

Day 309 - SUNDAY: December 10th

2 Samuel 13

2 Samuel 13:1-39 NKJV

After this Absalom the son of David had a lovely sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. 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. 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.'" Then Amnon 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." And David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Now go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." 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. 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." But 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." However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her. 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!" 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. Then he called his servant who attended him, and said, "Here! Put this woman out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her." 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. 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 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. But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. 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. 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. 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. 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.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "'The Tamar/Amnon/Absalom story is not simply a tale of lust and a brother's revenge. Amnon, as David's oldest son (2 Samuel 3:2-5), was first in line for the throne. Kileab [or Chileab] had apparently died [as Absalom will act as heir apparent on his return from exile following Amnon's death, see 2 Samuel 15:1-3], so Absalom was next in line after Amnon. Rivalry already existed between Amnon and Absalom! We need to understand the political implications of the events to fully understand the story" (Lawrence Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, 1991, note on 2 Samuel 13).

David, by his sin, had set a horrible example for his children—that of a man unable to govern his passions. We now find Amnon, David's firstborn, unable to govern *his* passions. He is in "love" with his virgin

half-sister Tamar, David's daughter by Maacah. David's only daughter recorded in Scripture, Tamar is the full sister of Absalom.

Marriage to a sister or half-sister is forbidden (Leviticus 18:11). So Amnon's infatuation cannot be satisfied. Yet he is so obsessively consumed with his longing for her that he visibly loses weight. Upon discovering the reason for this, his crafty cousin Jonadab encourages Amnon to pursue his wicked desire by using trickery to get Tamar alone with him. The plot succeeds, but she refuses his urging her to lie with him, suggesting rather that he ask for her hand of the king—no doubt a ploy to escape the situation, as she certainly knows that David cannot legally grant such a request. Undaunted, Amnon forces himself upon her. The words "he forced her" here "can also mean, 'he humiliated her.' Victims of rape sometimes speak more strongly of their humiliation than of the physical pain they were made to suffer" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on 2 Samuel 13:14). Of course, it was undoubtedly physically painful—but the psychological anguish she suffered was likely much worse.

There is a strong distinction between love and lust. The Scriptures reveal the true characteristics of love. Love is kind. It does not seek its own gratification. It does not think evil. It does not rejoice in iniquity (1 Corinthians 13). In contrast, lust requires immediate gratification. It is totally contrary to the way of love. Amnon's "love" reveals itself for what it is—perverted *lust*—in the rape and in his attitude immediately following it. Amnon now *hates* his sister. Once his lust and his desire to conquer were satisfied, there was a big letdown as he realized he had no real love for Tamar. "The sudden revulsion is easily accounted for; the atrocity of his conduct, with all the feelings of shame, remorse, and dread of exposure and punishment, now burst upon his mind, rendering the presence of Tamar intolerably painful to him" (*Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary*, note on verse 15). Perhaps he even irrationally blames her for what she has "made him do."

Amnon tells her to "be gone" (verse 15). But she does not. Defiled and with no apparent witnesses to what has happened, she will be left shamed and destitute, with no prospect for future marriage. Amnon, however, will hear none of it. He summons a servant and orders him to put her out. Tamar is devastated by this horrific ruining of her life. She is overcome with grief and despair. After telling Absalom of her plight, her brother encourages her to keep the matter to herself, which she does, while he plots revenge. Absalom certainly cares for his sister—later naming his own daughter after her (2 Samuel 14:27). But remember that, secondarily, politics were probably also involved in this matter.

Absalom now has what he perhaps reasons to be a legitimate reason to dispose of Amnon and become heir to the throne.

David, though becoming extremely angry on hearing of the matter, takes no action at all. As to why this is we can only guess. First of all, there may have been some confusion in the case since, upon Absalom's urgings, Tamar did not make the matter public. Secondly, while seizing a betrothed woman and having sexual relations with her against her will was a capital crime punishable by death under Israel's civil code, the death penalty was not mandated for seizing an *unbetrothed* woman and having sexual relations with her. The preset punishment in this case was the payment of a bride price and a forced marriage for life if the father so deemed (see Deuteronomy 22:28-29). Could that be allowed here? After all, Abraham being married to Sarah, his half sister, might seem to serve as precedent (compare Genesis 20:12). But since the time of Moses, incest with even a half-sister was punishable by the death of both participants (Leviticus 20:17).

Yet if it could be ascertained that the woman was unwilling in the act of incest, just as in the matter of the rape of a betrothed woman, she would not be punished—only the man. It is possible that Tamar did not "cry out" when she was raped or was not heard (compare Deuteronomy

22:24). Furthermore, there was evidently no examination to determine that defilement had taken place. It would seem, however, that a thorough interrogation of those who had been sent out before the rape (compare 2 Samuel 13:9), might have yielded the essence of what had happened—perhaps some actually did hear a cry from Tamar but were afraid of retribution from Amnon. Remember that someone could only be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Tamar was only one witness if Amnon refused to testify against himself—although evidence itself could also be considered a "witness" in a matter, as the New Testament makes clear (compare 1 John 5:7-8, NRSV).

Nevertheless, David, as already stated, does nothing—he apparently does not even investigate the matter. Perhaps he doesn't want to shame his own household—particularly with a possible lack of needed evidence. Or it may just be that, as with many parents, David is trying to protect his son from the consequences of his actions. Indeed, David displays an apparent unwillingness to appropriately discipline his children, as can be seen even at the end of his life in the example of Adonijah (see 1 Kings 1:6). And even others of his relatives, such as Joab, sometimes literally get away with murder.

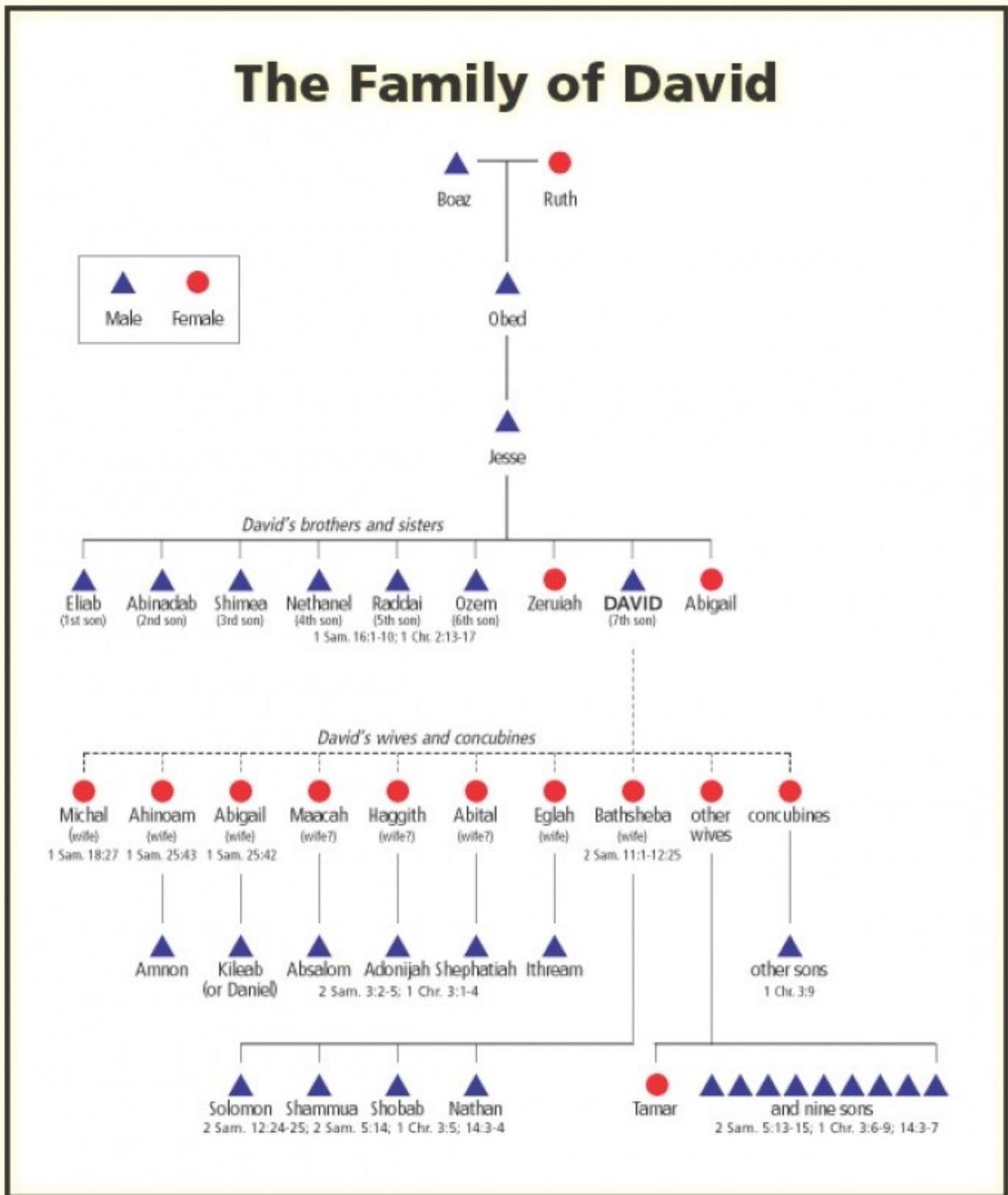
Of course, none of this explains why David took no action on Tamar's behalf, given the normally deep-seated sense of protection a father feels for a daughter. Perhaps David was giving special consideration to Amnon as firstborn and heir apparent. Or it could be that David, having been spared the death penalty in his own adultery and even murder, is unwilling to put his son to death for less. Although David had repented of his sins, he was probably still burdened with feelings of guilt. Often those who feel guilty are reluctant to take a strong moral stand, feeling they have lost their moral authority and would be hypocritical to take firm action. This often contributes to a downward moral spiral in families and nations. It may even be that David felt his own sin was

partly responsible for what happened, since one of its consequences was to be family infighting.

Remember, God had proclaimed that the sword would never depart from David's house (2 Samuel 12:10). And that sword first comes when, two years after Tamar's rape, Absalom finally exacts his revenge. David won't do anything about Amnon—but Absalom does. The deed completed, David's oldest son—an incestuous rapist—is dead. And the one who is now his oldest son is a fugitive from justice charged with murder.

Absalom flees the country to Geshur, northeast of the Sea of Galilee, receiving amnesty from the king there, Talmai, who is his grandfather on his mother's side (see 3:3). There he remains for three years. As David's grief over Amnon's death gradually subsides, he desires a restored relationship with Absalom but perhaps views it as inappropriate to pursue it anytime soon under the circumstances.

The Family of David



The Family of David” [END]

Verses 5 & 7 – The Hebrew word translated “meat” (NKJV) can simply be translated bread or food as it’s a general word for food and comes from the root word “to feed”.

This was a heavy chapter. What a sad awful story.