

## Shadows of Redemption: Tamar and Redemption for the Violated

(2 Samuel 13:13)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. I owe much of the thoughts and points of this lesson to Alan Yater and to the many messages I heard at SALT Camp.
2. The message was so appropriate to our study of **redemption** that I felt it is important to share it with you today.
3. Please open your Bible at 2 Samuel 13. There are some stories in the Bible that should make us weep. This is one of them.
  - A. It is the story of a woman who was horribly abused and violated. She suffered at the hands of a member of her own family, and it happened in the king's household.
  - B. This is a story that speaks directly to an issue that continues to dominate our society, our news, and possibly even our lives.
    - i. I am aware that some among us may relate because they have been violated by *sinners* or by *sin* in one way or another.
    - ii. My hope and prayer that God will bring help, hope, and healing through his Word today into the lives of those hurting.
4. What I find in this account is that God's Word speaks to every area of life.
  - A. Why would this story be preserved in the Scripture if it were not for the purpose of ministering to those who need help, hope, and healing today?
  - B. The story that is before us today, unfolds in six ugly scenes.

### BODY:

#### **I. Scene One: The tormented son**

- A. Absalom, David's son by Maacah, had a beautiful sister named Tamar. And, **Amnon**, David's oldest son, and who was born to Ahinoam, **loved Tamar**, his *stepsister*, and was so tormented by it that he made himself sick because of her (2 Sam. 13:1-2, 4).
  1. Amnon knew little about love, seeing it seeks the good of the person, irrespective of the cost.
    - a. For, Amnon was *obsessed* with Tamar and couldn't get her out of his mind.
    - b. So, for Amnon love was nothing more than getting what he wanted.
  2. Amnon **lived without God**. And when you live without God, something else will take the place of God. So, his passions became his god and took control of his life.
- B. You would think the fact that he was distressed to the point of making himself sick would be a sign to him that his desire was not pushing him in the right direction.
  1. But perhaps Amnon reasoned, as so many do today, that feelings so strong must be right, which is always a false bit of reasoning.
  2. And if you allow your passions to gain control of your life, they will eventually torment you as they did Absalom and rule you instead of God ruling you.

#### **II. Scene Two: The Crafty (Devious) Friend**

- A. Amnon had a crafty friend named Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother (2 Sam. 13:3).
  1. Jonadab knew Amnon and could see something was wrong and wants to know what it is.
  2. Amnon said, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister" (2 Sam. 13:4). So Jonadab came up with a scheme that would get Amnon some time alone with Tamar.
- B. Jonadab's idea of love seems to be affirming his friend's desires and supporting whatever he wants. *That* is basically at the heart of our PC philosophy today!
  1. But that is a long way from seeking someone's good.
  2. Beware of the friend who is always willing to support what you want or want to do.

#### **III. Scene Three: The Loyal Daughter**

- A. David sends Tamar to Amnon's house to prepare food for her supposedly sick brother and she went and prepared the cakes in his sight—*just as she was asked to do* (2 Sam. 13:7-8).
  1. Tamar was not only a beautiful woman but also appears to be a godly and humble woman.
  2. For, despite being a *princess* she does not hesitate to knead the dough with her own hands and bake bread and cakes for her seemingly sick brother.
- B. As a result of her humble obedience shame was heaped on her in three ways:
  1. She was **betrayed**:
    - a. That David "sent home to Tamar" (2 Sam. 13:7) indicates she lived in the king's house under his protection.
      - i. And, the king sent her to her brother's house where she should have been honored and had every right to feel that she would be completely safe.
      - ii. Why didn't David ask, "Why Tamar and not one of Amnon's servants?"
    - b. She trusted Amnon and was betrayed by Amnon...*the one she came to serve*.
  2. She was **violated**:
    - a. As Amnon's plan played out he sought to commit fornication with Tamar; but she refused (2 Sam. 13:9-12).
      - i. Here we see the trusting innocence of Tamar as she entered Amnon's room.
      - ii. Again, you see Tamar's godliness in her refusal of Absalom's advances!
    - b. She also states a very valid conclusion: "And I, where could I take my shame? And as for you, you would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you." (2 Sam. 13:13).
      - i. Tamar knows the true meaning of love and seeks Amnon's good, as well as her own.
      - ii. Yet, Tamar's statement, "Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you" (12:13), is a difficult one.
        - i) This was likely an attempt to get out of Amnon's trap, seeing *such a union was unlawful* (Deut. 27:22 – "Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.").
      - iii. But, Amnon would not listen, and she was violated because "being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her" (13:14).
  3. She was **rejected**:
    - a. "Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, 'Arise, be gone!'" (13:15)
    - b. Note how quickly Amnon's lust turns to loathing—in a *moment* (13:16-18). And, Tamar is thrown out like a piece of trash and the door is bolted behind her.

#### IV. Scene Four: The Vengeful Brother

- A. I want you to notice the response of the two men to whom Tamar might have looked for some help and some comfort in her trauma and her ordeal.
- B. Despite her great sorrow, Absalom is no help help to her.
  1. **Absalom** said to her, "Now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this to heart" (13:20).
    - a. Absalom is loyal to his sister, but his counsel was very wrong!
    - b. He basically tells her to **keep quiet and move on!**
  2. It was as if it was no big deal, that it was all in the family. The world never changes!
- C. Yet, Absalom knew that this was a big deal, so big that it caused him to hate Amnon so much that on that very day he decided he would kill him (13:21-22).
  1. Absalom should have promptly confronted Amnon with the truth.

2. But instead he acted as though nothing happened, while his hatred for Amnon burned in his heart for 2 years, leading to Amnon's murder and to his own corruption (13:22).
3. Sin that is not dealt with promptly and properly will destroy all involved!

#### V. Scene Five: The Passive Father

- A. There are some very significant words we should not miss. These are: "When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry" (2 Samuel 13:21).
  1. David knew what happened and the details were clear enough that it made him *very* angry!
  2. What happens from this point forward hinged on David—what he would do about this!
    - a. Amnon is David's son (2 Sam. 13:1) and Jonadab is his nephew (2 Sam. 13:3) and Tamar is David's daughter who lived in David's house (2 Sam. 13:7).
    - b. So, what will a **very angry** David do about this outrage in his own family and in God's kingdom in which rules? The answer: **Absolutely nothing!**
    - c. David does nothing to comfort his daughter or to discipline his son. He does not even bring his daughter home, seeing from that day forward Tamar lived as a "desolate woman" in Absalom's home (2 Sam. 13:20)!
- B. It is often said that David would not have felt that he was able to deal with the sin of Amnon because he saw a reflection of his own sin in Amnon's actions.
  1. David's sin with Bathsheba was similar in many ways and rattled the foundation of David's house and brought immorality and violence into his family. **So, Father's beware!**
  2. **Yet, this was no excuse for David.**
    - a. As a father he has a duty to love his daughter and to discipline his son. Yet, he failed completely on both accounts.
    - b. David's failure left Amnon without discipline, Tamar without justice, and the door open for Absalom to take the law into his own hands.
- C. Here were two men in Tamar's life who she might have turned to for help, and neither tells the truth about what happened to Tamar nor addresses it properly.
  1. Absalom hides it.
  2. David ignores it.
  3. Will anyone speak the truth about what happened to this godly woman?
- D. God does...right here in what we are reading! Why else would we read about this?
  1. God will not ignore or hide what happened to Tamar.
  2. God tells her story in His word when no one else will, telling the world what happened to His daughter, Tamar. He will not have it hidden or ignored!

#### VI. Scene Six: Tamar's pain

- A. This sin against Tamar brought:
  1. Great sorrow and suffering (2 Sam. 13:19 – "Then Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that was on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly.").
  2. Desolation upon her (2 Sam. 13:20 – "...So Tamar remained **desolate** in her brother Absalom's house."). She was isolated from society.
- B. Try to take in the pain of this godly woman.
  1. She feels so wretched that she put ashes on her head and tore her royal robe given her as a daughter of the king.
    - a. This beautiful woman didn't feel like a daughter of a king because she had been treated like trash and now feels like trash, feeling no longer worthy to be the king's daughter!
    - b. No wonder she puts her head in her hands and cries out in pain!
  2. And her sense of shame did not go away. She lived as a "desolate woman," disqualified from marriage through no fault of her own. She was damaged goods!

- a. There are some words of Job that speak very powerfully to the experience of person abused by sinners or sin (Job 10:15 – “If I am wicked, woe to me; **even if I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head. I am full of disgrace**; See my misery!”).
- b. Though she did nothing, like Job she was drowning in shame.
- C. That’s where Tamar was, and maybe you know what that is like.
  - 1. Tamar had done nothing wrong, but shame was heaped on her and she felt the weight of it.
    - a. Her great unanswered question was “Where could I carry my shame” (2 Samuel 13:13)?
    - b. That’s what Tamar lived with, and no one in David’s house could answer her question.
    - c. Amnon abuses her, Absalom silences her and downplays her violation, and David ignores her. And she lives with this unanswered question: Where can I carry my shame?
    - d. Maybe you can relate.
  - 2. Or maybe you have done wrong...wrong you are **so ashamed of** that you do not want to tell anyone about, sin that is causing you like Tamar to live a **desolate life!**
    - a. In scene six Tamar is a desolate woman. Is this the end for her? Will she live like this forever?
    - b. Or will there be a scene seven for Tamar? Can there be a scene seven for you?

## VII. Scene Seven: The Answer to Tamar’s Question

- A. Tamar’s question was “Where could I carry my shame?” (2 Sam. 13:13)
- B. To answer this, **consider** the remarkable parallel between the story of Tamar and the story of Jesus Christ that you might know a better ending than we find in 2 Samuel 13.
  - 1. He too was sent by his Father to a place where he should have been honored and welcomed, seeing He “came to his own” (Jn. 1:11), but it continues “and His own did not receive Him.”
    - a. It should have been the safest place.
    - b. But Isaiah 53:3 says, “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”
  - 2. He too came as a servant and was betrayed by ones He came to serve.
  - 3. He too was violated, being stripped of his clothing, beaten, spat upon, and pierced.
  - 4. He too was excluded, thrown out like trash, and left to suffer outside the city, hanging in agony on the cross.
- C. **Understand...**
  - 1. That when it comes to being loaded with shame, **even when you have done nothing wrong**, Jesus says to you, “**Me too.**” He knows!
    - a. If you think deeply about what he endured, you will begin to know that Jesus Christ is a Savior to whom you can come. And there is no one else like him.
    - b. He dealt with all the shame that mankind, as ministers of Satan, could heap upon Him that He might be the answer to all who have been abused by sin and sinners (Heb. 12:1-2 – “...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, **despising the shame**, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”).
  - 2. Jesus endured the shame of the cross, a shame not his own, a shame put on him. And, though he felt it, it did not overcome Him. He looked down *on it*. He despised *it*.
    - a. He was able to do that because he knew who he was, and he knew where he was going.
    - b. He was treated like trash, but he knew he was the dearly loved Son of God. He was nailed to a cross, but he knew he was destined for a throne in heaven.
- D. **Answer** the question of identity: Who am I? When sin has had its way with us, the questions will follow: Am I spoiled goods? Am I a piece of trash?

1. But, to answer the question of “Who am I?” you must first to answer another question: “Of what story do I find myself a part?”
2. If you have been abused by sinners, or sin has abused you, it is part of your story and cannot be ignored or minimized. But *you must not allow it to become your story*.
3. The world answers your question of worth with affirmations of your self-worth, of your need for self-esteem and self-love.
  - a. But these give no means of overcoming your suffering and distorted self-image.
  - b. And, they do not answer the question of how to receive or give love...when you believe that you are unlovable, worthless, impure and corrupt. [1] *Rid of My Disgrace*.

E. Carry it to Jesus!

1. That is the only way to answer, “Where can I go with my shame?”
  - a. The answer does not lie in a new story of loving yourself.
  - b. The answer lies in the story of the Son of God who loved you and gave himself for you.
    - i. There is a love outside of yourself.
    - ii. The Son of God welcomes you, receives you, holds you, and he will never let you go—irrespective of the cost, even if it means laying down his life for you.
2. Jesus came into the world so that your life could be part of a better story, so that the worst thing that happened to you, or even that you may have done, would not become the defining thing in your life, so that there could be a **seventh scene** for Tamar and for you—a new and better story of hope.
  - a. Jesus lives so that *in him* you may be able to *despise your shame and rise above it*, so that *no shame will have the last word in your life*, so that the ashes on Tamar’s head can be replaced with joy (Isa. 61:1-3 – “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor... <sup>2</sup>...to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup> to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes.”).
  - b. Remember that it is God “Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies” (Psalm 103:4) and that He will pour that lovingkindness and tender mercies into your soul so that over time it will heal you.
3. Tamar tore her royal robe because she no longer felt worthy to wear it. But Christ clothes his people in new royal robes of righteousness, and is not ashamed to call us His people.

CONCLUSION:

1. In the book of Revelation, we get scene seven—a great company of redeemed people. They are clothed in white robes, and they are not crying out in agony, but are shouting in triumph: “Salvation belongs to our God...and to the Lamb” (Revelation 7:10).
2. Scene seven in Tamar’s story is that right now those like her are a part of that great company.
  - A. Christ came into the world so that the outrage of Amnon’s sin should not have the last word in Tamar’s life.
  - B. He came into the world so that neither your sins nor the sins committed against you would be the defining story of your life.
  - C. He came so that your life could be part of a great story of Christ’s marvelous redemption.
3. Will that redemption, that salvation and healing in Christ be your story? Will you hate the sin that destroys you and embrace the Savior? There is hope for the abused, for sinners! F,R,C,B,LF?