

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Sept. 11

### MONDAY

David gathered his forces and they went to Rabbah and defeated the Ammonites who were defending it. The crown was taken from the Ammonite king's head and placed on David's head, and the spoils of war were collected. David treated the Ammonite people harshly, killing some, and torturing others in various ways. He led the army and took other cities in the same way, before returning to Jerusalem.

#### **READ: II Samuel 12:29-31**

David seems too greedy and too harsh, does he not? He was too anxious to claim the glory for the victory, and too eager to wear the captured crown. He was too severe in torturing and killing the POW's. Why this greed and harshness? Perhaps these actions on David's part are saying to us that the sins which David had committed so readily just prior to this time, though immediately forgiven when he acknowledged them before God, were not so easily overcome in his own life. The wages of sin are high! Perhaps his heart was not yet broken enough to be made soft.

### TUESDAY

David had many children with various wives. Absalom and Amnon were sons; and Tamar was a daughter, and a beautiful one at that! Amnon was lovesick for his sister Tamar, but she was a virgin and untouchable. Now Amnon had a friend, Jonadab. One day, Jonadab asked Amnon why he was so forlorn that he could not eat, and Amnon confessed to him a secret lust for his own sister, Tamar.

#### **READ: II Samuel 13:1-4**

Amnon's lust was unnatural and unthinkable. Unnatural and unthinkable, and yet, dominating Amnon's life. We are sometimes startled and shocked by sin, but the truth is that the most wicked of sins is not far from any one of us. The bent is still there, and the pull is still felt. Amnon saw the beauty of his sister and said in his heart, "I want it." That's called "the lust of the eyes" and we must guard against it.

### WEDNESDAY

Jonadab suggested a way for Amnon to get to Tamar. He said that Amnon should pretend to be sick, and when David came to see how he was doing, he should ask the King to allow Tamar to nurse him back to health. Amnon did exactly what Jonadab suggested and his plan worked perfectly.

#### **READ: II Samuel 13:5-7**

Despite being the King's oldest son, Amnon made it obvious that he was unhappy. Jonadab surmised as much and pursued the subject. Why was the King-to-be so obsessed with "love" that he was *lean*? Same question for saints today (and maybe even for us personally): why are the children of the King and heirs of the Crown of Life *lean from day to day*? The Lord "gives fatness to the soul" the Psalmist wrote. That is, the Lord gives us satisfaction regarding the things of God. Are you feeling fat today? (satisfied in the Lord?) I hope so! Because we ought to be so!

### THURSDAY

Tamar did as David told her to do. She prepared food for her "sick" brother, baking cakes as he watched. But he said he was too sick to eat it himself. He dismissed all the servants from his quarters, and then asked Tamar to feed him. Tamar apparently was deceived in all this and did as he requested: she prepared to feed him.

#### **READ: II Samuel 13:8-10**

I'm very impressed with Tamar! The King's daughter, knows how to bake! And she does so kindly. The dismissed servants and guards knew better than she! Why did they not sound the alarm, I wonder? Regardless of that, Tamar is like the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. Caring for the sick will always be near to God's heart. Such actions are the proof of true faith. May God always find us as willing as Tamar.

### FRIDAY

Sitting on Amnon's bed, thinking that he was too sick and feeble to feed himself, Tamar started to feed him. But he urged her to lie down with him. She refused strongly, saying that such a wicked thing should not be done! She pleaded with him to ask David for permission to marry her; she said that David would surely say yes. But Amnon ignored her pleas and forced himself upon her.

#### **READ: II Samuel 13:11-14**

Here we see Tamar pleading with Amnon not to do this evil thing, telling him that he will be recognized as a great fool, and suggesting by that, I think, that the good citizens of Israel will not allow a fool to reign over them. In other words, you are throwing away your future, she told him. Is that not a warning always? That a person is throwing away his eternal future for the pleasures of sin for a season? Or that we, as believers, are throwing away great blessing when we choose the path of sin.

### SATURDAY

Amnon's "love" turned to hatred. He hated her more than he had previously lusted for her, and told her to leave. Believing that a child might come of this and that some might think her to have been a willing partner, or even if no child were conceived, in her own heart, thinking she would remember the vileness of that act for the rest of her life, Tamar replied that her shame would be too great. She seems to have the hope that perhaps, even now, he would formally acknowledge her and legitimize the marriage, so great is her shame.

#### **READ: II Samuel 13:15,16**

The pleasure of sin is never as great as it is imagined to be beforehand. To me, it seems that Amnon imagined that sex with the beautiful Tamar would be the best thing that ever happened to him, and, in fact, it proved to be far less than that. His passion was not returned. His expectations were not realized. His dreams were unfulfilled. His sinful desires turned out to be far more sinful and far less desirable than he had ever thought! Here is the lesson: sin always works this way. It always leaves us empty and miserable. It never satisfies as Jesus satisfies.

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