

Burning Bush Blogs

Equipping men with biblical knowledge and leadership skills

Advanced Dig Deeper – Parenting Failures of David

From post: [Absalom Conspires to Take Down the King](#)

Trigger Warning: This Bible passage contains sexual content and violence

Assignment (Answers start on next page):

Using the [Context](#) from this post as your Observations, build an entire Bible study of 2 Samuel 13-14, focusing on what the passage is teaching us about King David and parenting. Hints for filling out details of each of the four sections are provided below.

NOTE – you may discover your own interpretations and applications beyond the prompts provided. If your conclusions are biblical, that's good!

OBSERVATION

Hint – Start with the context from the post as your initial list of observations. Add at least one of your own observations from the following verses:

- 2 Samuel 13:6-7
- 2 Samuel 13:21 (what doesn't this verse say about David)
- 2 Samuel 13:39
- 2 Samuel 14:28 and 2 Samuel 14:32

INTERPRETATION

Hints –

- How did David handle Amnon's lust for his half-sister vs what he should have done?
- Using this resource [Click Here](#), what did Deuteronomy 22 say about sexual assault? Do you agree with the assessment of verse 28 that the word "rape" is a mis-interpretation of the Hebrew?
- How did David handle Amnon's abuse of his half-sister?
- How did David respond to Absalom's anger?
- What was David's response to Amnon's death? How was his heart toward Absalom?
- Why did Absalom decide to burn Joab's fields?
- Note any thoughts on why David wasn't more involved in Amnon's situation and in reconciliation with Absalom.

CORRELATION

Hints – Perform a google search with the text "what does the Bible say about parenting?" List and summarize a few verses that apply to David's handling of Amnon and Absalom.

APPLICATION

Hints –

- How can we apply David's mistakes in parenting to our own parenting style?
- How did David's past affect his parenting, and what can we learn from it? Guilt?
- How can I apply these principles to my relationships with my children? My relationship with my parents?

Observations

Start with the context from the post as your initial list of observations. Add at least one of your own observations from the listed verses.

- Absalom was the third son of David by his wife Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.
- Absalom's half-brother Amnon defiled his sister Tamar. Adding to Tamar's disgrace (given the customs of the time), he refused to marry her, and she was a desolate woman for the rest of her life.
- David was angry with Amnon, but he did nothing about it.
- Absalom harbored hate in his heart for two years, before he finally orchestrated an opportunity to have his men kill Amnon.
- Absalom fled to Geshur, where his grandfather Talmai lived.
- Absalom stayed in Geshur for three years before David allowed him to return to Jerusalem.
- *2 Samuel 13:6-7* – Amnon pretended to be sick when he asked his father to send Tamar.
 - o David ignored Amnon's strange request to eat out of Tamar's hand.
 - o David, the king, sent Tamar to his son Amnon.
- *2 Samuel 13:21* – David was furious with Amnon...
 - o ...but didn't take any action to hold Amnon accountable.
 - o There's no record of David interacting with Absalom about the incident.
- *2 Samuel 13:39* – David longed to see his son Absalom who'd been living in exile.
- *2 Samuel 14:28,32* – When Absalom returned to Jerusalem, he had to burn Joab's fields to get an audience with his father.

Interpretations

- *How did David handle Amnon's lust for his half-sister vs what he should have done?*
 - o He seemed to ignore it, if not even facilitate it by sending Tamar in.
 - o Did he not notice the odd comment about eating from Tamar's hand? Or did David willfully ignore it?
 - o If he'd addressed it with Amnon, perhaps this entire ugly incident and its aftermath wouldn't have happened.
- *Using this resource [Click Here](#), what did Deuteronomy 22 say about sexual assault? Do you agree with the assessment of verse 28 that the word "rape" is a mis-interpretation of the Hebrew?*
 - o If not consensual, the man is to be held responsible and not the woman.
 - o If pre-marriage relations with a virgin is consensual, then the man must marry her (verse 28).
 - o The web-site's argument makes sense. Otherwise the passage would imply that God is condoning assault of an un-betrothed woman.
- *How did David handle Amnon's abuse of his half-sister? What should he have done?*
 - o He didn't hold Amnon accountable. Strict enforcement of Mosaic laws would have required stoning of Amnon. If consensual, which this was not, Amnon would have been required to marry her.
 - o At the least, David should have required Amnon to provide for her.
- *How did David respond to Absalom's anger?*
 - o He didn't.
- *What was David's response to Amnon's death? How was his heart toward Absalom?*
 - o David wailed bitterly about Amnon's death. He loved both sons.
 - o While Absalom was in exile, David's heart longed for Absalom.
- *Why did Absalom decide to burn Joab's fields?*
 - o King David had allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem, but he refused to meet with his son face to face.
 - o This was Absalom's way of getting David's attention.
- *Note any thoughts on why David wasn't more involved in Amnon's situation and in reconciliation with Absalom.*

- David wasn't present for his sons.
- David coddled them. He turned a blind eye to their failings. They could do no wrong.
- David was conflict-avoidant.
 - Rather than confront Amnon's lust, he enabled it.
 - He loved Absalom, but was upset that Absalom had killed Amnon. By not addressing it head-on, David allowed the wedge between father and son to fester.
- Guilt likely hindered David. He'd committed so many sins of his own, that he deemed himself unworthy to condemn similar actions by his sons.

Correlation

Perform a google search with the text "what does the Bible say about parenting?" List and summarize a few verses that apply to David's handling of Amnon and Absalom.

- Discipline balanced with love and encouragement (David didn't discipline his boys, and his passive-aggressive ignoring of them when he was upset had to be exasperating to them):
 - Proverbs 13:24 (NIV) - Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.
 - Proverbs 19:18 (NIV) - Discipline your children, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death.
 - Colossians 3:21 (NIV) - Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.
 - Ephesians 6:4 (NIV) - Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.
- Train children in the way of the Lord (David didn't spend time with them, and he didn't teach them not to follow in his sinful footsteps):
 - Proverbs 22:6 (ESV) - Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.
 - Deuteronomy 6:5-25 (summary):
 - Love the Lord with all your heart (setting a good example to children)
 - Diligently teach God's commands to your children. Day and night, everywhere you go, remind them of God's precepts.
 - When they ask questions, discuss God's mighty works with them. Tell them what God has done for them. Teach them how God deserves to be both feared and loved.

Application

- *How can we apply David's mistakes in parenting to our own parenting style?*
 - Be present. There's no better way to solidify a relationship with a child.
 - Don't avoid conflict with our children. Discipline them in a loving and fair manner.
 - Admit our wrongs and ask for forgiveness.
 - Live a godly life. Like it or not, our children will emulate us, as we see in Amnon and Solomon.
- *How did David's past affect his parenting, and what can we learn from it? Guilt?*
 - We all make mistakes. Kids will understand that. Teach them to learn from our mistakes.
- *How can I apply these principles to my relationships with my children? My relationships with my parents?*
 - I can't tell you how to apply these lessons to your life situation. But if a wedge is festering, pray about how you can achieve reconciliation. Don't turn into a David and Absalom.