

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning

Week 23 (May 29-June 4, 2016)

Many Christians do not understand the continuing **consequences** of sins even though they have been forgiven. Because of that, they often neglect to take their sins seriously, rationalizing that God will forgive whatever they do. This week, we will begin to see the ongoing consequences of David's sin with Bathsheba. God loves **you**, but He hates your **sin**.

Sunday, May 29 (read 2 Samuel 13:1-7)

In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. (2 Samuel 13:1)

Trouble comes to David's family when his oldest son, Amnon (see 2 Samuel 3:2) falls in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom, David's third son (3:3) by a different wife (v. 1). The attraction is based on sight alone. Because Amnon feels powerless to start a physical relationship with his half sister (v. 2), he turns to his shrewd cousin Jonadab for advice, and the two of them come up with an evil plan (v. 3-5). King David falls into the trap set by his son and sends his beautiful daughter into harm's way (v. 6-7). We will follow the tragic story tomorrow.

Monday, May 30 (read 2 Samuel 13:8-14)

But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister." (2 Samuel 13:11)

David, unknowingly, has sent his daughter to the home of a sexual predator to prepare a meal for him (v. 7). Tamar willingly obeys her father and bakes bread in the sight of her half brother (v. 8). She brings it to him, but he refuses to eat (v. 9a). After sending everyone away from the house, Amnon lures Tamar into his bedroom under the pretense of eating the bread from her hand (v.9b-10). That's when he grabs his half sister and, despite her pleading, proceeds to rape her (v. 12-14). This story will be only the beginning of tragedies within the family of King David as a result of his sin with Bathsheba. God forgives sins, but the consequences of those sins can linger for a long time!

Tuesday, May 31 (read 2 Samuel 13:15-22)

*He called his personal servant and said, "Get **this woman** out of here and bolt the door after her." (2 Samuel 13:17, emphasis mine)*

Amnon's **perceived** love turns into **hate** following his dastardly act with Tamar, so he orders her out of his house (v. 15). Again she pleads with her half brother, but he refuses to listen (v.16). I printed v. 17 above, because I am amazed at the disrespect a man will give to the woman he has violated. The victim loses her given name and becomes "**this woman**" to Amnon. (You probably remember the same scenario with President Clinton who used the same phrase, "this woman," in the 1990's.) Tamar goes into mourning as she returns to her full brother's house (v.18-19). Absalom does not confront Amnon at this time, but he nurses a grudge against his half brother for disgracing his innocent sister (v. 20-22). Unspoken hatred can only lead to a disaster, as we will see in our next devotion.

Wednesday, June 1 (read 2 Samuel 13:23-29)

But Absalom urged him, so he sent with him Amnon and the rest of the king's sons. (2 Samuel 13:27)

Earlier in his life, David prayed over **every** decision, but now he seems to follow the dictates of his children without consulting his Father. Learning from his mistakes, we need to take no action without committing it to prayer. In today's text, Absalom is ready to avenge the rape of his sister Tamar, so he plans a meal for the entire family. He is probably aware that his dad will not take time from his duties as king to attend a family banquet, so his evil scheme works to perfection (v. 23-27). Absalom orders his men to kill Amnon after his half brother becomes intoxicated with wine (v. 28). It is a warning to us that excessive drinking can open the door to tragedy. This party ends abruptly with the murder of Amnon, and the rest of the king's sons flee (v. 29). We'll continue the sad story with tomorrow's devotion.

Thursday, June 2 (read 2 Samuel 13:30-39)

And the spirit of the king longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death. (2 Samuel 13:39)

In today's text, David receives a much-exaggerated account of Amnon's murder, and he goes into mourning (v. 30-31). Jonadab consoles his uncle, but he stops short of confessing that the whole mess is his fault (v. 32-35; remember v. 3-5?). It is strange that the feelings of Tamar are not mentioned in the account of this event. David mourns over his guilty sons, but it appears that he does nothing to console his innocent daughter. Absalom flees to another country, but David's heart goes with him (v. 37). After three years, the king is ready to forgive Absalom for murdering Amnon (v. 38-39). That's going to lead to another consequence in the life of David.

Friday, June 3 (read 2 Samuel 14:1-14)

Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take away life; instead, He devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from Him. (2 Samuel 14:14)

In today's text, David's army general, Joab devises a plan to bring Absalom back from his exile. He finds a "wise woman" to go to the king with a fabricated message that he, himself, has made up (v. 1-3). You can read the story for yourself, but I want to major on the printed verse above. In His love for mankind, God **uses many ways and methods** to bring us back from the exile of sin. Of course, **salvation** is found only in the Person of Jesus Christ who gave His life as a ransom for our sins (John 14:6, Acts 4:12). God doesn't want anyone to be lost (2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 2:4), so He reaches out in various ways to those who are estranged from Him. Marvel at the wonderful grace of Jesus as you rejoice in His presence today!

Saturday, June 4 (read 2 Samuel 14:15-33)

Absalom lived for two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face. (2 Samuel 14:28)

I can hardly wait to see **our** King's face (see 1 John 3:1-3). Only then will I be free from the desires of the flesh that battle against God's will. Read today's text and take note of the wisdom of a godly, but human king (v. 15-20) as well as the pride of Joab (v. 21-22) and the physical appeal of Absalom (v. 25-26). The king's son devises another evil plan to get the attention of Joab in order that he may be brought into the presence of his father, King David (v.28-32). The plan works, but, unfortunately, it only sets in motion the **real** plan of Absalom, to take the kingdom from his father. That will be the subject of next week's devotions, but do not lose sight of the fact that this entire sequence of tragic events was set in motion by one night of indiscretion when David intentionally gazed upon the naked body of Bathsheba and then satisfied his lust with evil actions.