

**THERE IS TROUBLE AHEAD-CONSPIRACY IN  
DAVID'S HOUSEHOLD**

**2 SAMUEL 13 to 15**

**Amnon rapes Tamar**

Although the law of Moses discourages rather than bans having more than one wife, the Old Testament gives no picture of contented polygamy. Invariably the story throbs with pain and unhappiness. In Matthew 19:8 Jesus emphasises that a plurality of wives was not God's intention for mankind. "It was not like that at the creation." David's case is one of the unhappiest. David apparently ran a home where discipline was non-existent. He had never reprimanded Adonijah about anything (1 Kings 1:6) and that statement seems true of all the children.

**Read 2 Samuel 13: 1-15, 21**

- What advice does Jonadab offer to Amnon in order to seduce Tamar (v.5)?
- 
- 

- We sometimes use the following statements in the midst of temptation to convince ourselves that it's OK to sin. What errors of thinking can you find in them?

"If I play it smart, I can have the best of both worlds."

"If I keep my sin secret, no one will get hurt."

"Even if I get caught, I can always ask forgiveness."

---

---

- What actions did David take after he heard of the rape (v.21)
- 
- 

### **Read verses 23-29**

Absalom waited two years for David to act (v.23). But because of his father's passivity, Absalom's hatred festered into a plot to murder Amnon.

- If you were Amnon or David, would you suspect Absalom's party invitation (vv.26-27)? Why or why not?
- 
- 

- Why is revenge still on Absalom's mind?
- 

- What can you say about Jonadab (vv 5 and 32)?
- 
- 

- With Amnon (heir apparent) dead, what might Absalom the next in line to the throne think of himself as a refugee?
- 
- 

David may have given Absalom the finest house to live in, money to spend, and servants to meet his needs, but he didn't give him the one thing his son needed most: a relationship with his father. Shoved aside for two more years (v.28), Absalom began to loathe his father and determined to take the precious Kingdom David has spent his life building.

### **Read 2 Samuel 14: 1-21**

- Is Joab acting here in the best interests of Absalom, David or himself? Why do you think so?
-

- What aspects of the woman's clever story appeal to David: (a) The law which seeks to perpetuate a family name through descendants? (see Deut. 25: 5-6)? (b) The law which permits blood revenge (see Numbers 35: 19-21 (c) The brothers' motives were more selfish than just? (d) Murder "without malice aforethought" is not punishable by death (see Deut. 19: 4-6)?
- 
- 

## 2 Samuel 15: 1-2

Trouble in his family plagued David's public career, and Absalom was its focus. Handsome, popular, undisciplined, and ambitious, he found events smiling on him in a macabre sort of way. Incest with his sister Tamar provided him with the excuse to remove Amnon, David's first-born, from the scene. An unholy alliance with Joab, the ingratiating commander-in-chief of the army, that served both their interests restored him from banishment but only partly to the royal favour. The brooding inactivity of his father provided a public foil for his flair and flamboyant style and increased his rating in the popularity polls of the day, till he was ready to stage his coup d'etat. When he raised his standard in Hebron, people flocked to him, and soon they were ready to march on Jerusalem.

- What do 'chariots, horses, and 50 men' signal of Absalom's ambitions (v. 1; see 1 Samuel 8:11)?
- 
- 

- As a victim of injustice, what would you make of Absalom's two decrees (vv 3, 4)? His greetings (v. 5)?
- 
- 

- Why do you think Absalom waits "four years" (v.7) to carry out his conspiracy plot?
- 
-

The best time to brace your house against a storm is before rain starts falling and the wind begins to howl. Likewise, the best time to protect yourself against the stormy consequences of sin is before temptation strikes.

If David had only considered the whirlwind his sin would cause before his passions were aroused, he might never have sown the wind of adultery with Bathsheba. Now, while the winds are calm, ask yourself a few hard questions about what might happen if you were to fail morally.

- Who would my moral failure injure?

---

---

- How would my sin impact my reputation?

---

- My ministry?, My career?

---

- What devastation would my sin cause my family?

---

- How would my sin change my relationship with God?

---

- Can any pleasure be worth this much pain?

---