

In 2 Samuel 12:10-11, the prophet Nathan tells David, "the sword shall never depart from thine house..." This prophecy predicts ongoing strife during David's reign. This sermon highlights both the external problems of the Kingdom and the internal problems of David's household.

### JOAB CAPTURES RABBAH (VERSES 26-29)

David stayed home during "the time when kings go forth to battle" (2 Sam 11:1). After the Bathsheba interlude, the story jumps back to the siege of Rabbah, the Ammonite capital, now Amman, Jordan. The city was strategically significant, making it a key military target.

2 Samuel 11-13 includes the Bathsheba saga, which digresses from the main story of Rabbah's siege. 2 Samuel 13:26 appears to return to the same point as 2 Samuel 11:1.

While David stayed in Jerusalem, Joab took the city (2 Sam 12:26) and informed David. Joab suggested David come to take the city himself to get the credit (v. 28). David then gathered the people, went to Rabbah, and took it (v. 29), indicating a staged event for appearance.

The likely timeline is:

- Joab went to battle; David stayed home and had an affair.
- Joab won and called David for a victory photo-op.
- Bathsheba learned she was pregnant, continuing the story..

### SPOILS OF WAR AND SUBJUGATION (VERSES 30-31)

As David was in Rabbah, he conquered the Ammonites' territory, bringing back their crown jewels, including "a talent of gold with precious stones" (v. 30), to Judea.

David then subjected the captured Ammonites to forced labor. They worked with saws, iron harrows, iron axes, and in brick kilns, likely referring to laborious tasks or passing through places of pagan worship of Molech.

David subjugated the Ammonites for labor rather than incorporating them into his kingdom. Interestingly, in 2 Samuel 17:27, these people support David during Absalom's coup.

Despite external triumphs, David's internal decay was evident. His moral failings and familial strife undermined his reign, leading to future turmoil. This sets the stage for the tragic story of Ammon and Tamar in 2 Samuel 13.

### AMNON'S OBSESSION AND SIN (2 SAMUEL 13:1-14)

Amnon, David's eldest son, becomes infatuated with his half-sister Tamar. His obsession grows to the point of illness. Amnon's shrewd cousin Jonadab devises a deceitful plan for him.

Jonadab advises Amnon to feign sickness and request King David send Tamar to care for him. Amnon follows the plan, and David sends Tamar.

At Amnon's house, he dismisses others and asks Tamar to bring food to his bedroom. He then grabs her and tries to force her. Tamar pleads with him not to

commit such a disgraceful act and suggests speaking to the king, but Amnon overpowers and rapes her.

This violent act sets off tragic events within David's household, contributing to the turmoil and strife prophesied for David's family.

### AMNON'S DESPICABLE REACTION (2 SAMUEL 13:15-17)

Once Amnon had what he wanted, he "hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her" (v. 15). This shows a character flaw, a possible mental illness, or Tamar insisting on marriage for honor. Her words upon being sent away, "this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me" (v. 16), support the last idea. Amnon's actions only worsen his image. Whether due to mental illness or not, it highlights the chaos in David's family life.

### THE PUBLIC (AND PRIVATE) RESPONSE (2 SAMUEL 13:18-22)

Tamar wore a special garment for virgin princesses. After being expelled, she publicly grieved, tearing the garment, putting ashes on her head, and crying out, showing her strong virtue (vv. 18-19).

Her brother Absalom immediately knew what had happened, likely aware of his brother's flaws. Bullinger notes Amnon was 22, Tamar 15, Absalom 20, and David 53 when this occurred, two years after Solomon's birth.

David learned of the events, possibly from Absalom, Tamar, or a servant (v. 21). As king, David was responsible for justice, starting with his household. However, administering justice is hard when one's own life is disordered.

### ABSALOM'S REVENGE (2 SAMUEL 13:24-29)

Absalom, angry and seeking justice, waited two years before planning revenge on Amnon for his sister Tamar. He invited all the king's sons to a sheep-shearing event and instructed his servants to kill Amnon when he was drunk.

During the feast, Absalom's servants killed Amnon, causing the other sons to flee in fear. This act of vengeance satisfied Absalom but further destabilized David's household and reign.

### CONFUSION IN THE AFTERMATH (2 SAMUEL 13:30-39)

After Amnon's murder, David's sons were confused and fearful. David initially believed Absalom had killed all his sons, but Jonadab clarified that only Amnon was dead, killed by Absalom's servants. David grieved deeply for Amnon but also longed for reconciliation with Absalom, who fled to Geshur.

The tragedy increased animosity within David's family, leading to discord and threatening his reign's stability and family unity.

### CONCLUSION

Nathan's prophecy to David about ongoing strife in his house due to his sins is vividly fulfilled. External military victories contrast with internal familial tragedies, revealing the complexities of leadership and power. David's battlefield successes starkly oppose the moral decay and turmoil in his household. The tragic events involving Amnon, Tamar, and Absalom highlight the prophecy's accuracy, reminding us of sin's consequences and its impact on personal and political realms.