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2 SAMUEL 14:1-33

In today's lesson, we're going to continue to see the consequences of David's sin.

God had forgiven David, but He had also told David that He would raise up evil against him from his own household.

Last week, we saw the beginning of that. Last week we saw how God took the life of David's baby. Last week we also saw how David's son raped his half-sister and then how he himself was killed by his half-brother.

Chapter 13 also told us that after Absalom had Amnon slain, he fled.

So, the sword has indeed descended upon David's house. God indeed has allowed evil to be raised up against David from his own household.

Chapter 13 told us that David was angry with Amnon for raping Tamar, but it doesn't tell us David did anything to him. And when David found out about Absalom's murder of Amnon, he did nothing about that either.

So, Absalom fled from his father's presence. Absalom was obviously afraid that David **would** take action against him.

Look at **verse 39** of **chapter 13**...David's heart longed for Absalom. And I see the father in David as he longs for his son.

But, we can't get away from the fact that Absalom had committed murder. And even though he was the king's son, something should have been done. **What was the punishment for murder in the Old Testament? It was death!**

Genesis 9:6: *"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man."*

Numbers 35:33: *"So you shall not pollute the land in which you are; for blood pollutes the land and no expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it."*

Hadn't David done the same thing? Yes, but God had said, "You will not die, David, but I will bring another punishment on you." But, God had not told Absalom this.

Matthew Henry: *"God's laws were never designed to be like cobwebs, which catch the little flies, but suffer the great ones to break through."*

We don't know what went through Absalom's mind those two years before he killed Amnon. Was he waiting for David to punish Amnon?

Did he finally just say, "You know, Daddy got away with murder, I think I can, too. Besides, if they come after me,

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I can always run to my granddaddy's house."

And, before the story of Absalom is finished, I believe we'll see that David **should** have put Absalom to death. David will indeed reap a bitter harvest for disobeying God.

He is the father of a "**divided family**"...a "**divided household**"...and I also believe we're going to see in today's lesson that David also had a "**divided heart.**"

So, with all that in mind, let's look at **chapter 14**...

Verses 1-3...

Before we get into what this woman said to David I want to say this. **We don't see God in this.**

What we see is Joab taking matters into his own hands. Joab saw David becoming a **weak** and **ineffective** and **melancholy** king. Joab knew David's heart was broken and grieving. His heart was grieving for Amnon and it was broken for Tamar and it was longing for Absalom.

Some theologians believe David was physically ill during this time. They believe it was during this time that David wrote **Psalm 41**, and this psalm talks about how his friends are speaking evil against him and how they're saying that David will lie down one night and not get up again.

We'll look at this psalm more next week, but today I want us to think

- what made Joab send this woman to David.
- what was the message she brought
- and also what was the outcome of her visit.

Joab was David's general. He was second in command. What was the reason Joab got in touch with this woman? What made him tell her how to dress and how to act and what made him put words in her mouth?

Was Joab merely concerned about David's broken heart and his broken relationship with Absalom?

Or had Joab seen that the people were losing confidence in David...because they knew about his sin with Bathsheba, and that he had taken no action against Amnon, nor against Absalom?

We need to realize something that I didn't know until this past week as I studied. The city of Jerusalem was a very small place back then...only 11 square acres...not 11 square miles...11 square acres.

Our church sits on 5 ½ square acres. So, Jerusalem was almost twice the size...which means it wasn't very big, was it? **And I want to tell you, it would be very hard to keep a secret when the king and the people live in a city that small.**

What if word got out to the nations around Israel that King David was in depression? What if those nations decided to come against Israel?

So, it may be that Joab was concerned about what would happen to the kingdom if something happened to David. Who would lead the people? Absalom had fled and he was apparently the next in line to the throne.

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Had Joab seen in this situation that his position was threatened? Joab was a general, but Joab was also a politician. And like most politicians, Joab didn't want his position jeopardized!

Joab knew that David was heartsick. Joab knew the people were speaking against him and Joab decided something must be done.

Joab decided, "Absalom needs to come back. David needs to send for him. Hey, Nathan came to David and told him a story and it got David's attention. I'll send someone to tell David a story and see if I can his attention."

However, there was a huge difference...Nathan was sent by God to David. The woman from Tekoa was sent by Joab to David.

This woman was apparently an actress. The word translated "wise" in **verse 2** can also be translated "**skillful**." So, with all that as background, let's see what she says.

Verses 4-17...

Do you see what this woman from Tekoa is doing? She is telling David a story in order to manipulate him! Nothing she said was true. She's simply giving David a fictitious set of circumstances in order to get David to bring Absalom back home!

She said she had two sons...and one son killed the other son, and she said, "Now, all my family wants me to hand over my only living son so he can be punished."

Well, it looks as though David tried at first to dismiss her. He tells her to just go on home, and he'll give orders concerning her... "I'll see that your needs are met."

But, that's not good enough. Remember, she is very skilled and she pleads her case a couple more times and finally, David assured her that her son's murder would be forgiven...that not one hair of his head would fall to the ground.

Verse 14: She said "God doesn't take away life but plans ways so that the banished one may not be cast out from Him."

But God **did** and **does** take away life! God **doesn't** always bring the banished ones back. She had used God's name. She had used pious sounding words...but not everything she said was true...in fact, **most** of what she said was untrue.

And David knew better!! One of the things God had decreed the king of Israel do is **write** a copy of the Law and **read** it all the days of his life...**he should have seen right through this...**

...but the woman from Tekoa had done her job and she had done it very well!

Mission accomplished!! Her manipulation had worked. So, she said in essence, "Why is it David, why is it that you decree that my son who murdered his brother be forgiven, yet you haven't forgiven your son who murdered his brother. Don't you know, David, that what you're doing is causing unrest in the whole land of Israel?"

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And suddenly the lights go on in David's brain...and he said,
"I want to to ask you something...Did Joab put you up to this?"

David got Joab's message. He knew that if he could forgive a fictitious son that didn't even exist, he surely should be able to forgive his real son who did exist.

So, David called Joab to him...

Verse 21... "Joab, go get Absalom and bring him back..."

Verses 22-24...

We said earlier that at this point in his life, David not only had a divided house, but he had a divided heart. His heart was toward Absalom, but he didn't allow Absalom to come all the way to his house. Absalom went to his own house.

Verses 25-27...

Absalom was a very handsome man. He was a very highly praised man. He was a very proud man...**proud of his looks...proud of his hair...proud of himself.**

One of the seven deadly sins is pride...and we're going to see before this is over that Absalom was a very **arrogant man**. He was basically saying, "**I did what I did because my daddy wouldn't do it.**"

And **verse 28** tells us he lived two full years in Jerusalem and never saw David.

We've already said Jerusalem was a very small city. Two years is a long time to not see somebody in an 11 square acre town. **I believe you'd have to really work at that, don't you?**

I believe this lets us know that David's forgiveness is not genuine forgiveness. David knew what he should have done. He knew he should have taken measures against Amnon for raping Tamar, and he knew he should have punished Absalom for murdering Amnon.

He still loved Absalom as a father always loves his son, but he knew he couldn't just welcome him back into full fellowship with him.

So, for two long years these two men lived in the same very small community and never saw each other.

Well, Absalom finally decided he'd had enough! He said, "Joab, you tell my Daddy I'm ready to see him." But, Joab doesn't show up. He won't even come.

And so Absalom sends word to him a second time... "Joab, you come. I need to talk to you. I want you to arrange an audience with my Daddy."

But, Joab doesn't come. And Absalom says, "I need to get this man's attention." Joab seems to have been a farmer as well as a general and he had sown a big field of barley and his crops were beginning to come up.

And Absalom said to some of his buddies, "I want you to go burn his barley field." And that's what happened!

And guess what? Joab shows up. That's one good way to get somebody's attention. Just burn his barley field.

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And so Joab comes and says, "Why did you burn my field? And Absalom said, "Because that's the only way I could get you to come. I want you to go tell my Daddy that I want to see him." And Joab goes to David and arranged for them to meet.

Verse 33...

Now, on the surface this looks like "and they lived happily ever after" doesn't it? But we know there was nothing resolved!

The bottom line is David still did not hold Absalom accountable and Absalom still showed no repentance and remorse.

The bottom line is we see a king with a guilty conscience and we see the son of a king with no conscience.

And that's basically what **chapter 14** is all about...sort of a strange story...strange and sad.

Now, what do we need to see in this passage of Scripture that can be applied to our lives today? Is there **anything at all** that we can learn from this that affects us or our family or our nation?

I believe there are some things...so let's spend the rest of our time together looking at this...

And before we do that, we need to know that there are some godly men who believe Joab's orchestrating the story by the woman of Tekoa was a good thing. But we need to be reminded again that we don't see that God told Joab to do this as He had told Nathan.

Joab was a general. Joab was a soldier. Joab was a barley grower.

But, Joab was not a prophet of God! So, everything that went on in *chapter 14* went on without divine sanction.

And I wonder if this had really been of God, why He didn't send His prophet, Nathan, to David as He had done before.

So...with that reminder...let's draw some practical truths...

1) Children watch what their parents and grandparents do.

Absalom thought David would punish Amnon for what he had done to Tamar. And when he didn't he took matters into his own hands. He had seen his father get by with murder...and he believed he could as well.

I don't believe we will know this side of heaven the influence We have on our children and grandchildren...both for good and for evil.

My husband talked with our neighbor across the road this past week. He now has cancer in his spine. He told him he is trying to witness to his sons. But, his sons won't pay any attention to him.

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WHY? Because they saw their daddy go his own way all his life...never giving the Lord Jesus the time of day.

Thank the Lord for Gordon's salvation, but what a shame that he has wasted his life living for the devil instead of living for the Lord. But, his sons probably believe they, like their father, can wait until they're faced with a life-threatening illness before they come to know Jesus.

I pray we will do **all** we can, as **soon** as we can, to live our faith in Jesus before the eyes of our children and grandchildren

2) We should leave things to God. His timing and His ways are always better than ours.

I want to ask you...

Has there ever been a time when you've seen a problem between folks and you've gotten in the middle and tried to solve it?

Be careful. Don't do this unless God has told you to do it! God doesn't need you and me to **always** manipulate and orchestrate circumstances, you know!

I believe if you see a problem between members of your family or members of your church or members of your Sunday School class...ask God to direct you...He just may want you to get involved...but be sure your motives are pure!

Joab definitely had a vested interest in this. Joab was playing politics. Joab had seen how the people were concerned because their king was disturbed. Joab knew the nation didn't need unrest. Joab knew if another kingdom came against Israel and something happened to David then Israel would be in trouble.

Joab knew he might lose his position...and I believe we'll see in the weeks ahead that Joab didn't really care about Absalom...or the relationship between David and Absalom.

3) Capital punishment is not up for debate.

Look at **verse 14**...

This woman was indeed skillful. She was presenting a very liberal view of capital punishment.

Back in those days, God had ordained "cities of refuge" for folks guilty of manslaughter. But, Absalom wasn't guilty of manslaughter. He was guilty of conspiring for two full years to have Amnon murdered. That's why he didn't go to a city of refuge. Instead he had gone to the city of Geshur in Syria...to the house of mother's father...he had fled to his grandfather's house.

We live in a nation where folks don't worry about the law of the land. Criminals aren't punished. Murderers sit on death row year after year after.

The **Book of Ecclesiastes** says, **"Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among are given fully to do evil."**

Capital punishment is divinely instituted...and that leads us to our third truth.

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4) The Word of God is profitable.

This means it's to our benefit. God's Word works. And when you disobey God's Word, you don't really break God's law...God's law breaks you.

What had God said about murderers? He said they should be put to death! That's profitable!

Liberals today say capital punishment doesn't deter crime.
Of course it does!

The one that is put to death for his crime won't commit that crime again, will he?

If indeed this man they caught in connection with this precious little California girl's kidnap, rape and murder is found guilty and put to death, we can be sure of one thing...he won't ever do that to another precious little girl!!

God's Word is profitable!! It's for our benefit. And when we disobey it, consequences come.

According to the Law of Moses, Amnon should have been cut off from his people for what he did to Tamar. And according to the Law of Moses, Absalom should have been put to death. But, neither of these things happened.

Instead, David allowed Absalom to come back home. And we're going to see in the weeks ahead just what kind of havoc Absalom brought upon David and his household.

Paul told Timothy:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness."

I read this past week in a Warren Wiersbe book:

Scripture teaches us what **is** right...***that's the teaching or doctrine.***

It teaches us what is **not** right...***that's the reproof.***

It teaches us how to **get** right...***that's the correction.***

It teaches us how to **stay** right...***that's the training in righteousness."***

5) All counsel is not godly counsel.

The end result of the Tekoa woman's encounter with David was that she counseled him to bring Absalom back. She even made it sound as though it came from God.

We need be walking closely enough with God that we can discern whether the counsel we receive is from God or from man...or from the woman from Tekoa. 😊

One last thing and we're through. We said earlier that David had a divided household. God had brought a sword upon David's home and it had cut his household to shreds.

But, we also said that David had a divided heart. He brought Absalom back, but there was no real forgiveness, was there?

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Aren't you glad that when God forgives...He forgives totally and completely?

David's forgiveness of Absalom was completely inadequate because David was a sinner...he was a saved sinner, but he knew it was the results of his sin that were being played out before his eyes.

And David's inadequate forgiveness led to a further outbreak of sin, and we'll see that in the weeks ahead.

God's forgiveness of a man's soul is completely adequate...because God is holy and righteous and just and altogether good. And this forgiveness is a great deterrent to continued sin in the believer's life.

May God seal the truths of this chapter to our hearts!