

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far from the Tree

Have you ever heard that old expression? Similar to the old saying, “Like father like son,” it means that children often mimic the behavior of their parents. It is not unusual for a child to walk, talk, and act much like his or her parent. You can often identify the parent simply by watching the child.

Children learn good traits from their parents, such as honesty, respectfulness, and a good work ethic. Unfortunately, they also pick up their parents’ bad traits. Patterns and expectations in family life are often repeated generation after generation.

David’s lust caused him to commit adultery and murder. When confronted by the prophet Nathan, David admitted and confessed his sin. In last week’s lesson, however, we learned that God said the sword would never depart from David’s house. In this lesson you will discover the first fulfillment of that prophecy.

Remember that King David, in violation of God’s rules (Deut. 17:17), had many wives and concubines. There were many half-brothers and half-sisters in David’s family. **Absalom** and **Tamar** were brother and sister, while **Amnon** was their half-brother.

2 Sam. 13:1 How did Amnon feel about his half-sister Tamar?

2 Sam. 13:2 Amnon had the same kind of lustful thoughts toward Tamar that his father David had toward Bathsheba.

The Jewish Law clearly forbid sexual relations between a brother and sister, even if she was only a half-sister (Lev. 18:9, 11). Such a relationship would be incestuous, just as David’s relationship with Bathsheba was adulterous. Both are simply wrong.

2 Sam. 13:3-4 Amnon told his friend (who was also his cousin) about his “problem.”

2 Sam. 13:5 What did he suggest?

2 Sam. 13:6-8 Amnon followed his friend’s advice.

2 Sam. 13:9 Where did he send all his servants?

2 Sam. 13:10 Tamar brought the cakes to her brother’s bedside.

2 Sam. 13:11 What did Amnon do?

Tamar tried desperately to reason with her half-brother, but he overpowered her and raped her (verses 12-14).

2 Sam. 13:15 What became of Amnon’s so-called “love” for Tamar after he raped her?

Amnon threw Tamar out (v. 16-18). She put ashes on her head and tore her garment as signs of grief and shame (v. 19). Tamar went home to her brother Absalom’s house, where she remained unmarried and childless the rest of her life (v. 20).

2 Sam. 13:21 How did David feel about this incestuous rape?

Did he do anything about it?

2 Sam. 13:22 How did Absalom feel about Amnon?

Two years later Absalom's servants were shearing sheep. This was a time of great celebration, so he invited all the king's sons to come to a special feast (verses 23-27).

2 Sam. 13:28 What instructions did Absalom give his servants?

Just like David had arranged Uriah's death (2 Sam. 11:14-17), Absalom orchestrated his brother Amnon's death.

2 Sam. 13:29 What did Absalom's servants do?

2 Sam. 13:32 How long had Absalom planned to kill Amnon?

2 Sam. 13:37 Absalom ran away and stayed with his grandfather (3:3), the king of **Geshur**.

2 Sam. 13:38 How long did Absalom stay in Geshur?

2 Sam. 13:39 What did David want to do?

Concluding Thoughts: The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Just as David allowed his lustful thoughts to become sinful reality in an adulterous affair with another man's wife, his son Amnon acted on his lustful thoughts by raping his half-sister. Just as David plotted the murder of Uriah with cold-blooded calculation, his son Absalom planned for two years to kill his half-brother Amnon. Like father like son; David's sons duplicated his sinful actions.

One lesson for parents from this sordid story is that our children are watching our behavior. Parents must model morality and godliness if they want their children to be moral and godly people.

That is the natural explanation for the actions of David's sons, but there was more in operation than mere natural tendencies. After David's sin with Bathsheba, God clearly told him that "*the sword shall never depart from thine house*" (2 Sam. 12:10). Absalom's murder of Amnon was the first fulfillment of that terrible prophecy.

The theme of this quarter's study is, "***Costs of Disobedience***." All sin is disobedience to Almighty God. David witnessed the costs of his sin being paid by his children. Amnon paid for his sin with his life. Absalom's sin cost his relationship with his father.

Are you contemplating some sinful act? Don't do it! There **will be** terrible costs to pay.

Project: Whatever kind of legacy you want to leave your children, you must start living **today**. Remember, you are being watched.