

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

2 SAMUEL 11-13

Scottish judge, Francis Jeffrey, was quoted as saying, “A good name is got by many actions, and lost by one.” My mom preached the same to my brother and I, “Boys, it takes a lifetime to build a good reputation, but only one night to tear it down.” Oh, if David had heeded these warnings - if he’d listened to his mama...

One night of pleasure costs the King of Israel decades of distress...

The nightmare begins in chapter 11. “It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle...” After being cooped up all winter all kings needed a battle or two to get the juices flowing, and shake the cabin fever.

But King David “sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.” David decides to sit this battle out. He goes on *spring break*.

For 17 years David has ridden a string of unprecedented success. He’s had the Midas touch militarily. Every battle his army has fought he’s won. *Hey, David has been working hard. Why shouldn’t he take a vacation? He needs a little R&R.*

Relax David, drop your guard. Chill out and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

“Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very

beautiful to behold.” The Bible doesn’t address why Bathsheba was on the roof of her Jerusalem condo – and in full view of the king’s palace - bathing in the buff. Obviously, she shares some culpability in what follows.

But if David had been doing what God called him to do this incident would’ve never happened. It’s been said, **“The devil tempts all men, but idle men tempt the devil.”** We all need *down time*, but only to refresh our *upward look*. It’s one thing to take a break. It’s another thing to take a break from God - which is what David did.

You can be sure Satan never takes a vacation. Always be on your guard.

I’m sure David rationalized, **“She’s so beautiful, I just want to see her up-close. We’ll just chit-chat. We can pray. I’ll lead her to the Lord. It’s probably God’s will we get together.”** It was not the *look* that brought David down, but what *took* place afterwards. The look was innocent - the surge of manly feelings that rushed over him, normal. But David failed to control his thoughts, and harness his desires.

It seems controlling one’s thoughts, is becoming a lost art. We’re still a moral enough people to frown on certain actions - but we think its okay to indulge in any fantasy we choose. Hey, God is as concerned about what we think, as how we act. In fact, more so! God knows our thoughts will ultimately determine our behavior.

Proverbs 23:7 applies to us all, **“For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.”** It’s been said, **“Promiscuity begins in the head long before it ends in the bed.”**

I heard of a man who worked in an office full of gorgeous

women. He kept a nail in his pocket. One day a friend asked him why he carried around the nail. He answered, “I’ve learned a lot from the nail – its head keeps it from going too far.”

It might’ve helped if David had reached in his pocket and grabbed a nail. But that’s not what he grabs. **”So David sent and inquired about the woman.”**

And you can imagine the rationalizations that began spinning in his head.

J Allan Peterson writes, **”There is nothing wrong with happening to see a beautiful woman bathing. Nothing wrong with recognizing her God-given physical attractiveness and charm. Nothing wrong with an involuntary rapid pulse beat, a surge of red-blooded manhood, an inner whisper, “Wow!” But now the struggle begins, the struggle with his fantasies, his flesh, his faith, and his future.”**

And someone said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.” David has committed adultery with another man’s wife. It’s a deed not even the king can undo. Its consequences are going to haunt him forever.

FB Meyer writes in his biography on David, **”One brief spell of passionate indulgence, and then... his character blasted irretrievably; his peace vanished; the foundations of his kingdom imperiled; the Lord displeased; and great occasion given to his enemies to blaspheme!”** One moment of

indiscretion can topple a lifetime of achievement. David's momentary fling shapes the rest of his life.

Of course that's not what David thinks. He assumes come morning light all will be forgotten. Life will be back to normal. But verse 5 proves otherwise, **"And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I am with child."**

Now David has a real problem on his hands - and a choice he has to make. The king can *confess* or *conceal*. He can admit his sin, or plot to cover it up.

I read recently about a new product on the market called *"Audio Ally"*. For \$9 you can buy a cassette tape with various background noises – *a dentist office - an auto garage - an airport* – nine noises in all. You play the tape when you call your employer to tell him you can't come to work. The noise substantiates the lie you tell. *"Well, boss I'm fogged in at the San Francisco airport. I should be back tomorrow..."* as airport and airplane noises are playing in the background.

It's amazing the extremes to which a proud person will go to cover up their sin. And nowhere is this better illustrated than in the life of David. The king commits adultery - then adds to his deception - betrayal and eventually murder.

Here's how despicable David's been. Bathesheba's husband, Uriah, is a soldier on the frontlines – in combat for his king – *while the king is seducing his wife*.

When David realizes Uriah is under his command he sees a possible out...

“Then David sent to Joab, saying, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” And Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah had come to him, David asked how Joab was doing, and how the people were doing, and how the war prospered.” Obviously, none of this chitchat mattered to David. His concern was not the battle – but the baby. A child was undeniable proof of his adultery. He had deal with an illegitimate child.

And the easiest way to solve the problem was to make Uriah think Bathsheba’s baby was his son. “And David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.” In other words, *sleep in your own bed tonight. Cuddle up to your wife. You’ve been fighting on the frontlines - you deserve a pleasurable night.*

And I’m sure Bathsheba was coached to do her part. When David saw her naked he couldn’t resist. He figures Uriah won’t be able to either. Nine months later everyone, *but he and Bathsheba*, will think the baby belongs to Uriah...

“So Uriah departed from the king's house, and a gift of food from the king followed him.” David even sends the honeymoon couple room service.

“But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. So when they told David, saying, “Uriah did not go down to his house,” David said to Uriah, “Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?” Man, what’s up? Are you crazy?

And Uriah said to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my

house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife?

As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." Wow, what a noble attitude! Uriah was a better man than David. His words must've stung the king's conscience. How can I lay with *my foxy wife* while the troops sit in *a fox hole*? I won't enjoy *the heat of passion*, while my friends are in *the heat of battle*?

Verse 12 "Then David said to Uriah, "Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now when David called him, he ate and drank before him; and he made him drunk." Hey, this is David – "a man after God's own heart" - trying to compromise Uriah with boos.

David tries to loosen him up by making sure he gets plenty of the king's wine.

"And at evening he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house." Even while drunk as a skunk, Uriah has more integrity than David. Even after he's *loaded* he stays *devoted* to the troops. Uriah spends a second night with his men - not Bathsheba.

"In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die." Again, David is so calloused, he forces Uriah to hand-deliver his own death sentence.

"So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there were valiant men." He's

opposite their sharpshooters.

“Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And some of the people of the servants of David fell; and Uriah the Hittite died also.” It’s sad what happens to Uriah. He’s in a fierce fight. Everyone around him gets the withdrawal order, but him. Suddenly, he’s left alone - without any cover or support. He’s toast.

“Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war, and charged the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling the matters of the war to the king, if it happens that the king's wrath rises, and he says to you: 'Why did you approach so near to the city when you fought? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?'” Joab knows his tactics were poor battle strategy.

There was even a precedent. “Who struck Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman who cast a piece of a millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez?” The death of Abimelech is discussed in Judges 9...

Joab is worried he might get blamed for military malpractice. A general’s job is to safeguard the troops. He preps his servant. When David asks, “Why did you go near the wall?’ - then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.' ”

Understand the impact David’s murder of Uriah had on Joab. Recall, David had rebuked Joab when he killed Abner – now the king has done a worse deed. There were reasons to view Abner with suspicion, but Uriah was an innocent man.

Joab saw the hypocrisy of what David had done. Later he’ll

lose all respect for David. The erosion of admiration and honor must've began right here.

FB Meyer imagines Joab thinking, "This master of mine can sing psalms with the best; but when he wants a piece of dirty work done, he must come to me."

Verse 22 "So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent by him. And the messenger said to David, "Surely the men prevailed against us and came out to us in the field; then we drove them back as far as the entrance of the gate. The archers shot from the wall at your servants; and some of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city, and overthrow it.' So encourage him."

In other words, don't worry - accidents happen. Every war has some casualties. Outwardly, David is glib about Uriah's death - underneath he's jumping for joy.

"When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband." Notice God doesn't call her by name. It's not Bathsheba – it's "the wife of Uriah". God is accentuating the guilt of the adultery that's occurred.

What started out as a forbidden look - a peek... has now ended in murder.

"And when her mourning was over," How long Bathsheba wore black and shed crocodile tears we don't know, but it wasn't long. It would've created questions if a 9 month

pregnancy ended after they've been married just 6 months or 3 months.

So, **“David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son.”** And I'm sure David thought the whole sordid mess had been swept under the rug. It's over now. We can move on. Live happily ever after.

But Uriah is not the only person who fails to cooperate with David's ruse. The last line tells us, **“But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.”**

Hey, you can pull the wool over the eyes of the pastor eyes, your friends' eyes, even your spouse's eyes - but you can't fool the Lord. Luke 12:2 tells us, **“There is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.”**

Chapter 12 takes place about a year later. Bathsheba was now queen. A baby had been born. David was on the throne, but the king is far from a happy camper.

The previous year had been the worst of his life. His conscience had tormented him. The shame and guilt – the conviction of God – had driven him to the brink of insanity. His secret sin formed a cloud that blocked out the light of God's love.

David wrote of this experience in Psalm 32:2-3, **“When I kept silent, my bones grew old though my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer.”**

In verse 1 the Lord deals with David. **“Then the LORD sent Nathan to David.”** Nathan was a prophet of God. Some

people believed he authored 2 Samuel.

“And he came to him, and said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds.

But the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him.” The little lamb was more like a cherished household pet.

“And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.”

So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity." This is an atrocity. This is hideous. No such act of aggravated avarice and malicious cruelty will be excused in David's kingdom. The perpetrator will be punished.

David's words also prove he knew his Bible. Exodus 22:1, "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep." That's why David wanted the man restored fourfold.

Yet David is proof, just knowing the Bible doesn't purify a heart.

Verse 7 “**Then Nathan said to David...**” Though we’re not told this, I picture the prophet seething with righteous anger – stretching out his long boney index finger toward the king – just before he thunders, “**You are the man!**” *You took the ewe!* Suddenly, the truth cold-cocks David right in the jaw!

“**Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah.**

And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!” Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight?

You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.”

God is accusing David of thanklessness. This is interesting – David is guilty of lust, deceit, greed, pride, murder... but the sin God addresses first is ingratitude.

Hey, I believe behind every sin is a spirit of thanklessness. God is so good to us! We thank Him by obedience. Rebellion, disobedience is sheer ingratitude.

This is why the best deterrent to sin is a heart overflowing with thanksgiving. The more grateful you are to God the more you’ll want to live pleasing to Him.

David’s punishment is spelled out in verse 10, “**Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house** (and never is a very long time), **because you have despised Me,**

and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.”

This is a heavy penalty. Because David broke up Uriah’s family, God will break up David’s family. His own sons will be at odds with each other and their father.

According to Exodus 22 and David’s own words - the owner of the ewe lamb in Nathan’s parable - should repay fourfold for his thievery. Four of David’s sons die violently - the newborn of David and Bathsheba, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.

"Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; 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.

For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun." In other words, David’s wives will be violated *in broad daylight*. Years later, when the king’s son, Absalom, rebels against his father, and launches a coup - he runs David out of town, takes his throne, and his harem, and defiles his father’s wives.

He sets up a tent on the roof of the palace so all Israel sees his adultery.

Verse 13 “So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." David had sinned against Bathsheba – against Uriah – against their family – against his own wives and his family – against the nation... but what mattered most was his sin had broken the heart of his God. He says, “I have sinned against the LORD.”

A fuller account of David’s confession is recorded in Psalms

32, 38, and 51.

“Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.”

If we come to Him with a repentant heart, God will always forgive our sin, but forgiveness of sin doesn’t guarantee the removal of all sin’s consequences.

I’ve seen people come to God hoping to walk away scot-free. Their desire is to shirk responsibility for what they’ve done. But proof of genuine repentance is a willingness to own my sin – take responsibility for its consequences. A repentant attitude says, “Lord, forgive me, and help me repair the damage I’ve caused.”

“Then Nathan departed to his house.”

The cost of David’s sin was the death of his son. Verse 15 tells us, “And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill.” Notice, again, he doesn’t say “*Bathsheba*” – but “*Uriah’s wife*”. God is making a point.

Notice, God usually heals. But here, God strikes the child with a disease. He makes the child sick. “David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. So the elders of his house arose and went to him, to raise him up from the ground. But he would not, nor did he eat food with them.” David refuses food until the fate of his child is decided.

If there’s an opportunity for prayer to affect the situation David wants to pray. He isn’t just nonchalantly saying, “The

Lord's will be done..." Obviously, David believes in the power of prayer. He's going to pray as long as there's a chance.

"Then on the seventh day it came to pass that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, "Indeed, while the child was alive, we spoke to him, and he would not heed our voice.

How can we tell him that the child is dead? He may do some harm!" David has refused food. He's done nothing but pray for this child six days. His servants are afraid if they tell the king his child is dead - he'll come unglued – he'll snap!

What should they do? Verse 19 "When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead."

So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate.

Then his servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food." David mourns while the child is sick, but once he dies, *the king arises - changes clothes - worships the Lord - and orders dinner*. It's time to move on.

David explains his amazing turn-around in verse 22, "And he said, "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me,

that the child may live?' But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Notice, David's statement of faith - he believes that a young child who dies before he has the opportunity to express his faith is destined for heaven.

Hey, if you've lost a child – and some of you have – you need to remember that as much as you want them back they're now with Jesus. They're in a better place. A blissful place – a beautiful place - a bountiful place. Who knows the hardship and pain they were spared by their early departure from this cruel, ugly world.

And don't forget the sweet reunion that awaits you and your child.

Verse 24 **"Then David comforted Bathsheba his wife..."** Other than the initial reporting of her name this is the first time the biblical writer calls her **"Bathsheba."**

He uses her name now that she's emerged out from under the cloud of sin.

"And (David) went in to her and lay with her. So she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. Now the LORD loved him..." Here's amazing grace in action. God chooses to bless a marriage born in sin. He gives David another son that the LORD loves. Sin does have its consequences - but once dealt with, God can take even a person's sin – even an act of adultery and murder - and turn it into good.

"Now the LORD loved him, and He sent word by the hand of Nathan the prophet: So he called his name Jedidiah, because

of the LORD.”

“Jedidiah” means “*beloved of the Lord*”. I would’ve named one of our boys, Jedidiah – but Kathy didn’t want me to call him “Jed”. I still like that name!

Solomon grows up to be David’s successor, and the builder of the Temple.

Verse 26 “Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the people of Ammon, and took the royal city. And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, “I have fought against Rabbah, and I have taken the city's water supply.

Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called after my name.”

So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, fought against it, and took it. Then he took their king's crown from his head. Its weight was a talent of gold, with precious stones. And it was set on David's head.

Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance.” But here’s the point, David now goes out to battle... where a king belongs. No more idleness. No more springs breaks. No more bathing beauties. He’s back to the battle.

“And he brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them cross over to the brick works.

So he did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.” Where trouble at home has been brewing...

Understand, during his one-night stand with Bathsheba, David had some older kids. They witnessed their father's mistakes. *Bathsheba-Gate* blew up in their faces. I'm sure the monarch's critics had picked on them as well as the king.

These older kids lost a respect for their dad - he was never able to win back.

David's sin destroyed the moral underpinnings in his family. You begin to see a family gutted of virtue and morality in the sordid story recorded in 2 Samuel 13.

It's was said, "David's night of pleasure became a nightmare of pain."

David had many wives, so his palace was filled with half-brothers and half-sisters. Like the Brady Bunch, David had a blended family, and there were problems. The only battle David failed to win was the rearing of his family.

Chapter 13 makes more sense with a refresher of David's family tree.

David's oldest son, Amnon, was sired through a wife named Ahinoam. Everyone knew Amnon was the heir to David's throne. But he had two other children by a woman named Maacah – Absalom and his sister, Tamar...

Chapter 13 "After this Absalom the son of David had a lovely sister, whose name was Tamar (which means "palm" – perhaps it spoke of her long legs and model's figure); and Amnon the son of David loved her." - An incestuous desire.

"Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick; for she was a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her." Amnon may have made a few

passes Tamar quickly spurned. Amnon hated being rebuffed.

“But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother. Now Jonadab was a very crafty man. And he said to him, "Why are you, the king's son, becoming thinner day after day? Will you not tell me?"

Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."

So 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, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me food, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat it from her hand.' " This is an awful plot. This Jonadab sows seeds of destruction.

“Then Amnon (following Jonadab’s suggestion) lay down and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let Tamar my sister come and make a couple of cakes for me in my sight, that I may eat from her hand." Amnon has no shame. He even involves his father in his wicked plot.

And it seems to be an indictment against David that no red flags went up. He wasn’t even suspicious. It shows how distant he was from the heart of his kids.

“And David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Now go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." David plays right into Amnon’s evil hands.

“So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was lying down. Then she took flour and kneaded it, made cakes

in his sight, and baked the cakes. And she took the pan and placed them out before him, but he refused to eat.

Then Amnon said, "Have everyone go out from me." And they all went out from him." Tamar must've been suspicious, but she was under orders from the king.

"Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them to Amnon her brother in the bedroom. Now when she had brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister."

And she answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing! And I, where could I take my shame? And as for you, you would be like one of the fools in Israel.

Now therefore, please speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you." To avoid a rape, Tamar pleads for Amnon to ask David for her hand in marriage.

"However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her." She tried to resist his advances, but she was overpowered.

And here's the irony, once the deed was done, Amnon treated his sister with disdain. Verse 15 says, "Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, 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, "Arise, be gone!"

Amnon uses Tamar to gratify sexual appetites - *then treats*

her like trash.

And girls that's the attitude of any boy who wants to take away your purity without entering into a marital commitment. He pleads. He promises. He tells you he loves you - *until* you give in. Once he gets what he wants he throws *you* away.

Once you've been conquered, he runs off to the next challenge. You end up nothing but a notch on his belt. If he really loved you he'd been willing to wait.

The truth is the boy never *loved you*. He *used you* to gratify his lusts. And sadly, Amnon's crime against Tamar gets repeated thousands of times each Friday night.

Verse 16 is the cry of a woman who's been shamed by her brother. "So she said to him, "No, indeed! This evil of sending me away is worse than the other that you did to me." But he would not listen to her." She expects him to apologize – to make amends – to do something to restore her dignity. She is a princess of Israel.

"Then he called his servant who attended him, and said, "Here! Put this woman out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her." She was used - now spurned.

"Now she had on a robe of many colors, for the king's virgin daughters wore such apparel. And his servant put her out and bolted the door behind her." Her robe was the equivalent of a purity ring - a symbol of a young lady's virginity.

"Then Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that was on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly." And when Tamar's brother, Absalom, saw the torn robe he knew what had happened.

There was only one reason why his sister would tear her cherished robe.

“Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this thing to heart."

So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.” Absalom was trying to console his sister. Help her cope with the crime committed against her.

But he doesn't follow his own advice. Absalom takes this to heart.

Verse 21 “But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry.” But that's it! There's no record of David stepping in and punishing Amnon? He got angry, but took no action. I believe David was so riddled with personal guilt over his own sexual failure he had a hard time punishing a similar sin in his son.

His sin with Bathsheba stripped him of his moral authority to lead his family. He lost the moral high ground. When that happens, you invite anarchy into your home.

“And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.” A deep-seated hatred of Amnon filled the heart of his half-brother, Absalom, and worse... a simmering, seething bitterness toward his own father also began to develop in Absalom.

Notice verse 23, “And it came to pass, after two full years...” David had two years to deal with Amnon, but nothing happened. Absalom had a right to be mad.

It's a parent's job to provide spiritual and moral direction for the family. When a parent sends contradictory signals - or becomes paralyzed by his own guilt - chaos and confusion will reign among the kids. Resentments will form.

“And it came to pass, after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baal Hazor, which is near Ephraim; so Absalom invited all the king's sons.”

Absalom had a right to be mad, but he had no right to do what he does next.

“Then Absalom came to the king and said, "Kindly note, 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 now, lest we be a burden to you." Then he urged him, but he would not go; and he blessed him.

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 urged him; so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.” Amnon duped David in his rape of Tamar. Now Absalom uses David to set up Amnon's murder.

It's amazing to me that a man as wise and as sensitive to God as David was so blind to the problems in his own family... *or perhaps he wanted to be blind.*

“Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, "Watch now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon!' then kill him. Do not be

afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant."

So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded.

Then all the king's sons arose, and each one got on his mule and fled.

And it came to pass, while they were on the way, that news came to David, saying, "Absalom has killed all the king's sons, and not one of them is left!"

So the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the ground, and all his servants stood by with their clothes torn. Then Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, "Let not my lord suppose they have killed all the young men, the king's sons, for only Amnon is dead. For by the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.

Now therefore, let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead. For only Amnon is dead."

Then Absalom fled. And the young man who was keeping watch lifted his eyes and looked, and there, many people were coming from the road on the hillside behind him. And Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the king's sons are coming; as your servant said, so it is." So it was, as soon as he had finished speaking, that the king's sons indeed came, and they lifted up their voice and wept.

Also the king and all his servants wept very bitterly.

But Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud,

king of Geshur.” Talmai was Absalom’s grandfather. The Canaanite father of his mom, Maacah.

“And David mourned for his son every day. So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years. And King David longed to go to Absalom.

For he had been comforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead.”

Notice, verse 39 tells us, “King David longed to go to Absalom” ... but he didn’t.

But why didn’t he? David is the king! And the king can do whatever he likes.

David is an irony! He’s *too weak to discipline his kids*, but once they fail he’s *too proud to forgive them*. He doesn’t want to take responsibility for his parenting on either end... Hey, we need to be just the opposite. Strong enough to discipline and lead - then humble enough to forgive if our kids ever stray from the path.