

# Making Promises

## Part 6: The Kingdom

### Review

- Following his fall and subsequent repentance, David finishes off the Ammonites. However, Nathan's prophecy that the sword would never depart from David's house began to work itself out in strife between David's sons and in the rebellion of Absalom, and the sins of David were repeated and exaggerated by his sons.
- Overall, the storyline of chapters 13–20 is like the story of David and Bathsheba. A sexual sin is followed by a murder, and afterwards someone comes to David telling a parable that tricked him into passing judgment against himself.
- Echoes of Genesis may be heard in these chapters. Taking Bathsheba was an Adamic sin, a sin of seizing forbidden fruit, and David was driven out of the garden-city as a result. Soon afterward, brother murders brother, and the house of Jacob is divided.

### Fractured Family

- Amnon "fell in love" with his half-sister Tamar. Acting on the advice of his cousin **Jonadab**, he pretended to be ill and asked David to let Tamar attend him. As she attended him by feeding him in his bed he acted on his debased lusts by making sexual advances. When she refused his advances, he raped her (**2 Sam. 13:1-14**).
  - ▶ Following the crime, Amnon hated her and threw her out in the street which only added to the disgrace by ensuring that she was to be **rejected** in Hebrew society for the rest of her life (**2 Sam. 13:15-22**).
  - ▶ This episode is the first recorded evidence of the **sword** that never would depart from David's house (**2 Sam. 12:10**). Born to Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, Amnon was David's eldest son and half-brother of Tamar and Absalom (**2 Sam. 3:2; see Appendix A**).
  - ▶ Rape was shameful enough, but this was **incest** and was explicitly forbidden in the **covenant law** (**Lev. 18:9, 11; 20:17; Deut. 27:22**). Hence Tamar called it **godlessness** and argued that if Amnon did this he would be like one of the godless in Israel.
  - ▶ Looking back over the story, we see Tamar **trapped** (vv. 5–11), ignored (vv. 14a, 16b), raped (v. 14b), **despised** (v. 15), banished (v. 17), and **ruined** (vv. 18–19, 20b).
- The writer portrays each of the four major male characters as **deficient** in some

way:

- ▶ Amnon's perverted lust for his sister is surpassed by his subsequent hatred of her which stands at the center of the story (v.15). He twice, refuses to listen to her appeal (vv.14, 16). He exercises **passion** without **love**.
- ▶ Jonadab is presented to us as a "**wise**" man (i.e. "skillful" or "sharp"). Thus he has keen insight into situations, both in regards to the rape of his cousin, and later, in dispelling fake news (**2 Sam. 13:32-33**). However, what he has in **wisdom**, he lacks in **principle**.
- ▶ David exercises **anger** without **justice**. Much like a second Eli, David places his **fatherly love** higher than the will and justice of the Lord (**1 Sam. 2:29**). He certainly does not mimic Yahweh's kingship or he would be a stronghold for the oppressed and bring the way of the wicked to ruin (**Ps. 9:7-9; 146:5-9**).

## Absalom and Amnon

- After two years of silence concerning Amnon's rape of Tamar, Absalom arranged for Amnon to join him and the rest of his brothers at a **sheep shearing party**. While in the midst of the festivities, Absalom had his servants kill Amnon (**2 Sam. 13:23-33**).
  - ▶ Absalom was shrewd to invite David to the feast at Baal-hazor. Asking to take Amnon with him initially might've played into David's already present **suspensions** (v.26). Once the king refused to accompany the sons, Amnon was a reasonable replacement. The feast also provided a cover for Absalom, especially since the other sons of the king were all invited.
  - ▶ The last **sheep-shearing festival** we saw in 1-2 Samuel involved Nabal, whose heart, like Amnon's, died while merry with wine (**2 Sam. 13:28; 1 Sam. 25:36**).
  - ▶ Amnon had also played the fool, as Tamar said twice, when she warned him against doing a "**disgraceful thing**" (**nebalah**) and charged that he was acting like one of the **godless/fools** (**2 Sam. 13:12-13**). Amnon lived like a **Nabal**, and he died like a **Nabal**.
  - ▶ The connection between Nabal and Amnon also highlights the difference between Absalom and his father: When David encountered the fool, he was ready to take vengeance, but was restrained. Absalom shows **hatred** without **restraint**.
  - ▶ When the feast turned to slaughter, the report went out that Absalom had killed all the king's sons. **Jonadab** was there again, with "good news" for David: "Only Amnon is dead."

## Part 6: The Kingdom

<p><b>2 Sam. 13:1-14</b></p>	<p>1 Now Absalom, David's son, had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar. And after a time Amnon, David's son, loved her. 2 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. 3 But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother. And Jonadab was a very crafty man. 4 And he said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." 5 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.'" 6 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." 7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him." 8 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. 9 And she took the pan and emptied it out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Send out everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. 10 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. 11 But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." 12 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. 13 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." 14 But he would not listen to her, and being stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 13:15-22</b></p>	<p>15 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. And Amnon said to her, "Get up! Go!" 16 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. 17 He called the young man who served him and said, "Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the door after her." 18 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. 19 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. 20 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." So Tamar lived, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house. 21 When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. 22 But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had violated his sister Tamar.</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 12:10</b></p>	<p>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.'</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 3:2</b></p>	<p>And sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel;</p>
<p><b>Lev. 18:9</b></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>Lev. 18:11</b></p>	<p>You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, brought up in your father's family, since she is your sister.</p>
<p><b>Lev. 20:17</b></p>	<p>"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. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity.</p>
<p><b>Deut. 27:22</b></p>	<p>" 'Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'</p>

<p><b>2 Sam. 13:32-33</b></p>	<p>32 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. 33 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."</p>
<p><b>1 Sam. 2:29</b></p>	<p>Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?'</p>
<p><b>Ps. 9:7-9</b></p>	<p>7 But the Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice, 8 and he judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with uprightness. 9 The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.</p>
<p><b>Ps. 146:5-9</b></p>	<p>5 Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, 6 who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever; 7 who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; 8 the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. 9 The Lord watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 13:23-33</b></p>	<p>23 After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons. 24 And Absalom came to the king and said, "Behold, your servant has sheepshearers. Please let the king and his servants go with your servant." 25 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. 26 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?" 27 But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. 28 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." 29 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. 30 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." 31 Then the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. And all his servants who were standing by tore their garments. 32 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. 33 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."</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 13:28</b></p>	<p>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."</p>
<p><b>1 Sam. 25:36</b></p>	<p>And Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until the morning light.</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 13:12-13</b></p>	<p>12 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. 13 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."</p>

# Appendix A:

