with such stories. At the very least we hear about them or read about them in the news almost daily. It is also true that these sad stories about the consequences of sin have key players involved. Do we ever wonder why a particular person is so dishonest, or lives such a reprehensible life, or always seems to be causing trouble? Could it be that God's law of sowing and reaping is at work and that God actually uses sinful people to do His will? That seems to be the case in David's life.

### **A Very Sad Story.**

This is the story about young men who carried out a heinous crime (vv.1-17). It is the kind of story we hear about too often. In this case Amnon, one of King David's sons lusted for his beautiful half sister. *Now Absalom, David's son, had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar. And after a time Amnon, David's son, loved her (v.1).* Obviously, this is talking about incest. Regardless of what some perverse people or people groups might conclude, this is sin and should be strictly forbidden. God's law strictly forbid's incest. In civilized cultures in the past, common human ethics forbids incest. But lust over rules all laws and all common sense ethics.

What was poor Amnon to do about his deep desire (which was not really love at all) for his sister. Amnon's cousin hatched a plan by which to fulfill his lust. Jonadab came up with a plan to fulfill lust and ruin a young woman's life. All Amnon needed to do was lie to his father. *Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. And when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Let my sister Tamar come and give me bread to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat it from her hand'" (v.5).*

The plan worked to perfection (vv.7-8). David commanded his daughter to yield to the plan having no idea that he sent her into a tragic trap (v.7). Tamar being a sweet, obedient, and beautiful daughter complied (v.8). Amnon being the wicked, lustful, conniver managed to get Tamar alone in his room where he violated her (vv.9b-14).

Caught in those few minutes of terror, Tamar rightly identified the crime as “an outrageous thing.” *She answered him, “No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this outrageous thing (v.12).* She warned of the serious consequences. *As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the outrageous fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you” (v.13).*

Tamar learned what too many other innocent victims have learned in history: Protest and reasoning are no match for lust (v.14). *But he would not listen to her, and being stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her (v.14).* The best defense against such violation is to try to stay out of circumstances where lust will have an opportunity. It is always a sin that is crouching at the door.

The sinful deed was done and quickly it became obvious that God’s law worked to perfection. There is no satisfaction in sin. *Then Amnon hated her with very great hatred, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her (v.15).* But there is shame in sin. *And Amnon said to her, “Get up! Go!” But she said to him, “No, my brother, for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me.” But he would not listen to her. He called the young man who served him and said, “Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the door after her” (vv.15b-17).*

The story continues as it tells us how the various victims responded to the crime (vv.18-22). There are generally multiple victims when wicked people commit such crimes. Tamar was traumatized. *And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she wore. And she laid her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went (v.19).* It is doubtful that this was a case of a drama queen doing her thing. The young woman had experienced

a horrible violation of her person. Her grief was genuine and spontaneous.

Worse is the fact that the consequence of Amnon’s sin on Tamar seems to have been lifelong. *So Tamar lived, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom’s house (v.20b).* Practically speaking, Tamar was no disqualified for a royal marriage. Now she could not be a princess. Absalom, in typical male fashion told her not to worry about it (v.20). He provided a place for her to live and the protection of a male in a difficult culture. But he could not be her husband, nor did he provide one for her.

The details of the story might strike us that Absalom appeared to be quite cool throughout the tragedy. In fact, his response seems to be cold and calculated. *And her brother Absalom said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? Now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this to heart” (v.20a).* How did Absalom guess? Apparently, Amnon had a reputation. His advice to his sister, “Hold your peace” was, at the very least, intended to comfort. But more to the point of the moment he meant, “You won’t need to deal with this yourself.”

In fact, Tamar couldn’t deal with it herself. Amnon was her brother, son of the king, a prince well liked. More than that, he was David’s first born, the likely heir to the throne. How was Tamar going to deal with that? Furthermore, Absalom’s words, “Do not take this to heart,” meant, “You don’t need to ponder this matter over and over in your heart, because it is a matter of my heart.” In other words he told his suffering sister, “I will take care of this.”

Absalom was not at all unconcerned as his outward appearance might indicate. *But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had violated his sister Tamar (v.22).* He wasn’t cool with the problem. He was full of hatred. But rather than expose his feelings, he kept them bottled up for a later time. He had amazing control. He reminds me of a T-shirt I saw once that said, “I don’t get mad. I get even.” Absalom was going to get mad and get even.

David didn’t hide his emotions. It seems like he seldom did. The text reveals that David was very angry. *When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry (v.21).* To some extent he would have been angry because this event was an embarrassment to

his family. More important though was the fact that David understood God's righteous standard he was angry with unrighteousness. That should be expected in that David expressed genuine anger at the rich man in Nathan the prophet's convicting story because they man did wickedly.

It is okay to be angry in the short term with sin. We must never gloss over the fact that sin, wickedness, and all unrighteousness misses God's glory and that does not make God happy. God created all things and people for the express purpose of reflecting His glory. Sin destroys the plan and God is right to be angry at sin.

Maybe part of David's anger was due to the fact that his hands were tied. What could he do? This was his own family. Amnon was likely the crowned prince. Did David realize that this was God's promise coming to pass? In the prophet's story, the rich, arrogant man took the poor man's lamb that he treated like a daughter. Now, bold, brash, uncaring Amnon took David's daughter and destroyed her morally and emotionally.

It is good for us to look back at God's promise of consequences that Nathan brought up to David. God promised that murder and death would be a recurring tragedy in David's family. *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife (2 Samuel 12:10).* Worse is the fact that God promised that He Himself would raise up evil against David. *Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. (2 Samuel 12:11).* Amnon raping David's daughter was certainly evil. And yet to come would be the promise, *And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun." (2 Samuel 12:11b).*

How could David miss the obvious fulfillment of God's warning? But there was nothing he could do about it except commit himself to God, draw on God's grace and ask for God's mercy.

For Absalom, vengeance ruled the response (vv.23-39). The story reveals that vengeance simmered in his dark soul for a long time. Absalom planned for two years to pay back Amnon. *After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons (v.23).* Absalom planned his attack against his half brother carefully in order to look

suspicious. *And Absalom came to the king and said, "Behold, your servant has sheepshearers. Please let the king and his servants go with your servant." But the king said to Absalom, "No, my son, let us not all go, lest we be burdensome to you." He pressed him, but he would not go but gave him his blessing (vv.24-25).*

Sheep shearing was a big celebration like the time of harvest. To invite the whole family as well as friends was not unusual. David might have suspected such an invitation. But it is also likely that Absalom knew this would be his father's response. If David would have accepted the invitation, Absalom's plan would have been foiled. The invitation and expected refusal was all part of the plan to get Amnon to go to the party. The gamble paid off when David refused to go.

Then as part of his plan, Absalom schemed in order to get Amnon in a vulnerable situation. *Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us." And the king said to him, "Why should he go with you?" But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him (vv.26-27).* Amnon's presence was the goal. Therefore, Absalom had to put undue pressure on his father.

Absalom laid the plan with partners in crime. *Then Absalom commanded his servants, "Mark when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon,' then kill him. Do not fear; have I not commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant" (v.28).* The plan was simple: Get Amnon drunk so that he would not be able to defend himself. Then on Absalom's orders kill his half-brother.

Not to be deterred, Absalom carried out his vengeance which caused chaos and sorrow. The servants obeyed Absalom's orders and killed his half-brother. The rest of the king's sons fled in terror. *Then all the king's sons arose, and each mounted his mule and fled (v.29).* Rumors spread like wild fire. *While they were on the way, news came to David, "Absalom has struck down all the king's sons, and not one of them is left" (v.30).* The king was distraught. *Then the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. And all his servants who were standing by tore their garments (v.31).*

Ultimately, because he murdered the heir to the throne, Absalom had to escape into exile. *But Absalom fled and went to*

*Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day. So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years (vv.37-38).* It is a very sad story. It is a story that has been repeated in similar ways thousands of times throughout history since then. How or why do these things happen? What is the solution? How can we stop it?

### **How The Tragedy Came to Pass.**

First, we must come to grips with God's law of sowing and reaping. God promised that His law of sowing and reaping is active. What is that law? We can figure it out pretty easily by looking at a brief review of the various statements. The first time we see the law is when God warned Adam and Eve about the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God said, *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). Tempted by Satan they chose not to believe God. They sowed seeds of sin and doubt and reaped exactly the harvest God promised.

God warned the nation of Israel. *"But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you"* (Deuteronomy 28:15). That was pretty clear. Occasionally the people acted like they believed God and obeyed Him. But most of the time they did not. They reaped the promised harvest.

Likewise, God graciously God warned His people through His prophets that if they did not quit sowing seeds of rebellion they were going to face a harvest. *"For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind"* (Hosea 8:7). They didn't quit and they deed reap.

Wisdom warns, *"Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices"* (Proverbs 1:29-31).

God's law is constant. Therefore, God applied His law to David's sin. Through Nathan God had promised that David would reap what he sowed. Compare the warning and the consequences that worked out. David committed sin by having physical relationship

with a woman outside of marriage. So did Amnon with David's lovely daughter. Both women were beautiful (11:2; 13:1). Both women suffered greatly because of the sin (12:24; 13:16,19-20). Both sins resulted in the death of David's sons. The first born child of Bathsheba died. The first born son of David who was heir apparent to the throne died. Adrian Rogers once said, "We always reap the kind of seed we have sowed, we reap after we sowed and we reap more than we sowed." How true it is. It's God's law.

The second reason this tragedy came to bear is because sin that is tolerated becomes the master. Another of God's rules is that a man really is according to what he thinks in his heart. In simple terms that means that God's rule is that a person will act in light of how he or she thinks. In this story it is clear that for some time Amnon fantasized about committing sin with his half-sister. God's rule is that private, secret thoughts eventually have a way of working their way to the surface where they often become obvious to all.

Jesus told the Pharisees that all their outward works were pointless because on the insider they were thinking about selfish wickedness. He said, *"You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."* (Matthew 12:34). And our weak world exclaims that such words were not very nice. Yes, but they are true.

Jesus also taught that this sequence is natural because our actions will always flow from what is in the heart. *"The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil"* (Matthew 12:35). This is a tough truth to deal with because by nature we are all born in sin. Therefore, producing wickedness does not requiring any training.

A second unchanging rule is that wickedness flows out of the heart. That might not seem too bad until we come to grips with the reality that we are each born with a heart that is sick with the sin principle. Jeremiah warned, *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?* (Jeremiah 17:9). Therefore, a person with a natural heart will not only think about sinful activity but will do sin.

Jesus warned, *"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander"* (Matthew 15:19). That is why God must do the miracle of

regeneration on the heart. We cannot be righteous until He does. Amnon was not a righteous man and, therefore, his sin was not surprising. He had to sin in some fashion.

A third unchanging rule of God is that to sin is to be a slave of sin even if the slavery is hidden. Sin is not a mistake or a bad choice or even a bad habit. Sin is direct disobedience of or rebellion against God which becomes an enslaving master. Jesus taught, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin”* (John 8:34). Jesus used a present tense verb to describe the person whose life is characterized by sinning. The person who is characterized by sinning is a slave. Being captured in that slavery happens almost imperceptibly. Probably Amnon decided that he could think about committing incest with Tamar and since he really didn’t do it, it didn’t matter. But his continual sinning in that matter put him in slavery. Finally the master ruled completely and the result of devastating for many people.

That is how the sin against Tamar happened. Which led to sin against Amnon. Which will lead to the death of Absalom. No doubt the time came when Amnon was thinking that he wished he had never known Tamar, never known Jonadab and never thought the first evil thought.

But there was another situation at play in this sin. It is not difficult enough that we have to fight natural tendencies. Sometimes other sinners come along and encourage sin. Satan’s pawns encourage disaster. It was true in Amnon’s day too.

Jonadab figured significantly in this tragedy. He was David’s nephew, son of his brother Shimeah, and therefore, Amnon’s cousin. *But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David’s brother* (v.3a). The text identifies him as a very crafty man. *And Jonadab was a very crafty man* (v.3b). The word translated *crafty* does not always refer to a negative trait. It can speak of wisdom, or skill, knowing how to do something. When used in this negative sense we might call it “street smarts.” Using common sense to accomplish unrighteous deeds.

Amnon used Jonadab’s plan when he violated his half sister (v.5). Does it seem odd that he just happened to be around the king when news about Absalom’s murder of Amnon arrived? *But Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David’s brother, said, “Let not my lord suppose*

*that they have killed all the young men the king’s sons, for Amnon alone is dead. For by the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day he violated his sister Tamar”* (v.32). That’s odd. Jonadab just happened to be hanging out with the king. He just happened to know exactly what had happened. He even knew why the catastrophe happened.

It probably is not much of a stretch to conclude that Jonadab was so confident about what happened and why because he was to some extent in on the murder plan. *And Jonadab said to the king, “Behold, the king’s sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about”* (v.35). What a braggart. Listen to his words: “King I told you so!” But it was his idea that caused the rape of David’s daughter. Now almost certainly had the inside scoop on Amnon’s murder but never disclosed it so that David could save his son. Jonadab was a most wicked man and that reputation should have been clear.

Let’s learn from him. God has very clear guidelines on how we should interact with people who encourage sin. Solomon taught his son and us to stay away from people like that. He wrote, *Thorns and snares are in the way of the crooked; whoever guards his soul will keep far from them* (Proverbs 22:5). He taught us to avoid lying and deception in your own life, and stay away from those who do. *Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you* (Proverbs 4:24).

It is true that we need to confront sinners with truth and we need to tell them about Jesus. But at the same time we shouldn’t try to make alliances with them. *My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason; like Sheol let us swallow them alive, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse”-- my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood* (Proverbs 1:10-16).

It might seem unbelievable at this point but, David taught us to discern such traits in sinful people. Speaking of the deceiver who causes much pain David said, *His speech was smooth as butter, yet war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were*

*drawn swords (Psalm 55:21)*. That is prophetically a description of a Judas. Avoid such people.

God's law is unchanging. We are wise to intentionally set up walls, boundaries and guards in our lives to avoid encouraging our fleshly lusts. We need to be careful where we go, careful about what we see, careful about what we hear and careful about what we read. And we especially need to be careful about who we hang out with. In other words, the tragic details of this story really do encourage us to be other-worldly, like "out of this world." This world of sin never has been and never will be a friend of grace.