

2 Samuel Chapter 13 Commentary

2Sa 13:1 ¶ "And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2 And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do anything to her."

Ahinoam bore David's oldest son Amnon. David's third son was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, who was also mother to Tamar.

Tamar was an exceptionally beautiful woman, and much to be desired of men in fleshly lust. This is Amnon's problem. His sickness is the lust of the flesh. We know that it is lust of the flesh because we are told in scripture: **Ro 13:10 "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law."** Tamar is noted to be a virgin. Amnon could not do what he wanted to with her, because if he lay with her and took her virginity, she would have to change her attire from that of a virgin to one who was not a virgin, thus exposing him for his sin.

Herein, we see our very own inherit fallen nature, which lusts always after sin. We are not to yield to our nature affections in sin to cause the virgin, the church, to be seen differently than in her purity, and sanctity in Jesus Christ.

3 "But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man. 4 And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister. 5 And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand."

Amnon has a very subtil friend who recognizes that Amnon is sick and asks him what is the matter. Upon hearing of Amnon's lust for Tamar, he lays out a plan for Amnon to attain his goal and fulfill his fleshly desires. We notice that he does not counsel Amnon to do the right thing and ask the king for her hand in marriage. This alone tells us of the satanic nature of Jonadab.

There is one in this world that would proclaim to be our friend, Satan, and his minions, who will give us ways to fulfill the lusts of our heart's desires, without giving us **"thus saith the Lord."** He is not a true friend. He is just like Jonadab. He is very subtil, as noted in scripture in: **Ge 3:1 ¶ "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made."** As the serpent brought great sorrow and death upon mankind in the Garden of Eden, so the same shall be wrought here in this deceitful ploy of Jonadab and Amnon. We would add to these thoughts, Satan is always the father of subtility.

True friends will not give a means or excuse to commit sin to their true friends. Rather, they will counsel them to purge the heart, and mind, of these sinful desires. They will offer them support in regaining a healthy perspective by living a morally clean Christian life. They will accomplish this by telling them the cure is to go to God in repentance and prayer, asking for relief from the fleshly nature, and giving them godly counsel from the word of God. Many blessings are to be had by being a faithful follower of Jesus Christ, and building one another up in the Lord as seen in: **Jude 1:17-25; 17 "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. 20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and ever. Amen."**

6 "So, Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand. 7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him

meat. 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. 9 And she took a pan and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. 10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon, her brother. 11 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister. 12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly. 13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee. 14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. 15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone."

Amnon followed the advice of his subtil friend. He gets David to send Tamar to him, under the guise of her making cakes and feeding him, to bring his lustful desires to fruition. Tamar comes and makes cakes and Amnon sends everyone away so that he is alone with Tamar in his bedchamber. Amnon asks her to lie with him and she refuses. She explains that the sin would immediately be exposed, and she gives him the proper way to have his desires fulfilled, which was by asking King David to let them marry. He refuses to eat, refuses the right way to do things, and he takes her by force. He rapes his own sister. Then, we are told that he hates her, with a greater hate than the love he had for her before he sinned against her. Then, he sends her away in the shame that he has brought upon her. This is why we know that Amnon did not love Tamar, but simply was sick with the lust of the flesh. Had he truly loved her he would not have raped her nor sent her away.

Now, according to the law, Amnon would have to pay her dowry and marry her and could never put her away, seen in: **De 22:28-29; 28 "If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; 29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days."** This is another reason that tells us that Amnon is just filled with lust and not in love. If he was truly in love, he would have followed the law to start with, and he would have asked her hand in marriage.

Do you see that the way of falsehood, and deceit, is not the way that leads to a satisfied and peaceful heart and mind? Amnon has fulfilled his lustful desires and is totally unsatisfied. The same is true for the child of God. We cannot fulfill the lust of our flesh, in sinfulness, and find contentment and peace in our heart and mind. If the child of God sins willfully as Amnon has done, they are going to be conflicted in their conscience and have a very agitated spirit in their heart and mind.

Do you see that satisfying our fleshly lust in life has no reason nor merit? To willfully sin against God will always bring discontent, which is greater than what we thought would satisfy our lust originally. This is why the world continues to grow more and more sinful before God, because nothing they do will satiate their desires. The desires of the flesh are never satisfied, as seen in: **1Jo 2:16 "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."** Amnon was not satisfied when he fulfilled his lust of the flesh, and nobody will be satisfied in that way. We are also reminded of: **Pr 27:20 ¶ "Hell and destruction are never full; so, the eyes of man are never satisfied."**

However, we can have satisfaction in our hearts and minds, in living the Christian life to the full, as seen in: **Ps 65:4 "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."**

16 And she said unto him, There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. 17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her. 18 And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins appareled. Then his servant brought her out and bolted the door after her. 19 And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. 20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy

brother; regard not this thing. So, Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house. 21 ¶ But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth."

Tamar explains that sending her away is a disgrace that is worse than what he did to her. Amnon does not see reason and has her thrown out. Tamar now goes out disgraced, and she goes through the rituals of lost virginity with great mourning.

Absalom, her brother, asked her what had happened. Absalom tells her to not regard what has happened and to keep quiet about it. Wherefore, Tamar remains desolate in Absalom's house. She is desolate because her virginity has been taken and marriage to her refused. She can no longer go forth proudly wearing the robes of virginity.

King David hears what has happened and is very angry. However, we see that King David does not do anything about it. In this King David fails to follow through with the demand of the law, in which Amnon should have had to pay the dowry and marry her without the option of ever putting her away.

Thus, we see the beginning of the judicial judgment of God coming to pass, as given to King David in: **2Sa 12:11** *"Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house,"* We see evil in the house of David manifested by his eldest son raping one of his daughters, and King David does nothing about it. Not only is this a failure as king, but definitely a failure as a father.

22 "And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. **23** And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baalhazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons. **24** And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant. **25** And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. **26** Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee? **27** But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon, and all the king's sons go with him. **28** Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant. **29** And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded."

We see from these verses; Jonadab is not the only subtil one. Absalom hated Amnon for what he did to his sister. He waits two years and develops a scheme to kill Amnon. He tries to persuade King David to come, and bring all the family, to a celebration at his place. The king refuses. Absalom then asked specifically for Amnon to be sent. David asked him why, probably suspecting some mischief afoot. Finally, David concedes and sends Amnon, and all of David's other sons were there also. When Amnon has gotten drunken, Absalom has his servants kill him for what he did to Tamar.

We see in these verses more evil coming to the house of David, and personal vengeance taken, which is only going to increase the evil. Though we know these things are coming to King David's house as judicial judgment from God, this does not give us any license to do wrong, or seek our own vengeance, as we are told in: **Ro 12:19** *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."*

"Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled. 30 ¶ And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left. 31 Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent. 32 And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. 33 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 Amnon only is dead."

The other sons of David arose and started home. However, someone ran ahead of them and told King David that Absalom had slain all the king's sons. David immediately begins mourning as well as his household. Now, the subtil one, who put this whole scene in motion to begin with, tells King David: not all thy sons are dead but

Amnon only, because Absalom has killed him for raping and disgracing Tamar. He tells David to not believe the report that all his sons are dead.

Remember what we are told about talebearers in scripture: **Pr 18:8 ¶ "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly."** Certainly, King David experienced this from the words of the talebearer.

We acknowledge that had King David did the proper thing and made Amnon marry Tamar, which would have headed off this continued disaster in the house of David. Again, we see God's judicial judgments being brought to pass in the life of King David, at the expense of his family.

This is a reminder to us that we hear people say, my sin only affects me and no one else. This scripture certainly shows this is another lie from the devil. Sin has far reaching effects on many of those who are around it. Just remember how far reaching the sin of Adam was in disobeying God. It put all mankind under the penalty of death for sin.

34 "But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him. 35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is. 36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore."

Shortly, the sons of David show up and Jonadab, the subtil one, tells the king, see it is as I told you. Now, there is mourning and weeping all around. David and his sons weeping with joy that only Amnon was slain. And Everyone mourning for the death of Amnon, who was the eldest son of David and would have been the first in line to be king after David. Also, mourning now that according to the law, Absalom is under the death penalty. Death will come to Absalom, but in a very different way than the law demanded.

We point out here: had King David did his duty as prescribed by the law, seen in: **De 22:28-29; 28 "If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; 29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days."** the death of Amnon would not have happened. David should have made Amnon marry Tamar when he found out what happened. Because David did not do his fatherly duty, Absalom takes matters in his own hands and, in vengeful hatred, kills Amnon.

This is a reminder to all fathers to be protective of their sons, and especially their daughters, and do right by them. This is a reminder to all of God's children to do that which is right in the sight of the Lord, concerning all of God's commandments. If we do this, it will not leave an opening for the subtil one, the devil, to break in and cause more trouble than would happen with dealing with our sins properly when they happen.

37 "But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. 38 So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years. 39 And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead."

Because Absalom has committed willful murder, he cannot flee to a city of refuge and be safe. Wherefore, he flees out of the land of Israel to the land of Geshur, where his in-laws lived. Talmai was his grandfather on his mother's side of the family.

King David, who is comforted that Amnon is dead, mourns for his son Absalom every day. Why would David mourn for Absalom? He knows that if Absalom comes home, he should be dealt with and slain for murder. Also, David seems to have had a great affection for Absalom and wanted to go to him and bring him home, without punishing him according to the law. As we shall see later on, King David expects that Absalom will be king after him at this time.

This chapter is another display, that sin breeds more sin, and demonstrates the complete depravity of man without God. A warning to deal with our sins quickly, and properly, in accordance with **"thus saith the Lord."** Thus, we see that David's former sins of adultery and murder continue to haunt him, according to God's divine judicial consequences for committing them.

The same thing is true in our lives as a Christian. Though we be as King David and know our sins are forgiven eternally, the devil will keep bringing them up in our hearts and minds, hoping to distress us so badly that we

turn from following God. Also, we understand that when we sin against God, there will be a consequence of judicial judgment for that sin, here in time, as it is with King David.

Here is our blessed assurance, knowledge of our eternal forgiveness of sins, and the promise of eternal life, are the comfort of our distressed hearts and minds. Thank you, King Jesus, for your faithful finished work on the cross, which is so great a comfort to us day by day, through which comfort we can say: Hallelujah! Amen!