

9-24-2025 – Journey with King David – Week 12 – Failure as a Father

Intro: David was successful in all his military conquests. He was victorious as warrior. He was a respected king. But he was a lousy father.

In Hebron: ² Sons were born to David in Hebron: His **firstborn was Amnon** the son of Ahinoam of Jezreel; ³ his second, Kileab the son of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; the **third, Absalom** the son of Maakah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; ⁴ the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;⁵ and the sixth, Ithream the son of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron. **(2 Sam. 3:2-4)**

In Jerusalem: more wives & concubines who give more sons & daughters: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵ Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶ Elishama, Eliada & Eliphelet. **(2 Sam. 5:14-15)**

Tonight - 2 Samuel 13-14 – story of Amnon, Tamar, Absalom & **the ABC's of David's failure as a father**

Amnon has half-sister, **Tamar**, a virgin. Tamar's full bro is **Absalom**.

13:1 – Amnon fell “in love” with her.

- Not “love” – love does what is right. Love honors, protects, respects.
- This is lust. Self-gratification. **Vs. 2** tells truth: “obsessed” w/ her.

Amnon tells crafty cousin, **Jonadab** he loves Tamar.

Jonadab, son of David's brother, Shimea, comes up with a plan.

-- **Plan:** pretend/ ill; have Tamar come, prepare food, feed you.

David came to see him – agrees to send **Tamar**

Bonus Lesson #1 – when your son is sick, take action. Get meds, send for doctor, take his temp . . . don't send half-sister.

- **And cousin** – speak up for what's right. Don't be a “yes man” and go along with what you know is wrong.

Amnon refuses to eat, then sends servants out, & asks Tamar to feed him in his **bedroom**.

Bedrooms are places for sleeping... maybe discipline.

- Beware of teens having isolated places of recreation.
- Certainly not a place to gather & entertain. **Don't feed u in bed!**

Amnon grabbed her, wants her in bed with him...

- Tamar asks, what about me? What about you? Don't. No.
 - **No means no.** Now and then.
 - But Amnon wouldn't listen. He was stronger, raped her.
 - Then "Amnon hated her even more than he had loved her."
 - He sends her out; **proving** what he felt was **lust, not love**.

Tamar is in grief. She was wearing the customary long beautiful robe . . .
Tamar tears it, puts ashes on her head, goes away crying.

Bro Absalom sees her. Is it true? **"Be quiet for now"** - Don't go public.

- Rape & incest . . . those crimes not talked about. Carry shame.
 - We talk about theft, robbery... but much more is stolen here.
- **Vs. 20 - Tamar lived as a desolate woman in her brother's house.**

²¹ When King David heard what had happened, he was very angry. ²² And though Absalom never spoke to Amnon about this, he hated Amnon deeply because of what he had done to his sister." – **2 Samuel 13:21-22.**

First Failure - David is angry, but he's absent.

- No record of David doing anything – he **doesn't comfort** Tamar. And he **doesn't discipline** Amnon. He's too busy being "King"
 - Interesting Q – would you turn in your child?
 - Should be **discipline** for Amnon, **justice** for Tamar.
- No discipline . . . no correction . . . no rebuke . . . no guidance.
- **Note: 13:21** Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version add: "But he did not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his firstborn."
 - **It's not loving your child to not discipline them.**

- **Prov. 13:24** - Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.
- **But** David acted like this with more than Amnon, the 1st born.
 - **1 Kings 1:6** - “His father had never rebuked him by asking, “why do you behave as you do?”” (Adonijah)
- **Parenting is teaching right from wrong; it must involve discipline.**
 - **Discipline teaches** rules - behavior – consequences – so that we have self-control later in life.
 - **Discipline is** guiding/teaching . . . it’s **not about** punishing, even tho we need to learn consequences.
- When a parent doesn’t parent . . . a sibling may step up.
 - But teens/young adults doesn’t have the wisdom/maturity.
 - **And Absalom has hate in his heart, revenge on his mind.**
 - Easy to understand . . . but hate destroys us day by day.
 - **Hate** puts us on a course of **revenge**. Not God-desired course
- **Absalom waits 2 yrs.** Clear, **David isn’t doing anything.** No action.
- Invites father & bros to celebrate sheep shearing ... have a feast.
 - David declines. Then send Amnon. Why Amnon? Agrees.
 - Instructs his men: When Amnon is drunk, kill him on my signal.
 - They do it . . . all the other sons fled back to Jerusalem.
 - News reaches David – Absalom killed all your sons. Grief!
 - **³² But just then Jonadab, the son of David’s brother Shimea, arrived and said, “No, don’t believe that all the king’s sons have been killed! It was only Amnon! Absalom has been plotting this ever since Amnon raped his sister Tamar.**
 - Partial good news. Only 1. May not have made it much better.
 - **³⁶ They soon arrived, weeping and sobbing, and the king and all his servants wept bitterly with them. ³⁷ And David mourned many days for his son Amnon.**
 - Absalom fled to his grandfather, Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. **³⁸ He stayed there in Geshur for three years. ³⁹ And King David, now reconciled to Amnon’s death, longed to be reunited with his son Absalom.**
- Here is **David’s second fault – bullheaded.**
 - David longs for reunion, but stays put.
 - He is **stubborn**. The man will go to war, but not go for love.

- David needs to show love (tough love), forgiveness, mercy . . . but stays in Jerusalem.
- His friend Joab knows David longs for Absalom, has a plan.

Plan – a wise woman pretends to be in mourning, long time mourning.

Tell David this story: I'm a widow. My 2 sons fought, 1 was killed.

Family is demanding justice. But my husband's name will disappear...

- David – **“Leave it to me. Go home, I'll see to it that no one touches him.” – vs. 8** She says, “Please swear to me by the Lord your God that you won't let anyone take vengeance against my son. I want no more bloodshed.” “As surely as the Lord lives,” David replied, **“not a hair on your son's head will be disturbed!” -vs. 11**
- Then the woman appeals to David:
 - ¹³ She replied, **“Why don't you do as much for the people of God as you have promised to do for me? You have convicted yourself in making this decision, because you have refused to bring home your own banished son. ¹⁴ All of us must die eventually. Our lives are like water spilled out on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. But God does not just sweep life away; instead, he devises ways to bring us back when we have been separated from him.**
 - **David is confronted with irony – Asks if Joab put her up to it**
 - **David** sent for Joab, so ok – “bring back the young man Absalom”
²³ Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. ²⁴ **But the king gave this order: “Absalom may go to his own house, but he must never come into my presence.” So Absalom did not see the king.**

Here is David's third fault – Cold, Calloused.

David could protect the woman's son, but he wouldn't protect his own.

- David refers to Absalom as **the young man, not my son.**
- David could offer forgiveness & mercy . . . as he received, but doesn't.
- David could show love to his son . . . but he doesn't.

²⁸ Absalom lived in Jerusalem for 2 years, but he never got to see the king.

Absalom sent for Joab several times to ask him to intercede for him, but Joab refused to come. So he has his servants set fire to Joab's barley field, the field next to his.

- Joab shows up. Why?
- Absalom replied, "Because I wanted you to ask the king why he brought me back from Geshur if he didn't intend to see me. I might as well have stayed there. Let me see the king; if he finds me guilty of anything, then let him kill me."
- ³³ So Joab told the king what Absalom had said. Then at last David summoned Absalom, who came and bowed low before the king, and the king kissed him.
 - David finally – **years later – reconciles with Absalom.**
 - But David lost years w/ his son. Walls were built between them.

Here is David's fourth fault – Distanced & Detached.

Not just distance in miles, but distance in hearts.

- Distance doesn't tell anyone they are loved. Are forgiven.
- The son needs to hear forgiveness. . . know still loved.

David was a lousy father . . . but it's not b/c his kids did wrong. It's b/c of David's own actions.

As a Father, David isn't man after God's own heart. He's the opposite.

David is absent, God is always present w/ us.

David is bullheaded, stubborn. God is willing, yielding, open

David is cold, God is compassionate, kind, tender.

David is distanced, God is near to the broken-hearted.

God, our Father, wants us to know . . . we can always come home.

- The Father wants us to know – He is waiting . . . **still His child!**
- The Father wants us to know – we have a place at His table.
- The Father wants us to know – **we are forgiven.**

Rosh Hashanah began at sunset on Monday, Sept. 22, 2025, lasts through sundown on Wednesday, Sept. 24.

- Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish **New Year**.
- Time to reflect on previous year and focus on hopes for the coming year

- Reflect tonight on God as your Father . . . a father who disciplines us.
 - **Prov. 3:11-12** - “My child, don’t reject the LORD’s discipline, and don’t be upset when he corrects you. For the LORD corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.”
 - **Be aware** that God the Father is teaching us ... correcting us. God’s discipline continues even tho we are adults.