

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 9



DAVID REAPS THROUGH HIS SONS

Scripture Texts: 2 Samuel 13:1, 2 Samuel 13:14-15, 2 Samuel 13:22, 2 Samuel 13:28-29, 2 Samuel 13:38-39, 2 Samuel 15:1-14, 2 Samuel 18:6-15, 2 Samuel 18:33

To sow sin is to reap sorrow. Sin also brings suffering to innocent ones. God's Word always comes true. David's sin even weakened the bonds of morality in his own household. His own example of laxity of morals was imitated by his oldest son, Amnon, who ravished his half sister. In order to avenge the dishonor of his sister, Absalom murdered Amnon, and was for a time banished from the presence of the king.

MEMORY VERSE: *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*
— *Galatians 6:7*

Amnon's Sin

2 Samuel 13:1, 2 Samuel 13:14-15 Amnon, son of David, was greatly attracted to his half sister, Tamar. He might have successfully resisted the temptation that came to him as he did for a time. Amnon's conscience was not the strongest, yet it was guiding him rightly at the start of his temptation. It might have kept him from his sin had he continued to listen to it. But his cousin, Jonadab, was there with evil counsel. His wicked advice overrode Amnon's better thoughts, and he sinned against her. Was Jonadab truly a friend? How did he get the reputation of "subtil"? How does **1 Corinthians 15:33** and **Psalms 1:1** apply here?

Having sinned so grievously, Amnon's so-called love turned to hatred. He roughly cast Tamar out. Amnon found that he did not want what he had taken dishonorably. His changed feeling, the sense of revulsion, followed a pattern frequently followed today in the case of illicit relations. Lust is not love. Physical attractions fade. To depend upon promises and love claims based on these, is to run the risk of waking up holding only false and bitter ashes. True happiness grows only from the foundation of true honor and righteousness. Amnon's experience should have taught him that. Tamar tried to tell him, but he wouldn't listen. God's laws are made to suit man's greatest good. Those laws still stand unchanged and unchangeable.

Absalom quieted his sister about this, no doubt planning revenge, but David heard of it. **He was very wroth.** No doubt his memory went back to his own sin and the sentence pronounced by the Lord (**2 Samuel 12:9-12**). Sin brings multiplied evil.

Absalom Slays Amnon

2 Samuel 13:22, 2 Samuel 13:28-29, 2 Samuel 13:38-39 Absalom, filled with anger and hatred, deliberately planned to kill Amnon. As soon as he accomplished this, Absalom fled to Geshur, to his grandfather (**2 Samuel 3:3**), to escape his father's anger and just punishment. David's bitter grief was now double—for the first-born son who was dead, and for the son who was a murderer. He was torn between longing to go to Absalom, and abhorrence of his crime. Did Jonadab feel any guilt in Amnon's death (**2 Samuel 13:32**)? Should he have?

For five years, David did not see Absalom face to face. When they did meet at Absalom's request, there appeared to be submission from Absalom, and love from David (**2 Samuel 14**). How real each was can best be judged by later actions.

Absalom Revolts

2 Samuel 15:1-14 Absalom began a well-planned scheme to steal the rulership from his father. As eldest son and natural heir to his father's throne, Absalom began to feel that he should be recognized as king. So he

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made every effort to strengthen his position with the people. He used the fact that he was naturally handsome to his advantage. Then he tried to undermine his father's hold on the people by encouraging a feeling among them of discontent with existing conditions. He gave heed to their every wish and cry until he **stole the hearts of the men of Israel (2 Samuel 15:6)**.

Since there seemed to be no hope of becoming associated with his father in the kingdom, Absalom finally decided to carry out his plan to seize the throne for himself. Deceiving his father as to his purpose, he went to Hebron and proclaimed himself king, and gathered his friends and followers. At this news, David and his servants fled from Jerusalem to save his life, and to spare the city the destruction of war.

Absalom's Death

2 Samuel 18:6-15 A battle did follow **in the wood of Ephraim**, a hazardous place for fighting. **The wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.** Absalom himself fell victim, caught by an oak bough. Joab heard of it, went and thrust darts through his heart, completely disregarding David's request to **deal gently for my sake with the young man.** Then, caught up in the mob spirit, ten of his young men rushed in with many unneeded blows to finish the terrible deed. They gave Absalom's body a dishonored grave in a pit in the wood, covered with a great heap of stone.

Reaping of Sin

2 Samuel 18:33 In Absalom's death, David reaped a heavy penalty. His grief was pitiful. It was more for Absalom's loss than for his own. **Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!** What was Absalom's loss? What is always one's loss to die a sinner? Why was there all of this evil? Running through some of it was a chain leading back to David's sin. His children must have had knowledge of past events in David's life. How many of these later happenings were results of example? We can be sure that some of it was punishment—paying the consequences.

David sowed. Amnon sowed. Absalom sowed. What did each reap? Were the sowers alone in the reaping? Is it a characteristic of sin that it injures innocent ones as well as the guilty? Sin is not just. God's Word of years before came true. **The sword shall never depart . . . evil against thee out of thine own house . . . shall lie with thy wives. . . (2 Samuel 12:10-11).** Read **2 Samuel 16:22**. It is true that one always reaps as he sows.

David's Character

All through this bitter experience of Absalom's rebellion, David showed himself to be a man of great spiritual insight and character, filled with deep sympathy even for those who opposed him. He was willing to take the cursing and stoning of Shimei, one of Saul's family, as a direct punishment from God (**2 Samuel 16:5-8**). In spite of Absalom's character and terrible deeds, David loved him and mourned bitterly for him.

JUST A THOUGHT

Discipline is not punishment, it is training.