

Dealing with Idols of the Heart [Amnon]

By Pastor Matthew Black

Text: 2 Samuel 13

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Series: Life of David

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Introduction: Open your Bible to the book of **2 Samuel 13**. For this evening's message, we are looking a message entitled: "Dealing with Idols of the Heart".

Tonight we are going to consider ***how we must deal with idols of the heart in our lives***. Idolatry always leads to destruction. Let's remember the words of our Lord in **Matthew 7:13**, "Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat".

We must deal with sin at the root or it will overtake us. And if we are overtaken by sin, if we then try to hide it, it can and will destroy the lives of others. The very best thing to do with sin is to expose it. Revival comes when the sewers open up. We come to a very sad chapter in the Word of God where sin was not exposed. When sin is not exposed it is left to rot and it will rot and destroy the lives of the people it touches like a cancer.

Last week we talked about the danger of bad friendships. We saw how there is enough in any one of us to bring us to destruction. We saw how Jonadab, was called in **verse 3**, a friend of Amnon, and how this friend set up a plan so that Amnon could tantalize his lusts further. We read in **verse 3**, "But Amnon had a friend, whose name *was* Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab *was* a very subtle man". The word "subtle" means to be scheming, crafty, cunning, or wily.¹

- I. Idols of the Heart are **Deceptive**. David is deceived by his son Amnon. David is the one who sends Tamar into the lions den. David had earlier deceived Uriah, and now David was being deceived by his firstborn son, Amnon.

Verses 7-9, "Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat. *8* So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he *was* laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded *it*, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. *9* And she took a pan, and poured *them* out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him."

Amnon was willing to break his father's trust. Amnon went to bed and pretended to be gravely ill. King David became worried about him, and went to check on his condition. When the king arrived, Amnon spoke in the weakest and most pathetic voice he could muster. He said that it would make him feel better if his sister Tamar would come, bake some of his favorite bread in his sight, and feed it to him.

¹ James Strong: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. H2450.

David had no reason to be suspicious of this request. So he told Tamar to go to her brother and do as he asked.

Tamar arrived in Amnon's quarters dressed in a beautiful, richly ornamented robe. It was the customary clothing of the king's virgin daughters. Amnon played his part well, as he reclined in his bedroom, and watched Tamar through the door as she went to work. He saw her carefully knead dough, make bread, and bake it. All the while, he longed for her innocent beauty. He wanted to rob her of her innocence.

Verses 10-11, "And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* into the chamber to Amnon her brother. ¹¹ And when she had brought *them* unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, **Come lie with me, my sister.**"

Amnon deceived everyone around him. It wasn't until he was alone with Tamar that he revealed his true motive.

II. Idols of the Heart are **Destructive**. Amnon rapes Tamar. He sees his father's bad example, but he takes it even further. If we sow to the wind, we will reap the whirlwind.

A. Idols of the Heart will render a person blind to his **own** destruction. Lust is a slave master. Once a person gives himself to it, he is blind to reality. Amnon was the crown prince of Israel, David's firstborn son, and heir to the throne. Amnon is warned by Tamar that he will be considered a fool. She says in **verse 12**, "**Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly.** ¹³ And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? And as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel."

Amnon went from royal son and heir to the throne to a fool in Israel and for all time in a moment of time! He was the crown prince of Israel, but he was so blind that he was willing to give up his royal reputation for his lust. Tamar says to Amnon in **verse 13**, "**and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel.**"

Application: Isn't it amazing that a man will have a wife and a family and for a dabble into adultery he's willing sacrifice his family on the altar of a moment's pleasure. The idolatry of lust is a sure path to destruction.

B. Idols of the Heart will render a person blind to the destruction of **others**. Amnon is given an option by Tamar. What composure she has in this violent and ugly act! In **verse 13** suggests that Amnon instead do the right thing and marry her. She says to Amnon, "**Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee**". She was willing to be married to this wicked man. She tried to convince him that marriage was better than this. She first warned him of the shame it would bring to her and to himself.

1. Amnon was not concerned about the shame that Tamar would experience. Tamar says in **verse 13a**, "**And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go?**"

2. Amnon was not concerned about his own shame. **Verse 13b**, "**and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel.**"

3. Tamar was even willing to marry Amnon! **Verse 13c**, "Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee."

Look at the destructive nature of the idolatry of lust. He does not consider the consequences that will devastate his life, Tamar's life, the life of a nation. For a moment of pleasure, Amnon basically throws his life away. He's blinded. He becomes like an animal. Look at **verse 14**, "Howbeit he [Amnon] would not hearken unto her [Tamar's] voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her".

- III. Idols of the Heart are **Debilitating**. The crush of Amnon's conscience now is about to get him. We see from the next few shocking verses that Amnon immediately fell in the grip of his own conscience. There is no lasting pleasure in sin. It is temporary. And immediately after the deed is done, a person is handed over to the judgment of his own conscience.

That's what happened to Amnon, and it made him hate Tamar. Her beauty now reminded him of his own inward ugliness. Look at **verses 15-17**, "Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. 16 And she said unto him, There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. 17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her. 18 And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her."

- A. **Guilt** is debilitating. Did you catch **verse 15**? "Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her". How is this possible? Once Amnon's desire of lust was acted on, Amnon's conscience overtook him, and he did what most people try to do—hide his sin.

Amnon could run away from Tamar. He could lock her out of his sight. But God would not allow him to run away from his sin. "...Be sure your sin will find you out" (**Numbers 32:23**). The guilt of our sin is a reminder that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (**Hebrews 9:27**).

Application: This is how man acts naturally toward his sin. Adam hid from God after he rebelled in the Garden. God asked (**Genesis 3:8**), "Where art thou Adam?" God knew where Adam was. Adam was not looking for God. He was hiding. It was God who pursued Adam. Adam's reply demonstrates that he realized the state he was in. He said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He had no covering. He was aware of his shame. We are all in Adam's state, and what a miserable condition it is! Adam realized his innocence was gone, and he could in no way do anything about it, so he hid himself. Man's natural response to sin is to feel shame and guilt and hide. Oh, what an awful condition to be in.

Amnon had his own way of hiding. It seems clear that Amnon was not a regenerate man, and so he was blind to his need for repentance. He hardened his heart to God's coming judgment. He instead shifted his guilt away by getting Tamar out of his presence.

B. This guilt debilitated Amnon all the way to the **Grave**. We have no record at all that Amnon ever saw the evil of his way. It is highly probable that Amnon is in hell today.

That's the wages of sin—death and hell and the Lake of Fire. In hell Amnon and all who die with the god of lust in their hearts will lust even more in hell, but part of the torment of hell is that it will never be satisfied.

Application: There is a fountain where sin can be dealt with. Amnon could have repented. Because he did not, his sin ate at him like a cancer. There is a sweetness in repentance. Amnon never saw the need for repentance, and so his sin eventually dragged him to hell.

Listen, there is a sweetness in Jesus Christ. No matter what your sin, you need to hear the good news tonight. Jesus Christ died for the worst of sinners. The Scripture tells us that God the Father "...hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (**2 Corinthians 5:21**).

IV. Idols of the Heart are **Divisive**. What we are going to see is that when a person is enslaved to a certain sin, they will follow that sin even if it spits up their family and tears their life to pieces.

If you are in the grips of lust or desire for something, then it can lead you to forsake even the sweetness of family and friends. Because of Amnon's wicked actions, Absalom, Tamar's full brother, is bitter against Amnon.

Look at **verses 19-20**, "And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. 20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he *is* thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house."

Application: Idolatry destroys families. Consider lust, alcohol, jealousy. If you have been wronged, you need to submit yourself unto God. We are told in **Romans 12:19**, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." You may have been wronged, but bring your burdens to God. It is ours to wait on God.

Bitterness can destroy your spiritual life. Remember Hebrews 12:15, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled".

Remember there is coming a day, says Paul in **2 Thessalonians 1:8**, that Jesus Christ will come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ".

V. Idols of the Heart are **Disgraceful** so we try to hide it. Sin is so disgraceful that we have the temptation to hide it, to cover it up, to not deal with it. If we want to root out sin out of our lives, we must confess it and turn from it.

When a person overcome by lust or any sin, often a person wants to hide the consequences. David seems to have softened the consequences of sin for Amnon by

allowing him not to deal with what he had done. He should have judged Amnon, but instead he chose not to deal with it. **Verse 21**, "But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wrath." David was angry, but apparently he did nothing.

- A. The **Law** demanded that David deal with his son's sin. David was the chief magistrate and judge in all of Israel. He had a responsibility to bring justice to the situation. **Leviticus 20:17** gives the punishment for the crime that Amnon transgressed. Amnon should have been **banished** from Israel for what he did.
- B. If we don't deal with sin now, it will always have to be dealt with later. It will destroy our lives and our families if we harbor it or cover it up for someone else. David overlooked his son's sin. He did not punish him. If the king won't enforce the law, where can you go? Absalom would later use this against his father to promote an insurrection. **2 Samuel 15:4**, "Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!"

Conclusion: Beware of sin's diluting power. It seems David became a member of the "Rug Tucker's Society". He should have brought out what occurred and judged it before Israel. David should have judged his son, but he did not. He could have avoided Amnon's murder. He could have saved two sons. When we bring sin out and deal with it, God's Spirit is pleased. He will fall on us. If there is a temptation for sin in your life, cut it off at the root before it destroys you. Get rid of the idols in your heart! If you do not destroy them, they will destroy you.