

## 2 Samuel 13 — Like Father, Like Son

**October 8, 2023**

Good morning CrossWinds! If you are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. We are grateful to have you. I have a few quick announcements. First, special thanks to Mel Peterson, John Becker, and Tim Moermann. This week, they worked on the new lights in the worship center, adjusting them to the right height. They did a great job. It looks much better. There is additional lighting in the works, but the first part of the project is done.

Second, the garage project is beginning. We hope to have it framed before winter. We are waiting for some final details so we know the arrival dates on the rafters and wood. If you want to help with the garage build, there will be plenty of information coming as things get things.

Third, we are in the process of transitioning from pews to chairs. Last week, I told you we were a name-it-claim-it church. If you name a pew, you can claim a pew. Talk to me after the service if you are interested. The rest of the pews we will put on Facebook.

Fourth, October 23, which is a Monday night, we have our annual meeting at 7:00 PM. That meeting is to approve the new elders and deacons for each campus. If you want to learn who is up for election, go to your church app. The home page has a link with photos and a write-up of the people for each position. We also have a printed list of those candidates in your bulletins. If you are a member, one of the membership responsibilities is to attend those meetings. Annual meetings are not just to affirm new officers. They are also a great time to celebrate what God has done and look forward to the future. As part of the

annual meeting, we have the annual report. That report will be available via the app this week. We will have the paper versions next Sunday.

This morning, we have a wild study. It will feel like a Sunday where the topics come from headlines in the newspaper. Today we will look at sex, lust, abuse, rape, rebellious children, and broken families. If you don't find anything in this message relevant to your life, that confirms you are dead. We will bury you this afternoon and move on. I mean, if you have a beating heart, the topics we cover this morning will be relevant to your life.

This morning, we continue our study of 2 Samuel. We are in 2 Samuel 13. This chapter starts the process of transitioning from David's generation to the generation of his children. While David built a legacy of faith, courage, and heroism; in 2 Samuel 11, that was tarnished by his affair with Bathsheba and the assassination of her husband to get him out of the picture. Last week, in 2 Samuel 12, after a year of trying to hide his sin, the prophet Nathan called David out on his sin. Thankfully, David repented. God forgave him. David would not die for his sin. David was forgiven and allowed to remain as king, but as with all sin, there were still consequences that flowed from what he had done.

The first of those consequences was that the sword would never leave David's house. His family will be littered with bloodshed and animosity between his sons and other household members from that point forward. The second consequence of his sin was that four of David's sons would die on account of his killing Uriah to take his wife. In the last chapter, the newborn son born to

Bathsheba died because of David's sins. In this chapter, David's firstborn son will die. After this, two more sons will die.

Here is a terrifying thought, but it runs through this chapter like a thread stitching it together from beginning to end. Like Father, like Son. The sins and failures of parents are often reproduced in the lives of their children. While good looks, height, and intelligence are passed in the genes from one generation to the next, the choices parents make in their lives are often repeated by their children, either for good or for ill.

What makes 2 Samuel 13 such a chilling chapter is that David's sons repeat David's sins. David took a woman who was not his wife and murdered her husband to get rid of the problem. In this chapter, one of David's sons takes a woman who is not his wife, and another son commits murder to make the problem go away. Like Father, like Son.

This thought is scary but true. Children are much more likely to imitate what they see their parents do than learn from what they hear their parents say.

Since this chapter introduces us to David's children, and the generation after David, let's meet the new characters in the story.

### **Meet The New Characters**

- **Amnon** — He was David's oldest son. He was David's son by Ahinoam of Jezreel.
- **Absalom** — He was David's son by Maacah, the daughter of the King of Geshur. Absalom was the third-born son. David's second-born son was a man named Chileab. He was mentioned in an earlier list of David's sons in this book. It appears that he died as a child. He is out of the picture. While Absalom was

the third-born son, at this time, he was second in line for the throne. His grandfather was a king. His mother was the daughter of a king. He wanted to be a king, but Amnon, his older brother, was in the way.

- **Tamar** — She was Absalom's biological sister. David was her father. Maacah was her mother. She was a godly woman who was also extremely beautiful.
- **Jonadab** — He was the son of Shimeah, who was David's brother. He was the cousin who kept putting his nose in everybody else's business when he should be minding his own business.

### **Amnon loved Tamar.**

Now Absalom, David's son, had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar. And after a time Amnon, David's son, loved her. 2 Samuel 13:1 (ESV)

Amnon describes his feelings for Tamar as love. As we will see in a few moments, he was not in love with her. He was in lust over her. She was extremely beautiful. All he cared about her, and the only way he thought about her was sexually. David could only think about Bathsheba sexually. He was consumed with lust for her. Now we see Amnon, David's oldest son, also consumed with lust for her. He can only think about her sexually. The problem is that she was his sister.

Why do I claim his feelings toward her were completely lustful, not loving? All the ingredients of true love are lacking from Amnon. He was not interested in sacrificing himself for her. He was not interested in what was good for her or what was best for her. He wasn't interested in romance. His feelings for her were just raw lust, like a man fixated at a woman in a pornographic video or photo. He didn't care about her. He just wanted her for sex, plain and simple.

And Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. 2 Samuel 13:2 (ESV)

David had many women who were wives in his harem. He had many women available to him, but he wanted Bathsheba, a woman that was off-limits to him because she was already married. Amnon, as the prince of the land and next in line to the throne, had many women interested in him as an available bachelor. Like his father, he also wanted a woman that was off-limits to him, his sister.

The text says it was impossible for him to do anything to her. We know what he wanted to do to her. I think that is obvious. He was so consumed with lust toward her that he was physically sick.

It doesn't matter how much he desired her, she was off-limits. Any relationship with her would be considered incest, which is forbidden by God.

You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another home. Leviticus 18:9 (ESV)

As we get to know Amnon, and see his character, I am not sure the biggest barrier in his mind to this relationship was a moral one. Unlike his father, Amnon didn't care about God and God's law. What frustrated Amnon was an opportunity problem. As a beautiful royal daughter of the king, Tamar was heavily guarded, and her sexual purity protected. She could not be easily seduced. It seemed impossible for Amnon to be alone with her. Just as presidents and their children have secret service agents around them, it is reasonable to assume Tamar also had some kind of protection around her guaranteeing her purity and safety.

## Bad friends promote wickedness.

Amnon might have lived in the self-imposed torments of his lusts if it were not for the inquiries of his friend and cousin Jonadab.

But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother. And Jonadab was a very crafty man. 2 Samuel 13:3 (ESV)

Some translations say Jonadab was a very wise man. The ESV uses the word crafty, which I think is a better translation. Jonadab was not wise in a good way. He was tricky. He was a manipulator of people and situations. He was a politician. He knew how to manipulate people to get what he wanted.

And he said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?"... 2 Samuel 13:4a (ESV)

Hey buddy, what is wrong? You are the son of the king. You are next in line for the throne. The kingdom is thriving. Life is good. You have no reason to be sad. What is wrong? You look haggard. You need more than coffee in the morning.

...Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." 2 Samuel 13:4b (ESV)

Amnon identified her as Tamar, his brother's sister. There was only one Tamar in the family. By saying she was his brother's sister, he identified the impossible problem for him to overcome. She is my brother's sister.

If Jonadab were a true friend, at this point, he would have told Amnon to take a cold shower. He would have told him to get his head on straight. He would have opened the Bible and told him incest with his sister is wrong. He didn't do that. Instead, he gave Amnon a plan to help him overcome the palace protocols so he could be alone with Tamar so that he could sexually force himself on her.

A true friend would have never done this. A true friend would have rebuked him and told him to get a grip. Jonadab may have been a cousin, but he was a terrible friend because he encouraged people's stupidity and enabled self-destructive behavior.

If you are a junior high, senior high, college student, or young adult, I know you have people in your life like Jonadab. If your parents know about them, they have warned you about them. They have told you to stay away from them. They are not friends. They are enemies who will enable the destruction of your life. Friends like Jonadab are the people who dare you to smoke something because they tell you that is what all the kool people do. They dare you to drink something because they tell you that is what popular people do. They will bet you \$50 to encourage you to do something foolish that will regret for the rest of your life. Stay away from these kinds of people. They may claim to be your friends but they are not your friends. They are your enemies masquerading as friends. Get them out of your life. Think about this. Anybody who helps you plan the rape of your sister is not the kind of person you need in your life.

Here was Jonadab's plan.

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.'" 2 Samuel 13:5 (ESV)

Jonadab's plan is to help Amnon get Tamar to be alone with him in his bedroom so he can rape her. It is all based on lies and deception. In addition, while we can't see it clearly in English, in Hebrew, it is apparent that the way this

plan works was designed to further entice Amnon's already out-of-control sexual fantasies. As we work our way through this, you will see what I mean.

### **Our daughters must be protected from evil men.**

So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. And when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand." 2 Samuel 13:6 (ESV)

Here are some of the interesting subtleties. It says Amnon wants Tamar to make two cakes in his presence and then have her feed it to him with her hand. In Hebrew, both the verb and the noun for *make* and *cake* have as their root the word *heart*. He wants her to make two heartaches and then feed them to him by her hand as he lies in bed. Do you think that will cool his sexual fantasies?

Absolutely not!

Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him." So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, where he was lying down. And she took dough and kneaded it and made cakes in his sight and baked the cakes. And she took the pan and emptied it out before him, but he refused to eat... 2 Samuel 13:7-9a (ESV)

Everything suggests that Tamar was unaware of what transpired in Amnon's mind. Her immediate response to her father's request was to help her sick brother. She made food for him. She spent time with him. She was trying to help him during his sickness. She had a compassionate heart. She was a good nurse. Things began to get weird when she gave him his food, but he refused to eat his two heartaches. That is a little weird.

We will miss this, but from the Hebrew perspective, Tamar is portrayed as an extremely godly woman. She was very beautiful. She was sexually pure. She was the daughter of the king, but she was not afraid to get her hands dirty. She



cooked. She had compassion on someone in need. She went about doing good works. She was a godly woman who was more than just a pretty face.

Before we get to Amnon sexually forcing himself on Tamar, let's talk for a moment about the proper way a man should treat a woman. Not only should Tamar not be treated with the violence that is about to happen, but women like her should never be put into a situation where this kind of attack is possible. The men in her life should have protected her. As we will see, Amnon had a poor sexual reputation. He was not trustworthy. People knew he was burning with out-of-control lust for Tamar. David should never have sent her to be alone with him. David should have protected her. That was her father's job. Fathers and brothers, it is our job to protect our daughters and our sisters. To the extent it is possible, it is our job to keep the daughters and sisters in our lives safe from predators like Amnon in this world.

Fathers, when a young man wants to date your daughter, you must know his character. You must be able to trust his character. If you suspect him to be untrustworthy, do not let him alone with her. Brothers, you know what guys talk about in the locker room. You know how guys brag about their sexual escapades around their friends. If one of those guys takes an interest in your sister, you warn her. You don't protect her from a young man like Amnon who is just interested in using a young woman to satisfy his glandular desires.

We live in a society that encourages the sexual exploitation of young women. Pornography is rampant. More and more young men look at young women just like Amnon did Tamar. They see young women as nothing more than

sexual objects. Instead of precious daughters of God. Fathers and brothers, to the extent we can, it is our job to make sure we protect the young women in our life from young men like Amnon. We do not allow the young women in our lives to be put into situations like this where they can be sexually exploited or overpowered.

What does the Bible say about the way a young woman should be treated?

...treat older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity. 1 Timothy 5:2 (ESV)

If you wouldn't do it with your sister, don't do it with your girlfriend. When she becomes your wife, treat her as a wife. Until she is your wife, treat her with absolute purity.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

God will judge sexual immorality. Last week, we saw that David faced consequences for not respecting the marriage bed. The consequences of David's sexual sin were hard and long-lasting.

## Rape!

Now comes the hard part: Amnon executes his plans for Tamar.

...And Amnon said, "Send out everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. 2 Samuel 13:9 (ESV)

He was finally alone with her. Tamar still seems to suspect nothing. After all, Amnon is her brother.

Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, that I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 2 Samuel 13:10 (ESV)

Now Amnon drew her into the privacy of his bedroom. He sent his servants away so they could not hear what happened next. It was time for Amnon to spring his trap. It is possible that Amnon was so blinded by his lust that he thought his advances would appeal to Tamar. When his fists closed over her wrists and he threw her on the bed, the look that appeared on her face was not excitement but terror. She had no interest in him. She was disgusted by him.

But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." 2 Samuel 13:11 (ESV)

Tamar was overpowered and pinned to the bed. She was quick thinking. She tried to talk him out of it.

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. 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." 2 Samuel 13:12–13 (ESV)

Don't do this Amnon! Don't do it! This is outrageous. She gave him three reasons to stop.

1. She reminded him that raping her would destroy his reputation for life. Sex outside of marriage is an offense to God. Incest by rape is especially offensive to God. They were Israelites and children of the king. This kind of thing should never happen among God's people. She said, if you do this, your reputation will be one of the outrageous fools in Israel. The word for fools in Hebrew is especially strong. She literally said, if you do this, you will become known as a wicked pervert. You will not be able to live that down. Your reputation as a wicked pervert will stick for life.

2. She pointed out this would also ruin her life. Where could she carry her shame? If he incestuously raped her, who would want to marry her? What would become of her life? If he cared about her, he would not do to her what he planned.
3. Finally, in desperation, she said, speak to the king, and we can be married. I don't think Tamar was seriously suggesting she marry this beast. David would never allow an incestuous marriage because it would be against God's law. In desperation, she was willing to try anything to stop Him.

Amnon, the complete fool he was, wouldn't listen to a word she said. Completely controlled by his glands and in serious need of taking the polar plunge, he would not listen.

**But he would not listen to her,... 2 Samuel 13:14a (ESV)**

What happened next probably only took 10 minutes, but for Tamar, it seemed like an eternity of terror.

**...and being stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her. 2 Samuel 13:14b (ESV)**

The English is toned. The Hebrew words are violent. There was a fight. She desperately tried to resist him. It was physical. It doesn't say, but it wouldn't surprise me if he hit her as he tried to submit her. It says he "lay with her." In Hebrews, the word "with" is missing. There was no "with" about this moment. He brutally raped her. Those ten minutes of terror shattered the rest of her life.

I am not a woman, so I do not know what it would feel like to be raped, but I know it must be extremely traumatic, especially for a young woman. It would be even worse when the rape came from your brother.

Years ago, I found myself providing marital counseling for a newlywed couple. She was raped as a young woman, and it scared her so deeply that a decade later, in her marriage, she still felt dirty and violated. She couldn't put the rape behind her. I suspect that is how Tamar felt.

Before this, Amnon claimed he loved her. After her rape, his feelings toward her drastically changed.

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... 2 Samuel 13:15a (ESV)

For those who engage in sexual assault, the one thing they want more than the sex itself is for their victim to give themselves to them. When rapists are hated and rejected, they often rage against their victims. If they should hate anyone, it should be themselves. Rather than hating themselves, they vent their anger on their victim, sometimes killing them. This was Amnon. Having used Tamar and been rejected by her, he was done with her and hated her.

...And Amnon said to her, "Get up! Go!" 2 Samuel 13:15b (ESV)

It reminds me of a smoker who is filled with cravings for his cigarettes. After he is done something a cigarette, he throws it on the ground and steps on it with his foot. That is how Amnon treated Tamar. Once he was done with her, he discarded her. He never felt love for only, only lust.

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. 2 Samuel 13:16 (ESV)

According to Israelite law, if a man raped a virgin woman, there were penalties imposed on him, plus he was forced to marry the woman and provide for the woman.

“If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife.” Exodus 22:16 (ESV)

This was to make sure there were not a bunch of raped women running around that nobody would marry. If a man sexually seduced a woman, he needed to be responsible for his actions and take care of her, not just throw her away. What will Amnon do with Tamar, not that he used her? Will he take care of his sexual and relational responsibilities toward her?

He called the young man who served him and said, “Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the door after her.” 2 Samuel 13:17 (ESV)

In the Hebrew, the word “woman” is missing. He literally said, “Put this thing out of my presence.” Before, he was consumed with lust for her because she was the beautiful woman he desired. Now, he saw her as nothing more than a piece of trash to be discarded and put out of the house. Putting her out and bolting the door behind implies that he blamed the rape. He made it seem like she needed to be kept away because she tried to rape him. Isn’t this typical of a sexual abuser? They use a person, then blame the person, saying it is their fault.

Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves, for thus were the virgin daughters of the king dressed. So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. 2 Samuel 13:18 (ESV)

Her flowing garment signified her position as a virgin daughter of the king. She should have been safe from this kind of experience, especially from her brother!

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. 2 Samuel 13:19 (ESV)

She ripped up the robe, which represented her status as a virgin daughter of the king. She was completely traumatized. As only a modern victim of rape can understand, she simply could not pull herself together.

Either Tamar made her way to her brother's house, or her brother saw her as she made her way there. Her face was in her hands. Tears were running down her cheek. Her flowing robes were torn to pieces. Look what he said to her.

And her brother Absalom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you?..." 2 Samuel 13:20a (ESV)

Absalom took one look at her and knew Amnon raped her. This speaks volumes about Amnon's character and his reputation. He was known as a man who used ladies. Absalom knew what happened before she said a thing because Amnon's terrible reputation preceded him. David should have known better than to send his daughter to be with Amnon the creep.

...Now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this to heart." So Tamar lived, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house. 2 Samuel 13:20b (ESV)

Hold your peace was Absalom's way of telling her she wouldn't need to deal with this alone. He would help right this wrong. When he said, "He is your brother." That was not speaking of family solidarity but that it would be difficult for Absalom to deal with him because he was the prince and greatly loved son of David his father. Absalom was not confident David would have the guts to deal with the situation because his love for his son kept him from correcting him.

What should have happened? The law was clear when it came to incest.

"If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people." Leviticus 20:17 (ESV)

Gazing at your relative's nakedness cut you off from the people. Raping your sister was the death penalty.

Tamar lived in her brother's house. As far as we know, she never married. She never recovered from the rape. This is the last time we see Tamar in the Bible. We do not know how things ended but it does not look good.

When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. 2 Samuel 13:21 (ESV)

David better be angry. Who wouldn't be furious? This was a terrible wrong. David better make sure justice is served. Then we read this comment. It is not in the text, but one of the Dead Sea Scrolls has a comment at this point that a copyist added. The comment may not be God's Word, but I believe it is a true word.

But he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, since he was his firstborn — 2 Samuel 13:21b Septuagint

David should have been angry. The problem is he did nothing about it. Amnon was allowed to remain in the palace, the oldest son of the king. He was allowed to remain next in line for the throne. David did nothing to neutralize Amnon's influence or discipline him for what he had done. He did nothing to prevent him from raping other women. We know rapists typically keep on raping. David did not just fail to punish Amnon, but we also don't read about him doing anything to comfort his daughter. We don't read about him defending her honor. He ignored the whole thing, hoping it would go away.

Why did David do nothing? It is possible that he felt so guilty about his affair with Bathsheba that he could not stand up to his son about the rape of Tamar. David's failure to discipline his sons for their sins to mold them toward



godliness will ultimately cause more harm to his kingdom than all the wars of the Ammonites and Philistines combined.

David was not just responsible to be the leader of Israel, but he was also responsible to be the leader of his family. The portion of David's life we are studying in 2 Samuel has parallels in the book of 1 Chronicles. 1 Chronicles describes this time in David's life from the outward public portion of his life. At this time, in public, David was amazingly successful and wealthy. 2 Samuel describes this period of David's life from the private side, what was happening with his family. While David was wildly successful in public, he was a complete failure as a father. He failed to discipline his sons and protect his daughters. At the end of the day, it was the neglect of disciplining his sons and his unwillingness to stand against them that would almost destroy his kingdom.

David, as a boy, fearlessly stood against Goliath to protect God's honor. At this time of his life, he did nothing to protect and restore his precious daughter's honor.

### **What are some lessons we can learn?**

1. **David let the sins of his past keep him from disciplining his sons in the present.** We must not do the same. I hear this all the time. I can't tell my kids not to live together before marriage because I did. I can't tell my kids not to become sexually involved because I did. Folks, don't let the sins of your past keep you from correcting your children in the present. Let them drive you to correct your children. You understand the pain and suffering sin brought into your life. Be super motivated to turn your children away from repeating the same mistakes.

2. **Christian fathers must set a godly example for their children by how they treat their mom.** Sons learn to treat their girlfriends by how they see their dad treat their mother. No yelling. No demeaning. Keep taking her on dates. Romance her, and buy her flowers. Don't model being an absent father who yells at his wife. Model being a present husband who cherishes his wife.

### Revenge!

But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had violated his sister Tamar. 2 Samuel 13:22 (ESV)

Absalom was stewing. For two years, David did nothing. He ignored the situation, hoping it would go away. That made Tamar and Absalom hopping mad.

Absalom was so mad that he decided to take matters into his own hands.

After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons. 2 Samuel 13:23 (ESV)

Baal-Hazor was about 15 miles north northeast of Jerusalem. Sheep shearing was a feast time, similar to Thanksgiving meals today. The first impression we get is that after 2 years, the problems are passing. Absalom expressed goodwill toward his family. He invited everyone over to his house for their version of Thanksgiving.

And Absalom came to the king and said, "Behold, your servant has sheepshearers. Please let the king and his servants go with your servant." 2 Samuel 13:24 (ESV)

Absalom invited the king and the entire royal court to his house for the sheep-shearing party. That sounds generous, but it is absurd. That was far more people than he could handle. Remember, the king had a huge family with all the different wives and their children. This was all part of Absalom's strategy. Begin

the negotiations high, then see if you can hit the middle ground you actually want.

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. 2 Samuel 13:25 (ESV)

David says we are way too much for you. You can't go to all that expense and trouble. David did not outright reject Absalom's invitation, just the number of people would be too much.

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?” 2 Samuel 13:26 (ESV)

Wait a minute? Why did he want his brother, the crown prince? He refused to talk to him for two years. He hates him for what he did to his sister. Why was Absalom suddenly friendly? David said, “Why should he go with you?”

But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. 2 Samuel 13:27 (ESV)

This appears to be a compromise. Not just Amnon but the rest of the king's sons will go. The rest of the royal court will stay in Jerusalem, but there will be enough people with Amnon to keep him safe, at least, that is what David thought.

Before Absalom's guests arrived, he had a word with the waiters serving the food.

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.” 2 Samuel 13:28 (ESV)

This is chilling. Absalom turns his waiters into assassins. David sent his servants to kill Uriah. Now Absalom sends his servants to kill Amnon. Like Father, Like Son.

Absalom is hell-bent on carrying out vengeance for what was done to his sister. What does the Bible say about vengeance?

### **What does the Bible say about vengeance?**

#### **1. God carries out vengeance.**

...“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” Romans 12:19b (ESV)

God promises to take vengeance on sins committed against us. Today, we are told to take revenge for ourselves because if we don't get revenge, nobody else will do it. Not true. God promises vengeance on all sin and sinners.

#### **2. Since God promises to carry out vengeance, we are not to take justice into our hands.**

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God,... Romans 12:19a (ESV)

We are not to seek revenge. God is not the only one who rights wrongs. Romans 13 tells us that God has established government. Part of the God-given role of government is to enforce justice. This is why it is a problem when a government does not have police to keep order or district attorneys who will enforce justice. They are neglecting their God-given role to provide order in society. Worse yet, when governments do not take care of justice, people will start carrying out justice on their own. They take vengeance in their own hands. As a result, they create more violence, not less.

#### **3. Since we are forbidden from carrying out vengeance, and God promises to carry out vengeance, the only Christian response is to do good.**

Because God avenges evil then.... If your enemy is hungry, feed him, If he is thirsty given him something to drink Romans 12:20

Absalom should have asked his father to carry out justice against Amnon. If David failed, he should have taken it to the country's elders. If that failed, he should have left it in God's hands, trusting God would do justice. In the mean time, he was to do good. That is not what he did.

So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and each mounted his mule and fled. 2 Samuel 13:29 (ESV)

Amnon was murdered. Everybody ran for their life. As David's sexual sin led to the murder of Uriah, not Amnon's sexual sin led to his younger brother murdering him.

Back in Jerusalem, David heard a report.

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." 2 Samuel 13:30 (ESV)

This news was a rumor. It was weird. Nobody was texting. There were no cell phones. Nobody arrived from the grisly scene. How did this rumor get started? That is an important question. We will find the answer in a moment.

Then the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. And all his servants who were standing by tore their garments. 2 Samuel 13:31 (ESV)

Everybody was cut to the heart. They knew Absalom and Amnon were on bad terms, but they did not think Absalom would kill every son of the king.

Notably, there was one person not crying. It was Jonadab.

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. Now therefore let not my lord the king so take it to heart as to suppose that all the king's sons are dead, for Amnon alone is dead." 2 Samuel 13:32–33 (ESV)

Jonadab knew what happened, which means Jonadab knew about Absalom's plan to kill Amnon ahead of time, and he did nothing to stop it. In fact, it appears Jonadab was the one who planted the rumor that all the sons were killed, then he told the king only one son was killed. Remember Jonadab's negotiation techniques. He starts out big, then moves smaller to make things seem not too bad. That is what Jonadab did with news of Amnon's death. He was a trouble maker. He was the creator the Amnon's plan to rape Tamar. He also played a part in manufacturing Absalom's plan to murder his brother. I told you this guy pretends to be a friend, but he isn't.

But Absalom fled. And the young man who kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, many people were coming from the road behind him by the side of the mountain. 2 Samuel 13:34 (ESV)

Absalom fled in the opposite direction of the king's sons. When the lookout could see the mob coming over the mountain, he knew who it was because he knew who was behind the chaos.

And Jonadab said to the king, "Behold, the king's sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about." 2 Samuel 13:35 (ESV)

And as soon as he had finished speaking, behold, the king's sons came and lifted up their voice and wept. And the king also and all his servants wept very bitterly. 2 Samuel 13:36 (ESV)

David's firstborn son, who was an incestual rapist, was dead at the hands of David's next son. The son who was second in line for the throne is now a murderer of his older brother. If you thought your family was dysfunctional, this family takes the cake!

But Absalom fled and went to Talmi the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day. 2 Samuel 13:37 (ESV)

Absalom hid in his paternal grandfather's kingdom beyond David's empire. Meanwhile, David mourned for his son day after day. In Hebrew, the expression day after day means all of his days. David mourned for his oldest son for the rest of his life.

So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years. 2 Samuel 13:38 (ESV)

Absalom was gone for the next three years. What happens when he returns as the murderer of his older brother but also next in line for the throne? That crazy story begins next week.

And the spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom, because he was comforted about Amnon, since he was dead. 2 Samuel 13:39 (ESV)

This is a difficult verse to translate from Hebrew. After looking at scholars on this verse, the best translation I found reads as follows.

And all these circumstances held the king back from marching out against Absalom, but he mourned for Amnon because he was dead.

David was furious at what Absalom did when he deceived and murdered his older brother, but David did nothing. David was furious at what Amnon did when he raped his sister Tamar, but he did nothing.

David became like Eli from 1 Samuel. Eli refused to correct his wicked sons. Now, David refused to correct his wicked sons. It will almost cost him his kingdom.

There are many applications we can pull from this chapter. We can look at Amnon, who teaches us the difference between love and lust. We can look at Absalom, who teaches us the danger of stuffing problems instead of dealing with them. We can look at Jonadab and the danger of bad friends.

As we close, I want to look at this chapter from just one angle, that is what we can learn about parenting from looking at David as a father.

### Applications

1. Fathers must not become so involved at work that they fail to lead in the comfort and correction of their children, including adult children.
2. Children are more likely to repeat what they see their parents *do* than learn from what they hear their parents *say*.
3. The greatest temptation fathers face is not outright wickedness but apathy and inaction. David could have stopped all this if he addressed problems in his family instead of ignoring them.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at [www.Christ2RCulture.com](http://www.Christ2RCulture.com) ([www.c2rc.com](http://www.c2rc.com))

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