

MAY 28

2 Samuel 13

It is hard to tell how much time had passed. David had written Psalm 51 and shown true repentance (sort of). It might be that David hoped that what the Lord had said would happen, would not happen, or maybe he thought the threat would come from outside of Israel. I'm sure he didn't see this coming. This is not only a sad day in the history of redemption, but days like this would keep on rolling.

Vs. 1-6 Here we are introduced to the old "come and bake bread in my presence" ploy. With so many wives and children, these people, though related, didn't have the same, normal "I'd gag if I kissed my sister" repulsion. They were almost like strangers to each other in this respect. Although we don't see the name "Satan" anywhere in this context, we know from the New Testament, that he was involved somewhere.

Isn't it interesting that we hear so little about Satan in all of this history? I think it is because the real "enemy" is the sickness within us.

Vs. 7-14 Apparently this was an accepted custom in that culture for a sick person. That's why David fell for this. I can imagine that if you were rich, the food was prepared by servants somewhere removed from the main living quarters, possibly in another house. Now, you have to admit, that when the right stuff is being made, it makes the house smell great. Actually, I think I have even gained weight just smelling bread being baked. That sense of warmth and wholeness and smell, and, in general, the wonderfulness of it all was probably thought to help make a sick person well. Anyway, as silly and as transparent as this sounds to us, it probably was rational in that culture.

When Amnon sent everyone out of the room, didn't anyone think it looked fishy?

V. 13 This marriage would have been forbidden in Israel, meaning they would have had to leave Israel, and Amnon could not have been king. Under the guidelines of the law, this kind of incest was forbidden, but it would have been no different than Abraham and Sarah, who both had a common father but different mothers. It is just to say that if Amnon had really been honest, he could have had her by abdicating from the throne and living in Moab or Egypt. With David's connections, it would still have been a good life and a realistic option.

V. 14 This is God's punishment on David. The sickness released in the family was ironically bearing fruit. I wonder how much this act mirrored David's interaction with Bathsheba. I wonder if he used the "come and bake bread for me" ploy too?

Vs. 15-19 Violating Tamar like this would make her "unmarryable" in the proper circles. Tamar was not at fault, but it would have been Amnon's responsibility to do the right thing and marry her.

Vs. 20-22 This will be like the spreading of a cancer. Obviously Absalom will be responsible for his own actions, but this, humanly speaking, destroyed him. And this is where David failed as a father, as a leader and as a follower of God. He failed too because of his own failure. How could David judge his son for doing what he, himself, had done? And now we also see another sickness in David that will be very transparent when he has to deal with Absalom. David was consumed with worry about which son would take the throne after him.

You might have a note that the Dead Sea Scroll and Septuagint (and Luther) add, "But he would not punish his son Amnon because he loved him, since he was his firstborn." David couldn't judge him; and at the same time, he hoped that Amnon would take the throne when he died. This lack of justice created an intense hatred and bitterness in Absalom that would engulf the nation in

war. As we'll see, there was at least one other man who was deeply affected by this. I'm sure that many, many people lost confidence in David.

V. 22 You can see that hatred was festering in the heart of Absalom.

Vs. 23-33 Two years went by. That is not only hatred; it is commitment to have revenge.

V. 26 How did David fall for this? I'm assuming that as the heir apparent, Amnon represented the king at some events and this is what Absalom was asking for. He certainly didn't want David there. He must have known that David would refuse; and so, as a compromise, he pleaded with David to show the favor of his presence by sending Amnon to represent him.

This is just a speculative point here, but I don't think David was a good relational communicator. He wrote wonderful songs and psalms, but as a father and as a verbal minister to his family, he seems to have been a disaster. We'll see more of that tomorrow and in the days to come.

Vs. 37-39 Three years and no communication, just brooding and sulking on David's part. And what was going through Absalom's mind? And here we see a very confused David, so compromised in his own heart and so anxious to have his own son sit on the throne, that he can no longer judge rightly. And this all began one evening as he watched a loyal friend's wife bathe. How tragic.

For us as disciples, I think the lesson to learn here is to be very serious and intentional to keep our passions fulfilled God's way. I've heard of people who have fallen into adultery or pornography and disqualified themselves from ministry, if by no other way than by the distrust and bitterness they have brought into their close relationships. God is showing us something in David's life that is meant to be a warning to us. With everything God is showing us here, it would be doubly tragic to make the same mistakes. Imagine getting to heaven and having David walk up to a fallen disciple and say, "What? God exposed my sin and wrote it on the pages of His Word to help you and you ignored it?"

John 17

Vs. 1-5 It is instructive that as Jesus begins this prayer for His disciples, it is all about glory, that is, revealing who the Son is and who the Father is. As followers of our Lord, living for and giving glory to the Father should be just as important to us as it was to our Lord.

V. 3 This is a great definition of what eternal life is.

Vs. 4-5 This seems like a very intimate talk between the Son and His Father.

Vs. 6-8 I guess you could say that it wasn't Jesus' job to make them believe, but to manifest the Father before them. The final word on their progress was that they had kept the Father's Word, which was the Word that Jesus had spoken.

Vs. 9-12 It appears that Jesus was praying for their growth and unity in Him. Judas was lost and these 11 would be tested. Jesus was glorified in them in that they had saving faith and were still following Him. Jesus didn't just want the Father to protect them, but to give them the oneness with Him that Jesus had with the Father. I guess that unity is a supernatural enablement too. I think this oneness grows out of the mission.

Vs. 13-19 Notice that it was the Word that made them hated by the world, and it was the Word that sanctified them in the truth. Verse 18 is the pre-resurrection giving of the Great Commission. Jesus is not only announcing that they will complete what He has begun, but Jesus is saying He will continue His work with them by consecrating Himself, now and during the church age as He sits at the right hand of God. (See Mark 16:20.)

Vs. 20-23 Jesus prayed that the Father would grant that all who believed in Jesus would have spiritual unity.

Vs. 24-26 Jesus also prayed that they/we would be with Him and would see His glory and would be filled with the love that the Father had for the Son.

There is a lot of love and unity being spoken of here. And it makes sense to me that it is not only in Jesus and in His Word, but we need to be following Him in the harvest to really understand what He is talking about.

Psalm 119:81-96

Vs. 81-88 What stands out to me is the longing in these verses. Do you notice here, and through this entire psalm, the interchange between David's distress and going to the Word?

Vs. 89-96 I think David understood that as the promises were made in the past, there was also waiting and suffering as those promises moved to fulfillment. Abraham waited; Joseph waited; Israel waited and Moses waited. David was now a part of this waiting, but also he had become a part of the story of God's faithfulness.

V. 92 I'm sure this was true for David in those long years of running from Saul. I'll bet it became true for David again as his family was falling apart.

V. 93 If only that had been true of David. It needs to be true of me.

Proverbs 16:6-7

David was still a man after God's own heart and I'm sure these two verses came into play as God forgave David and as David refocused his life on following God. We need the fear of the Lord, and we need to live to please our Lord and honor our Father, as we follow in the harvest.