

Bible Study August 7, 2024

2 SAMUEL 13 (AMPLIFIED VERSION)

Amnon and Tamar

¹ It happened afterwards that Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and Amnon [her half brother] the son of David was in love with her. ² Amnon was so frustrated because of his [half-] sister Tamar that he made himself sick, for she was a virgin, and Amnon thought it impossible for him to do anything to her. ³ But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a very shrewd (cunning) man.

⁴ He said to Amnon, "Why are you, the king's son, so depressed morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" And Amnon said to him, "I am in love with Tamar, my [half-] brother Absalom's sister." ⁵ Jonadab said to him, "Go to bed and pretend you are sick; and when your father [David] comes to see you, say to him, 'Just let my sister Tamar come and serve me food, and let her prepare it in my sight, so that I may see it and eat it from her hand.'"

Amnon was encouraged by his cousin Jonadab to commit sexual sin. We may be more vulnerable to the advice of our relatives and friends because we are close to them. However, make sure to evaluate every piece of advice by God's standards, even when it comes from those you are closest to.

⁶ So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, so that I may eat from her hand."

⁷ Then David sent word to the house for Tamar, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare some food for him." ⁸ So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, and he was in bed. And she took dough and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and baked them. ⁹ She took the pan and dished them out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Have everyone leave me." So everyone left him [except Tamar]. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, so that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her [half-] brother Amnon. ¹¹ When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said, "Come, lie with me, my sister." ¹² She replied, "No, my brother! Do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this disgraceful thing!" ¹³ As for me, how could I get rid of my shame and disgrace? And you, you will be considered one of the fools in Israel. So now, just speak to the king [about taking me as your wife], for he will not withhold me from you."

¹⁴ But he would not listen to her; and since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her. ¹⁵ Then Amnon became extremely hateful toward her, for his hatred toward her was greater than the love which he had for her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"

Love and lust are very different. After Amnon raped his half sister, his "love" turned to hate. Although he had claimed to be in love, he was actually overcome by lust. Love is patient; lust requires immediate satisfaction. Love is kind; lust is harsh. Love does not demand its own way; lust does. You

can read about the characteristics of real love in 1 Corinthians 13. Lust may feel like love at first, but when physically expressed, it results in self-disgust and hatred of the other person. If you just can't wait, what you feel is not true love.

16 But she said, "No, because this wrong of sending me away is worse than the other that you have done to me!" But he would not listen to her.

Rape was strictly forbidden by God (Deuteronomy 22:28-29). Why would Tamar say that sending her away was even worse? By throwing her out, Amnon made it look as if Tamar had made a shameful proposition to him, and there were no witnesses on her behalf because he had dismissed the servants. His crime destroyed her chances of marriage—since she was no longer a virgin, in that culture she could not be given in marriage.

17 Instead, he called his young man who was his personal servant and said, "Now throw this woman out of my presence and bolt the door behind her." 18 Now Tamar was wearing a [long-sleeved] robe of various colors; for that is how the virgin daughters of the king dressed themselves in robes. Then Amnon's personal servant took her out and bolted the door behind her. 19 So Tamar put dust on her head [in grief] and tore the long-sleeved robe which she had on, and she put her hand on her head and went away crying out [for help].

20 So her brother Absalom said to her, "Has your brother Amnon been with you? But now keep silent, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this matter to heart." So Tamar remained secluded in her brother Absalom's house.

Absalom tried to comfort Tamar and persuade her not to turn the incident into a public scandal. Secretly, he planned to take revenge against Amnon himself. This he would do two years later (13:23-33). Absalom told Tamar the crime was only a family matter. But God's standards for moral conduct are not suspended when we deal with family matters.

21 Now when King David heard about all these things, he was very angry [but failed to take any action]. 22 But Absalom did not speak to Amnon either good or bad; for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar.

Hatred often leads to disaster. Absalom had reason to be angry with Amnon, but instead of confronting Amnon with his sin, Absalom allowed his anger to fester into hatred. This produced revenge instead of resolution. When you become angry at a wrong done to you or someone else, avoid the mistake of getting even. Instead, try to confront the person and address the issue.

23 Now it came about after two full years that Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons [to a party].

Absalom Avenges Tamar

24 Absalom came to [his father] the king and said, "Behold, your servant has sheepshearers; please let the king and his servants go with your servant."

David was angry with Amnon for raping Tamar, but David did not punish him. David probably hesitated because (1) he didn't want to cross Amnon, who was his firstborn son (1 Chronicles 3:1) and therefore next in line to be king, and (2) David was guilty of a similar sin himself in his adultery with Bathsheba. While David was unsurpassed as a king and military leader, he lacked skill, sensitivity, and integrity as a husband and father.

²⁵ But the king said to Absalom, “No, my son, we should not all go, for we will be a burden to you.” Although Absalom [strongly] urged David, still he would not go, but he gave him his blessing. ²⁶ Then Absalom said, “If not, then at least let my brother Amnon go with us.” And the king said to him, “Why should he go with you?” ²⁷ But Absalom urged him [again], and he let Amnon and all the king’s sons go with him.

²⁸ Now Absalom commanded his servants, “Notice carefully, when Amnon’s heart is joyous with wine, and when I say to you, ‘Strike Amnon,’ then kill him. Do not be afraid; have I not commanded you myself [and in doing so have I not taken full responsibility for his death]? Be courageous and brave.” ²⁹ So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon just as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king’s sons got up, and every man mounted his mule and fled.

³⁰ Now it happened while they were on the way [back home], that the [exaggerated] report came to David, “Absalom has killed all the king’s sons, and not one of them is left.” ³¹ Then the king stood and tore his clothes and lay on the ground [in mourning]; and all his servants were standing by with their clothes torn. ³² But Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David’s brother, responded, “Do not let my lord assume that all the king’s sons have been put to death; for only Amnon is dead. This act of revenge has been on Absalom’s mind since the day Amnon violated his sister Tamar. ³³ So now, do not let my lord the king take the report to heart that all the king’s sons are dead; for Amnon alone is dead.”

³⁴ Now Absalom fled. And the young man who kept watch looked up, and behold, many people were coming from the road behind him by the side of the mountain. ³⁵ And Jonadab said to the king, “Look, the king’s sons are coming. It has turned out just as your servant said.” ³⁶ And when he finished speaking, the king’s sons came, and they raised their voices and wept; and the king and all his servants also wept very bitterly.

³⁷ But Absalom fled and went to [his mother’s father] Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. ³⁸ So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there for three years. ³⁹ And the heart of King David longed to go to Absalom; for he was comforted regarding Amnon, since he was dead.

David now faced sins in his own family that were a consequence of those he had committed. The sin in his life was magnified in the lives of his children. If you are a parent, you can’t always control what your children do, but you can love and obey God and show them how to live their lives in obedience to God’s will.

Absalom fled to Geshur because King Talmai was his grandfather (1 Chronicles 3:2) and he would be welcomed.

David’s Four Lambs

2 Samuel 12:1-7

- **LAMB #1 . . . THE BABY BORN TO BATHSHEBA AND DAVID DIED.**
- **LAMB #2 . . . DAVID’S OLDEST SON, AMNON.**
- **LAMB #3 . . . DAVID’S THIRD SON, ABSALOM.**
- **LAMB #4 . . . DAVID’S FOURTH SON, ADONIJAH (ABSALOM’S YOUNGER BROTHER).**