

## Turmoil in David's Family

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*"They sow the wind  
and reap the whirlwind."  
(Hosea 8:7)*

Last week's homework revealed the depth of David's sins and for how long he lived in that state of sin – over a year – seemingly without a desire to repent until the Lord confronted him through Nathan. Surely if David had not been so completely consumed by his wandering and deceitful heart, he would have, at some point recognized the many opportunities presented by the Lord to stop and consider his actions and to repent. If only David had recognized those opportunities, those nudgings of the Holy Spirit, things wouldn't have gone so drastically awry! The tragic events that immediately followed David's finally choosing to repent of his sins drew him back to the Lord seeking forgiveness. Forgiveness was granted, but the consequences of his sin were a great price paid by David and those around him.

This week we will continue to see the whirlwind that David reaped from the seeds planted in the time of his sin with Bathsheba. Hosea uses the metaphor of sowing seeds of wind – sinful actions and choices committed by Israel – that mature into a harvest of whirlwind, of judgment. We can see a similar parallel in David's life. The period of sin and disobedience will produce a harvest of strife, betrayal, violence, and death. The judgments announced by Nathan in Chapter 12 are the whirlwind that was cultivated by David's sin.

### Amnon and Tamar

*'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you.  
(2 Sam 12:11)*



Read the events recorded in 2 Samuel 13:1-38.

Identify the following people in this passage:

Amnon \_\_\_\_\_

Jonadab \_\_\_\_\_

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Tamar \_\_\_\_\_

Absalom \_\_\_\_\_

♥ Amnon with Jonadab's help plots to take advantage of Tamar. Read verses 12-13. Tamar pleads with Amnon asking him to consider what his actions would do to her future and his as well. What does she mean when she tells him, *"You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel."* Recall our previous discussions regarding the biblical meaning of *wicked* and *fool*.

Verses 1-5 tell us that Amnon is desperately in love with his sister, to the point of being "lovesick". But his actions completely betray his true feelings. Verse 15 says *"Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had \_\_\_\_\_ her."*

It is obvious there never was even a shred of love towards his sister. Neither romantic nor sisterly affection.

♥ When David first laid eyes on Bathsheba, do you think he was looking at her with eyes of love? \_\_\_\_\_. David wasn't brutally forceful, but his actions toward Uriah were just as cruel and heartless as Amnon's rejection of Tamar. What connection do you see that parallel the actions of the father and the son?

Describe the actions of the following people when Amnon's actions were discovered.

Absalom \_\_\_\_\_

Tamar \_\_\_\_\_

David \_\_\_\_\_

How long did Absalom wait to take his revenge? \_\_\_\_\_

- What did he do?

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- Where did he go?
- Who spoke to the king regarding Absalom's actions?

♥ Complete verse 39: *After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. And the spirit of the king \_\_\_\_\_ Absalom, for he was \_\_\_\_\_ concerning Amnon's death.*

- What does this verse tell you about David's feelings regarding his sons?
- Look back at 2 Samuel 12:10. What does it say would happen to David because he had despised the Lord?

In this tragic story, we see the first winds of the whirlwind blow through David's household. Just as the Lord had foretold, calamity had befallen David's house. Tamar is ruined by her own brother who never learned to control his passions. In this respect he bears a strong resemblance to his father. On more than one occasion David could not control his desires when it came to beautiful women, although he never resorted to force, a step that did not seem to deter his son. Both men seem to think their position of authority as king and heir to the throne place them above the law when it comes to sexual appetites. No one steps in to hold them accountable for their actions. In this story we also see the sins' of the father visited upon the son in that the son learns his ways as they are modeled by the father's behavior. David failed to teach his son self-control and proper obedience to Torah, setting a dangerous precedent that his son was all too willing to follow. Amnon has revealed himself to be one who despises and shows contempt for the Lord.

### **Absalom Returns to Jerusalem**

*"Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart \_\_\_\_\_ for Absalom." (2 Sam 14:1)*



Read 2 Samuel 14: 1-33 and answer the following questions.

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♥ What does Joab want to accomplish in bringing home Absalom?

What method does Joab employ to entreat the King?

♥ <sup>13</sup>The woman said, "Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son? <sup>14</sup> Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take away life; instead, he \_\_\_\_\_ so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.

- What is the woman advising David to do?
- What do you think this truly means that David must do regarding his relationship with Absalom?
- Does David do this? (verse 29 provides insight)

David allows Absalom to return back to Jerusalem, but does not permit him to enter the King's presence. Bringing Absalom back from exile is a show of unity to the people of Israel on David's part. It gives the appearance that all is well in the King's household. While Absalom's house and family are restored to him, his position at court is not. He is not allowed to dine at the king's table with the king's sons thereby establishing the fact that Absalom has precluded himself from being next in line for the throne by killing his elder brother, David's heir. Absalom may be returned to his home, but he is not restored to his father.

♥ Finally, to get Joab's attention, Absalom resorts to setting the man's field on fire. Why do you think Absalom goes to such extreme measures? What do you think he wants from Joab and David?

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In the years between Tamar's rape, Amon's death, Absalom's absence and return to Jerusalem, what do you think is happening to Absalom's heart?

♥ Absalom finally is brought before the King in verse 33. Do you think there is true restoration and reconciliation between David and his son? Or is it too little, too late?

David and Absalom are reconciled and Absalom regains his place at the king's table and as heir-apparent. But it does not appear that there is truly heartfelt reconciliation between, father and son. They both got what they wanted. David wanted peace with his son without the responsibility of discipline for his son's actions. For the sake of familial peace he was willing to suspend Torah law - the death penalty that Absalom's murder of his brother (not to mention, heir to the throne) warranted. On the other hand Absalom got what he wanted. He is restored to the King's good-graces and his position as heir apparent is also restored. His desire was not reconciliation with his father, but the appearance of reconciliation with the King. By all outward appearances Absalom can present himself as the restored son and heir apparent. This reconciliation gives credibility to Absalom as the true heir to the throne, putting himself in a stronger position for his future plans against his father.

### **Absalom's Conspiracy**

*Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel."*

(2 Samuel 12:11-12)



Read 2 Samuel 15:1-37.

*Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. (2 Samuel 15:6)*

According to the verse above, what did Absalom do to the hearts of the men of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_ By what means?

Why do you think Absalom wanted to go to Hebron?

♥ Why do you think Ahithophel joined with Absalom?

With great patience, craft and a pleasing appearance Absalom ingratiated himself with the people of Israel. He became the adored and favored son who could do no wrong in the eyes of the people. Next Absalom removes himself to Hebron, a fortified city in Judah associated with the Patriarchs and is David's former capitol before establishing himself in Jerusalem. Establishing himself in Hebron puts Absalom in a strategic position to garner the support of the tribe of Judah in standing against his father. Absalom shrewdly invites 200 men from David's court, most of the King's counselors and advisers, to join him in Hebron. When the time came and Absalom openly took a stand against his father, these 200 men would be forced to support Absalom or risk their lives. Along with their counsel, David lost their support in defending the throne and Jerusalem. David finds himself in a very precarious and weak position, unable to defend either himself or Jerusalem. Even his counselor Ahithophel joins Absalom.

♥ Why do you think David fled Jerusalem?

Who went with David?

Why does David send the Ark back to Jerusalem?

Where does verse 30 tell us David went weeping? \_\_\_\_\_  
From before the time of David this was considered a High Holy Place of the Lord. What does David pray for?

♥ Why does David send Hushai back to Jerusalem?

- What word describes Hushai's relationship to David?
- How does this contrast with David's relationship with Ahithophel?

David departs Jerusalem with what little military support he has to insure that no attack comes upon the city. He leaves ten concubines to run the household, not to defend it. He attempts to insure that no violence come upon the city and its inhabitants, Jerusalem is a city of peace, not war. He takes with him the fighting men he has buying time to gather forces and mount a defense. He returns the Ark back to Jerusalem because it is the throne of the Lord, the true ruler and King of Israel. David is in no way assured that he will weather the storm of Absalom's insurrection. Whether or not David remains the king, the Ark belongs in the center of the People of Israel. David sends Abiathar and Zadok, the High Priest to tend to the Ark and its required services. They also will serve as spies for King David.

Weeping and mourning David and his small entourage arrive at the Mount of Olives where David learns of Ahithophel's desertion. He prays, *"Oh Lord, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."* In what we can certainly take as answer to David's plea to the Lord, he is immediately met by Hushai the Arkite who promises to serve him in Absalom's court. Further evidence that the Lord is with David through this trial can be seen in the fact that in the short amount of time it takes for Hushai to return to Jerusalem, a one mile walk,

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Absalom was entering the city. Absalom and his men were separated from David only by one hill. The Lord's hand of protection was certainly over David and his men so dangerously close to those with evil intent.



2 Samuel 16: 1-23

Who meets David just beyond the summit?

What does he bring with him?

What does Ziba say of Mephibosheth?

♥ Why do you think David accepts such a blatant lie?

Shimei curses David and throws these accusations at David:

*As he cursed, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you scoundrel! <sup>8</sup>  
The LORD has repaid you for all the blood **you** shed in the household of Saul, in  
whose place you have reigned. The LORD has handed the kingdom over to your  
son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood!"*

Shimei's curse is a lie. Who truly did kill Saul and Ishbosheth?

Why does David prevent Abishai from killing Shimei?



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♥ Why do you think David believed the Lord instructed Shimei to curse him? What do the scriptures tell you about David's (and his follower's) physical state that would lead David to believe this lie. What do you think was their emotional state at this time?

- 15:23 \_\_\_\_\_
- 15:30 \_\_\_\_\_
- 16:6,13 \_\_\_\_\_
- 16:14, 17:27-29 \_\_\_\_\_

What does 16:23 say of Ahithophel's gift for counsel?

What was the advice Ahithophel gave to Absalom?

What does 2 Samuel 12:11-12 have to say that is pertinent?

### **The Advice of Ahithophel and Hushai**



Read 2 Samuel 17:1-29

Restate in your own words Ahithophel's advice.

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What is Hushai's advice?

Hushai is preying on Absalom's vanity by suggesting he amass a great army from the length of all Israel – Dan to Beersheba- and lead it himself. Hushai predicts a great victory for Absalom if he follows his advice. But, by following Hushai's advice, what is Absalom doing to help David?

Absalom and his men came to the conclusion that Hushai's advice was better than that of Ahithophel. Complete the reason why in the following verse. *For the \_\_\_\_\_ had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to \_\_\_\_\_*  
\_\_\_\_\_.

What did Hushai instruct David to do through Zadok and Abiathar (and Jonathan and Ahimaaz)?

Why do you think Ahithophel killed himself?

## **Absalom's Death**

*Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'*  
(2 Samuel 12:10)

*Pride goes before \_\_\_\_\_,  
a haughty spirit before a \_\_\_\_\_.*  
(Proverbs 16:18)

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Read 2 Samuel 18:1-33

David wanted to march out to battle with his commanders, but they wouldn't let him. What reasons did they give for David to stay behind?

What did David command Joab, Abishai, and Ittai regarding his son?

Who else heard this command?

Who won the battle? \_\_\_\_\_ How many casualties? \_\_\_\_\_

♥ Verse 8 says *The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the \_\_\_\_\_ that day than the \_\_\_\_\_*. What do you think that means?

How does scripture say that Absalom is caught?

2 Samuel 14:26 mentions Absalom's hair. How is this detail of his capture ironic?

Joab is outraged when he hears that one of the men left Absalom hanging in the tree and didn't kill him. What does the man say to defend himself to Joab?

The means of Absalom's death is theologically significant. We are told he was found "*hanging in an oak tree.*" The Hewbrew word "taluy", translated *hanging*, is used only once in the Torah in Deuteronomy 21:23 declaring "*anyone who is hung (taluy) on a tree is under*

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*God's curse.*<sup>1</sup> Absalom had certainly rebelled against divine law by rebelling against his father<sup>2</sup> and taking to bed David's concubines<sup>3</sup>. Despite a massive army, the support of most of Israel, and the means of fleeing danger mounted on a mule, Absalom could not escape the judgment of the Lord for rising up against the Lord's anointed King. Absalom's disobedience and wicked intent brought the curses of the Lord down upon him.

Absalom offered a reward of ten shekels of silver (approximately 4 ounces) and a warrior's belt to anyone who killed the king's son, despite David's order to be gentle with Absalom (v5). It appears that Joab had come to the conclusion that the only way for this civil war to come to an end was with the death of the usurper. The offering of a reward for this death points to Joab's own outright and high-handed disobedience to the King's command. In spite of Joab's bounty the soldier refused to raise his hand against the king's son. Joab took matters into his own hand and dispatched Absalom. Absalom was buried as befit the rebel and according to Torah law demanding that a rebellious son be stoned.<sup>4</sup> His burial in the woods denied him the honor of a proper burial in the family tomb within the Promise Land. This battle took place outside the boundaries of Israel, east of the Jordan River. Absalom, who deprived his father and king, the Lord's anointed, of his inheritance – the Promise Land, would be denied his own inheritance for eternity.

Read the following epitaph on Absalom's life:

*During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King's Valley as a monument to himself, for he thought, "I have no son to carry on the memory of my name." He named the pillar after himself, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day. (v.18)*

During his reign, for whom did Absalom erect a pillar?

Who is the pillar named after?

Read 1 Samuel 15:12. Who did what for whom in this passage?

*"My lord the king, hear the good news! The LORD has delivered you today from all who rose up against you."(v31)*

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<sup>1</sup> New American Commentary

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; 21:18-21

<sup>3</sup> Deuteronomy 27: 20

<sup>4</sup> Deuteronomy 21:21

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Joab initially sends Ahimaaz to give news to the King of the outcome of the battle and the death of Absalom. Ahimaaz loses heart and can't tell the King of Absalom's death. A Cushite messenger was also sent by Joab with the news. What is the Cushite's response when King David asks about his son?

♥ What is David's response?

♥ What do you think fuels this response?

The whirlwind seems to have expended itself. The judgments against David have come to pass resulting from his own rebellion and disobedience. David has lost two more sons and seen his country divided by civil war. David is utterly bereft at the loss of his son and recognizes some if not all of the part he had in his son's disobedience and arrogance. While the storms may have subsided, David has survived, but as one who has survived a shipwreck. His country is divided and he has been betrayed by more than just his son. He has to pull himself together and reunify a heavily divided country.

What spiritual truths have you learned this week about rebelling against the Lord and the ramifications of those actions?