



AMNON'S INCEST AND DEATH

MEMORY VERSE: “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” (2 Samuel 13:12).

TEXT: 2 Samuel 13:1-39; 14:1-33

The previous chapter recorded God’s stern pronouncement of judgment on King David for his dual iniquities of adultery and murder. He was dealt the full weight of judgment because he had given the adversaries of the Lord occasion to blaspheme His name through his acts of wickedness. “Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; (the Lord said), because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife... Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun” (2 Samuel 12:10,11). This chapter begins with a series of calamities that befell David in confirmation of God’s judgment designed to chastise him for his moral missteps and utter wickedness. People of God should take heed to their ways, remain righteous and holy to avoid unpleasant consequences which may happen long after the evil had been committed. As wayfaring pilgrims, they should travel this road to heaven and “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Hebrews 12:28).

God’s chastisement of David for his sins reveals, one, His impartiality because He is not a respecter of persons (2 Chronicles 19:7; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11); two, He will not allow the wicked to go scot-free (Proverbs 11:21); and three, He is “of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Habakkuk 1:13).

The two chapters under consideration reveal Amnon's incest with her half-sister, Tamar, Absalom's fatal revenge and flight from justice as well as his recall through Joab's crafty counsel to a wise woman from Tekoah.

Question 1: What lessons can believers derive from God's chastisement of David for his sins?

AMNON'S LUST AND INCEST (2 Samuel 13:1-21; Leviticus 18:9,11; 20:17; Deuteronomy 27:22; Ezekiel 22:11; Mark 6:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1; Romans 15:4)

Amnon was caught in a web of sin and bond of iniquity. His debauchery had become uncontrollable that he could not gratify his lust and base passion elsewhere except in her sister. He lost every sense of decency and self-control and sold himself to immorality. "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 Samuel 13:1). The love, so-called here, is nothing but lust of the basest sort. Sinful as it is to lust after other women, it is utterly vile to have this kind of affection towards a blood relation. Amnon got consumed with it till he fell sick (2 Samuel 13:2). An adulterer will hunt for the precious soul and would not rest till he had taken his prey (Proverbs 6:26).

As an illegal carnal relationship between two people who are genetically or closely related, incest is squarely condemned in the Scripture and generally considered a taboo in most cultures. Under the Mosaic Law, it was one of the abominable sins that the children of Israel must abhor (Leviticus 18:9,11; 20:17; Ezekiel 22:11). In fact, a curse was placed on people who engaged in it: "Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen" (Deuteronomy 27:22).

Question 2: Explain the evil of incest.

Lust is a strong source of all kinds of temptation. The Scripture warns: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own

lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:13,15). As Amnon allowed lust to overwhelm his mind, Satan quickly inspired his crafty friend, Jonadab, to help him execute his evil design.

Amnon’s fall into sin is instructive to all believers. First, he could not control his thoughts and this inflamed his passion to begin to hatch an evil plan (1 Peter 1:13). Second, he failed to resist the temptation. If he had resisted the devil like Joseph or our Lord Jesus, he would have overcome (James 4:7). Third, he had a crafty and an ungodly man as his close confidant. Like Rehoboam, he surrounded himself with ungodly friends who could not give him scriptural counsel.

The evil of incest can best be understood when viewed against the shame and reproach which attended people who fell into it. Consider Lot’s daughters, how they lured their father into it and the products of the relationship (Genesis 19:33-38). Reuben had carnal knowledge of his father’s concubine and lost his birthright (Genesis 35:22; 49:3,4). Judah imperceptibly went in to Tamar, his son’s wife (Genesis 38:18-23). Other cases of incest were also recorded in the New Testament: Herod married his brother Philip’s wife (Mark 6:17), while a backslidden Corinthian brother went in to his father’s wife (1 Corinthians 5:1).

God abhors sin in all its shades and His judgment looms over unrepentant sinners. Though David frowned at Amnon’s wicked act, there was no mention of his attempt to discipline him (2 Samuel 13:21). Christian leaders should never withhold the rod of discipline from their erring members (1 Timothy 5:20). Likewise, parents are to rebuke and discipline their wayward children (Proverbs 23:13). Everything should be done to prevent this evil from happening in our homes and churches.

Question 3: Why did Amnon fall into the sin of incest and what lessons can Christians learn from it?

ABSALOM'S MURDER OF AMNON AND FLIGHT (2 Samuel 13:22-39; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23)

Absalom was deeply hurt by the misbehavior of his elder brother, Amnon; more so as there was no record of remorse or repentance from him. "And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar" (2 Samuel 13:22). Then, he plotted his elimination. After two full years, Absalom was to have a sheep-shearing feast and thought it to be a perfect occasion to carry out his evil plan of murder. First, he invited the king, but he declined. Then he pressurized him to release the king's children in order to lure Amnon to attend. Meanwhile, he had instructed his servants when to kill him. "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" (2 Samuel 13:28). True to his command, Absalom's servants carried out the crime. "And the servants of Absalom did unto

Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled" (2 Samuel 13:29). From incest, the sins in David's house progressed to murder.

Absalom's cruel murder of his brother has no justification in the Scriptures. His action was not only wrong but totally condemnable. God forbids revenge or retaliation; he ought to have left Amnon's judgment in His hands (Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19). Secondly, his action was highly suspect. Killing Amnon may not only be because of his injury from the evil of incest; he probably had his eyes on the throne since Amnon was the heir apparent to the throne, being David's eldest son. Getting rid of him would clear the way for him to be the next in line to the throne. Thirdly, the murder of Amnon was an express disregard for the law of God (Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13). Fourthly, murder was punishable under the Mosaic Law. He who kills another person intentionally must also pay the supreme price (Exodus 21:14).

Believers who wish to get to heaven must avoid every form of sin, including murder, either through abortion, suicide, so-called 'mercy killing' or character assassination. They should abhor envy and jealousy which may lead to murder, but maintain holiness without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). All kinds of killing are condemned and punishable in the Scriptures.

Question 4: Why was Absalom's murder of his brother condemnable?

However, Amnon's untimely death has some scriptural implications. The Bible says "...the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4) and "...the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23). To avoid both physical and spiritual death, all sinners and backsliders should repent of their sins and turn to God for mercy and pardon. "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (Ezekiel 18:30).

Question 5: What can believers learn from Amnon's untimely death and what must all sinners and backsliders do urgently to avoid God's judgment?

ABSALOM'S RETURN THROUGH JOAB'S CRAFTINESS (2 Samuel 14:1-33; 13:28,29; Psalm 5:9; Revelation 21:8)

After he murdered Amnon, Absalom fled to Geshur to evade justice (2 Samuel 13:37,38). Though a prince, he became a fugitive in another land like Cain who became a vagabond and fugitive because he had killed his brother, Abel (Genesis 4:12,14). Moses was also a fugitive in Midian after he fled from the face of Pharaoh because he had murdered an Egyptian (Exodus 2:15). This is always the portion of murderers when they attempt to evade justice.

Absalom went on self-exile for three years before Joab muted the idea of bringing him back. "And Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for

the dead” (2 Samuel 14:2). Though the idea of brokering peace between King David and his fugitive son was commendable, the method employed by Joab was ungodly. As head of David’s army, he ought to have approached the king directly if his motive was right. The stage-managed plea to the king was highly deceptive and diplomatic. David was flattered as an angel of God (2 Samuel 14:17,20).

Believers should avoid deception in all forms; it is sinful and always comes with grievous consequences. When Jacob deceived Isaac his father to claim Esau’s birthright, he paid dearly for it. Ananias and Sapphira deceived Peter and lost their lives. The serpent deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden and received an eternal curse. The Gibeonites deceived Joshua and became perpetual slaves in Israel (Joshua 9:1-27). Christians who try to secure the favor of leadership through deception, diplomacy and flattery would incur the wrath of God. We should not use deception in getting jobs, contracts, admission, selling of goods or in contracting marriages because “...all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Revelation 21:8).

Question 6: What is the consequence of deception?

“And the king said unto Joab, behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again” (2 Samuel 14:21). So Joab arranged and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem, but he was not allowed to see the king. Rather than remain sober in Jerusalem, Absalom was in a hurry to realize his ungodly ambition to become king by all means. “Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come. Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab’s field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom’s servants set the field on fire” (2 Samuel 14:29,30). It is strange that Absalom could do this to a man who midwived his return from exile. Surely, every unconverted soul would betray their ungodly character. It is only repentance and conversion that can bring genuine character transformation.

The following points should be noted as this study comes to conclusion. One, David is portrayed here as a weak and an indulgent father. Aside being an innocent accessory to Tamar's defilement, he also did the same in the murder of Amnon. Nothing was heard beyond his being wroth after Amnon's incest (2 Samuel 13:21). Two, Joab and Absalom shared some traits that God-fearing saints must shun: they were both unforgiving (2 Samuel 3:30; 13:28), murderous (2 Samuel 3:27; 13:28), violent, treacherous and driven with ungodly ambition (2 Samuel 3:21,24,27; 14:30; 15:1,4 -6,10). Anyone who possesses these traits will end up in hell except they repent (Luke 13:3,5).

DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING

MON	Luke	15-16	2
TUE	"	17-18	1
WED	"	19	
THU	"	20	
FRI	"	21	
SAT	"	22	
SUN	"	23	

EVENING

Samuel	23-24
Kings	1
"	2
"	3-4
"	5-6
"	7
"	8