

# Second Samuel

## Lesson 13

*“You Got What You Loved, You Hated What You Got”*

### D. Amnon, David’s Great Frustration (13:1-39)

#### 1. Amnon Violates Tamar (13:1-13)

##### a) Amnon’s Request (13:1-6)

With the page turn to chapter 13, the compiler moves down in time from the birth of Solomon at least a decade or more. In this story, David’s trouble continues with the story of his children, Amnon, Tamar, and Absalom. No doubt, this story is selected by the compiler to present the partial fulfillment of the LORD’s prophecy to David due to his adulterous sin with Bathsheba. In chapter 12:11-12, the LORD prophesied to David, *“Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.’”* The story with Amnon and Tamar fulfills the first part, which says, *“Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household....”*

We now come to the story in chapter 13, verse 1. *“Now it was after this that Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David loved her. <sup>2</sup> Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill, for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her. <sup>3</sup> But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David’s brother; and Jonadab was a very shrewd man. <sup>4</sup> He said to him, ‘O son of the king, why are you so depressed morning after morning? Will you not tell me?’ Then Amnon said to him, ‘I am in love with Tamar, the sister of my brother Absalom.’” <sup>5</sup> Jonadab then said to him, ‘Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill; when your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some food to eat, and let her prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat from her hand.’” <sup>6</sup> So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, ‘Please let my sister Tamar come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand.’”*

As chapter 12 ended, Solomon was born in David’s tenth year as king at the age of forty. In chapter 3:2-5 we learned that six sons were born to David in Hebron during his first seven years as king. The passage in chapter 3 says, *“Sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; <sup>3</sup> and his second, Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Gesbur; <sup>4</sup> and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; <sup>5</sup> and the sixth, Ithream, by David’s wife Eglah. These were born to David at Hebron.”*

And so, from this, we discover that Amnon was David’s firstborn son. Absalom, also mentioned in this story, was David’s third son. From our story in chapter 13, we discover that Absalom had a sister named Tamar. We do not know if Tamar is older or younger than Absalom. We do not know if she was born in Hebron or to David while he lived in Ziklag. We know that at the time of Solomon’s birth, neither Amnon, Absalom, nor any of the other four sons of David were any older than ten years of age. Amnon, the first, might have been ten, and Absalom a little younger. We must remember that Amnon was a half-brother to Absalom and Tamar, who were full-blood siblings with David as their father and Maacah as their mother. Amnon’s mother was Ahinoam. It is quite possible that a young ten-year-old boy named Amnon could be in love with his half-sister, but it is highly doubtful that infatuation at this level would not need a little more age on Amnon, at least five years, if not ten years.

Jonadab was the cousin of all of David’s children. He was the nephew of David’s brother Shimeah, the thirdborn son of David’s father, Jesse.

Tamar was still a virgin. The wording in this passage says, “*Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill, for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her.*” Therefore, it seems that Amnon was already sexually active with women. It also shows the sin of Amnon because the LORD’s law strictly says, “*You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s wife; it is your father’s nakedness.*”<sup>9</sup> *The nakedness of your sister, either your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter, whether born at home or born outside, their nakedness you shall not uncover. . . .*<sup>11</sup> *The nakedness of your father’s wife’s daughter, born to your father, she is your sister, you shall not uncover her nakedness.*” (Leviticus 18:8-11) The Scripture also says, “*Cursed is he who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or of his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’*” (Deuteronomy 27:22). Amnon indeed was without excuse, for all the nation of Israel heard the law read every seventh year on the Sabbatical Year. Jonadab had no excuse; he was a full-grown man. Amnon must have been a man by this time too. Jonadab, Amnon’s cousin, helped with the evil plan to seduce Tamar. Even David was tricked into complying with the evil request.

#### **b) Tamar’s Rejection (13:7-14)**

The evil plan seems to have gone just as Jonadab planned. David heard Amnon's request, and the king's instruction told Tamar to visit her brother. Verse 7. “*Then David sent to the house for Tamar, saying, ‘Go now to your brother Amnon’s house, and prepare food for him.’*”<sup>8</sup> *So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house, and he was lying down. And she took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes.*<sup>9</sup> *She took the pan and dished them out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, ‘Have everyone go out from me.’ So everyone went out from him.*<sup>10</sup> *Then Amnon said to Tamar, ‘Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand.’ So Tamar took the cakes which she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon.*<sup>11</sup> *When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, ‘Come, lie with me, my sister.’*<sup>12</sup> *But she answered him, ‘No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this disgraceful thing!*<sup>13</sup> *As for me, where could I get rid of my reproach? And as for you, you will be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you.’*<sup>14</sup> *However, he would not listen to her; since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.”*

Tamar knew better than to allow Amnon to violate her. However, Tamar gives Amnon an out when she says, “*Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you.*” Did Tamar think that David could overrule the law of the LORD in some way for Amnon to have Tamar? I think not. I believe Tamar was desperate to get away from her brother, and she thought if she could distract Amnon by convincing him that he could get permission to take her, it would have given her enough time to get away safely. No doubt, she knew her father would disagree. But, it was not a suggestion that Amnon even considered. He had another thing on his mind.

#### **c) Amnon’s Repulsion (13:14-19)**

In one kind of sin, an interesting thing occurs. After successfully sinning with a person, you begin to hate that person deep within. And so it is with Amnon’s repulsion of Tamar. Verse 15, “*Then Amnon hated her with a very great hatred; for 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 away!’*”<sup>16</sup> *But she said to him, ‘No, because this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you have done to me!’ Yet he would not listen to her.*<sup>17</sup> *Then he called his young man who attended him and said, ‘Now throw this woman out of my presence, and lock the door behind her.’*<sup>18</sup> *Now she had on a long-sleeved garment; for in this manner the virgin daughters of the king dressed themselves in robes. Then his attendant took her out and locked the door behind her.*<sup>19</sup> *Tamar put ashes on her head and tore her long-sleeved garment which was on her; and she put her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went.”*

Tacitus wrote, “It is the characteristic of human nature to hate one whom you have injured.” Tacitus was a Roman historian who lived from AD 56 to AD 120. He saw the great expansion of the Church firsthand and most likely had been in the presence of the Apostle Paul from time to time. He would have been about fourteen years of age when Titus destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem. His writings seem to be accurate in every detail. His understanding of human nature is spot on. Amnon

was not in love with Tamar; he had an animal lust for Tamar. His lust was followed by remorse. His remorse was followed by hatred. Out the door, she must go, and the bar locked behind her.

Why did Tamar challenge Amnon's forceful instruction to send her away? What if she was pregnant with his baby? She did nothing wrong. He did all the wrong. He raped her. But if she were sent away with a child, the people would have thought she was a woman of great sin herself. She needed to stay. The people needed to know he was the sinner, not her. His private offense would become her public dishonor.

Thrown through the door, Tamar drenched herself with ashes from the very fire she had cooked Amnon's meal. She tore her clothing in a sign of grief. If David could have foreseen all this, he would not have taken Bathsheba the way he did. This act came because of David's act with Bathsheba and his premeditated murder of Uriah. Indeed, David's folly was followed by shame. Amnon's folly was followed by shame. For Tamar, she could not hold back tears of grief.