

14. Trouble at home

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When many people who can manage and handle companies or troops or other big organizations at ease face difficulties in their own homes, they are utterly lost and don't know what to do.

The dynamics of handling home is much different than handling an organization. Because at home, we can not put up our good sides that we want other people to see. Each family member knows the others rather well. We might be able to hide our flaws at our work places, but not in our own homes. We tend let our hair down and show the true color. Another reason why the dynamics at home is much different than the organization is that we are involved with each others in emotion.

When storms rage, the best place to be is home, protected from the howling winds and the cold, rainy blasts. Unless the blizzard is inside the home.

Chill winds from cold hearts and pounding tempests of rebellion can devastate a family like no amount of rain or snow outside ever could. Because when we've been careless about our relationships with the Lord and others, we learn firsthand what the prophet Hosea declared.

Hosea 8:7 They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind.

Kings are no exception to this principle, as David would find out. He had sown the wind with Bathsheba, and he was about to reap the whirlwind.

Before we look at the tragic series of consequences that tore apart David's home, let's get a firmer grasp on the stark, enduring truth Hosea recorded. It applies not just to David but to us as well.

A. PRINCIPLE FROM SCRIPTURE

The apostle Paul stated Hosea's principle a little more directly to all of us in Galatians 6.

Galatians 6:7-8a Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption,

We will reap in like kind what we have sower (only magnified). If we sow sin, even after we confess it and restore our communion with God, we must live with the consequences – the broken trust, the painful memories, the bruised reputation, the fractured hearts. The pain of the reaping always eclipses the pleasure of the sowing.

God is still with us as we endure our consequences. In fact, He often uses them to restore and redirect and redeem our lives.

Galatians 6:8b but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

David's repentance truly restored him to God. His promised dynasty would still last for centuries, and the Messiah would still come through him. In David's life, "But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more," (Rom. 5:20b) became true to its words. However, his one night of ecstasy and subsequent murder plot produced sorrow and regret for many years to come.

B. PROBLEMS AT HOME OF DAVID

Nathan had forecasted the pain David would have to endure in one simple but chilling pronouncement:

2 Samuel 12:10-11 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.

We can trace the line of David's sin with Bathsheba to eight consequences that led him on a downward path of grief and heartache. We are going to see four of them in this chapter. We already studied the death of the child from David and Bathsheba as the first consequences in last Bible study.

1) Amnon rapes Tamar

2 Samuel 13:1-2 After this Absalom the son of David had a lovely sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2 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.

Absalom and Tamar were children of David and Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. Amnon, David's firstborn son, was the child of Ahinoam of Jezreel, loved her. However, Amnon's love for his half sister was nothing more than the passion of incestuous lust.

Marriage to a sister or half sister and incest were strictly forbidden by the law of Moses.

The name Tamar means "Palm Tree," signifying fruitfulness. The name Absalom means "His Father's Peace." And the name Amnon means "Faithful, Stable." None of them found their future according to their names.

2 Samuel 13:3-10 But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother. Now Jonadab was a very crafty man. 4 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." 5 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.'" 6 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." 7 And David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Now go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." 8 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. 9 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. 10 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.

Jonadab was a cousin to both Amnon and Tamar. In my opinion, this guy is a total weasel. Hanging around a twisted prince to ride behind his coat tail. There is a great Hebrew description for this kind of people: Ted Kennedy for John Kerry.

Amnon's lust for his sister had made him obsessive. He was in a self-destructive course. Sadly, he would destroy others as well.

From this and other passages, it appears that David was generally passive towards his children. This may be because he felt guilty that having so many wives, children, and responsibilities of state, that he didn't take the time to be a true father for his children. He dealt with the guilt by being soft and indulgent with his children like many parents would do in current days.

2 Samuel 13:11-14 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." 12 And 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! 13 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." 14 However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her.

Amnon is a spoiled rotten bratty prince who always took what he wanted at any cost.

Victims of rape or molestation sometimes speak more strongly of their humiliation than of the physical pain they were made to suffer.

If you are a victim of this kind of horrible violence, please remember that it is not your fault. It is not your fate to have this kind of things happen to you. But God can make something good out of your past. You can find strength, peace, comfort and shelter in the loving arms of our God.

2) Amnon hates Tamar

2 Samuel 13:15-22 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!" 16 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. 17 Then he called his servant who attended him, and said, "Here! Put this woman out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her." 18 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. 19 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. 20 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. 21 But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. 22 And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

Amnon's "love" for Tamar immediately showed itself for what it truly was: Lust turned into hatred.

In this single-minded lust, Amnon only built upon the example of his father David. Even though David was never this dominated by lust, but he was pointed in the same direction. David's multiple wives and adultery with Bathsheba displayed that he was not much different than Amnon.

Tamar was simply a reminder of Amnon's foolish sin. He wanted every reminder of his sin to be put far away.

How did David, the judge of the nation and protector of his home, respond to the jolting news of Tamar's rape? He was very angry.

That's all. Sadly, David's anger went no farther. Maybe the king felt unworthy to judge Amnon because of his own track record of lust. Even so, Tamar desperately needed her father to come to her aid, to vindicate her through swift and severe justice. Yet David did nothing. Was she worth so little that Amnon could abuse her and get away with it? Since David wouldn't restore her dignity, her brother, Absalom, would – with a sword.

David was like many other men in Scripture. He was an indulgent father who raised a bunch of kids who were bad. That has happened again and again. We find a good example with old Eli, God's high priest in 1 Sam.

I am convinced that the main problem today in Christian homes is the lack of example and discipline on the part of the parents. Give your children a godly example and discipline and start soon, because the day will come when your children will walk out.

Christian parents need to realize that they need to spend time training their children. Don't get the impression that you are raising a little angel. There are many parents who treat a child as if he were a cross between an orchid and a piece of Ming Dynasty china. If they think that applying the board of education to the seat of learning break him into pieces, the child will come apart in future.

Proverbs 23:13 Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.

3) Absalom murders Amnon

2 Samuel 13:23-29 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. 24 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." 25 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. 26 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?" 27 But Absalom urged him; so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. 28 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." 29 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.

Absalom planned to murder his brother to avenge his sister's rape and perhaps to enhance his own chances of making a bid for the throne for two years. Having carefully planned the murder of his brother, Absalom invited the king's sons to a sheepshearing festival at Baal Hazor. Just like God said through prophet Nathan, the sword is starting to go through David's family.

4) Absalom rebels and runs away

2 Samuel 13:30-39 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!" 31 So the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the ground, and all his servants stood by with their clothes torn. 32 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. 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 only Amnon is dead." 34 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. 35 And Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the king's sons are coming; as your servant said, so it is." 36 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. 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 King David longed to go to Absalom. For he had been comforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead.

It is significant that David did not react to this news with disbelief. He sensed that Absalom was capable of such evil. David reacted with mourning instead of disbelief.

After David heard about Amnon's death, Absalom fled to the home of his grandfather – Talmai, king of Geshur. There he remained as a refugee for three years, with no contact from David in all that time. By now, David had lost three sons and one daughter.

C. APPLICATIONS

1) Discipline your children according to God's way, not according to the worldly way, not even the Christian psychological way.

Child discipline issue is the third reason for marital conflicts. If husband and wife don't agree in child discipline, I feel pity for you two. Seek God's Word and administer punishment to your child with fairness, firmness and love.

Never to disagree and argue with your spouse in the presence of the children. If you do that, you are giving a green light to your children to cause more problems between two of you.

2) Let's trust that God can bring something great from the most horrible situation.

You might say, "You have no idea what I've gone through in my past." You are absolutely right. I have no idea. But God does.

Mt 19:26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

2Cor 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.