

A Word of Hope to a Word of Death

2 Samuel 13:30 - 35

Nutshell: David was convinced that violence had swallowed his house, per God's warning. But God sent David HOPE.

I. Context: Absalom killing Amnon for raping his sister.

II. Text

2 Sam 13:30 And it happened *while* they were on the road- yes, the report had come to David, saying, "Absalom has struck all the king's sons, and not one of them is left!"

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

Review

- A. The Book of Kingdoms, our 1 & 2 Sam + 1 & 2 Kings, is the story of Israel's kings, beginning with the prophet Samuel, who anointed both of the first two kings, Saul and David
 1. Samuel warned Israel vs. having a king, 1 Sam 10:19, Hos 13:11
 2. **Saul** demonstrated *man's* kind of rule. God previewed *His* version of king through **David**, 1 Sam 13:14
- ✿ B. 1 Kings 15:5 says David kept God's commands *except* in the Bathsheba incident. This provides a 'game-changer' hermeneutic.
- C. David was God's chosen king, a *picture* of Messiah, but *not* the Messiah; a *reference point* for later kings of Judah, 2 Kings 14:3
 1. David was anointed king over **Judah**, 2 Sam 2, then **Israel**, 5:1-5.
 2. Trouble between the two begins in 2 Sam 2:12-32.
- D. **DAVID'S WAITING BUSINESS AS KING***
 1. Conquer Jebus (Jerusalem), where Goliath's head was, 1 Sam 17:54
 2. Retrieved the Ark from its 'wanderings', 6:1-19; tragically wrongly, 1 Chron 15:2; then rightly & joyfully
 3. Build a permanent form for the Tabernacle, the Temple.
 - ★ 4. God chose **Abraham** to bless all nations. Now He chose **David's** line to bring forth the King of all nations

5. 1 Sam 20:14 oath in 2 Sam 9. *OBLIGATIONS CAUGHT UP.
- E. David's sin and its consequences
- ★ 1. David murdered to cover adultery, Ch 11. Now David, though forgiven, *would see continued violence*, ch 12
 - 2. David's son died, *not*, per Deut 24:16, as a cohort. He was 'replaced' by Solomon/ Jedediah, "adored" by God.
 - 3. Chap 13, Amnon was lovesick over his half-sister Tamar
 - a. He deceitfully lured her to his bedroom
 - b. Tamar refused his demand, giving 7 disincentives
 - c. Amnon raped her, then hated her greatly, telling her to leave. Tamar said that was worse than the rape.
 - d. She mourned aloud. Her brother Absalom took her in.
 - 4. Absalom's 2-yr. hidden rage found occasion to kill Amnon

Kid-speak: Amnon had treated Absalom's sister, Tamar, real bad. Absalom waited two years, then what did he do? He killed Amnon!

- F. In our section: 2 Sam 13:30-35, Jonadab will correctly contradict an eyewitness report, giving David hope until the reality could come clear.

Outline:

- I. Grieving over a false report, 13:30-31
 - II. Jonadab's insightful prognosis and its fulfillment, 13:32-35
- G. Last time, we did not find *emotional* closure over the injustice done to Tamar. But *there is none to be found*.
- 1. Is there even *mental* closure to be found?
 - 2. We noted Tamar's choice not to cry out, Deut 22:27
 - a. Apparently hoping Amnon would 'doing the right thing' afterwards (thinking of Dinah in Gen 34. How could Amnon be cruder than pagan Shechem?)
 - b. *Tamar cannot be faulted for this hope*, but it left her without legal recourse
 - 3. Furthermore, consider: she could have brought an accusation vs Amnon
 - a. Again, she chose not to
 - b. This may be one thing significant about her

- transferring to her brother Absalom's house, 13:20
- c. Absalom, who might have represented her 'in court', *counseled her silence*. He had ulterior motives. (Did Tamar know or sense this? Agree with it?)
 - d. But it would have also been a messy, embarrassing legal matter, and perhaps doomed to failure. Better to chance that or to bear the injustice?
 - e. Tamar acquiesced to Absalom's counsel not to pursue it, for *whatever* reason
- H. Might David have used his *kingly* prerogative to intervene and prosecute Amnon?
1. Legal-wise, how could he assume facts on which the victim, Tamar, remained silent?
 2. Family-wise, David had to weigh Tamar and Absalom's *right and choice* not to pursue the matter

Kid-speak: Absalom and Tamar didn't want to put Amnon in jail for what he did. Did King David have to go by that? Yes.

- I. David hated Amnon enough to kill him with his bare hands, 13:21, 39
1. David knew the Law inside-out, backwards & forwards. If there were a way to prosecute Amnon that honored God's Law, he'd have known it and done it.
 2. Is it moral to 'use' the law against its own wording, even to achieve a just outcome?
 - a. No. Once again, we are simply left with no *emotional* closure except knowing that God will judge.
 - b. I have passable *mental* closure, but it doesn't help with the emotional ache/gap
 3. In fact, Absalom himself would promise justice for every injustice! 2 Sam 15:4
 - a. And who wouldn't be tempted to sign on to that? So he would steal Israel's hearts, 2 Sam 15:6.
 - b. But it would be an empty promise.
- J. In this life, is there always a path to justice from God's laws?
1. No, for instance, even adding Deut 24:1-4 to the existing divorce laws *could not keep a husband from unjustly divorcing his wife*
 2. All this corrective law could do was protect her from slander, removing objections from a prospective new

husband marrying her

3. Putting the Law *in our hearts* is the main improvement of the New Covenant over the Old, Jer 31:31-34

K. Can **God** always avenge wrongdoing?

1. Yes, but, ultimately, only when He uncovers men's hearts in His presence
2. Until then, though, He still generally finds ways to bring peoples' unrighteous decisions back on them, Prov 11:3b
3. And we note that, despite Absalom's injustice in murdering Amnon, two years later, *Amnon is dead*

Kid-speak: Is there a way to pay back every bad person for what they did? Not until Jesus comes back.

L. The lack of emotional resolution in this case increases our longing for a final, omniscient, omnipotent King, Messiah

1. Which the chronicler has woven into the story throughout
2. BUT during Jesus' first coming, did He provide earthly justice, even when asked? Lk 12:13-14
 - a. Jesus' mission at the time did not include being an adjudicator of inheritances
 - b. Is Jesus' 'answer', Lk 12:15, unsatisfactory? Couldn't He at least appeal to the older brother?
 - c. His answer was, in effect: your older brother is in charge of dividing the inheritance. If he cheats, *your* chief concern is to keep your own covetousness in check.
 - d. Upshot: this life is not a place for final justice. In fact, *you can count on a significant amount of injustice.*

2 Sam 13:30 And it happened *while* they were on the road-yes, the report had come to David, saying, "Absalom has struck all the king's sons , and not one of them is left!"

M. We will soon see how a messenger could have gotten to Jerusalem sooner than the escaping sons

1. In the confusion, the *wrong story* had been processed
2. Better to say, "Here's what I saw. Here's what I couldn't tell." But who sorts out such details while murder is being committed?

2 Sam 13:31 And the king arose and tore his garments, and

lay on the earth, with all his stationed servants *having* torn *their* garments.

N. Devastating news

1. We are at the mercy of our news sources
 - a. We learn where to inject a healthy skepticism, but emergency news tends to breach that wall
 - b. Job would have felt the same. The helpless, cavernous grief would be engulfing.
2. A similar scene had played out at news of Saul's death, 2 Sam 1:11. ("Tear clothes," 1st mention, Gen 37:29)

Kid-speak: When Absalom killed *Amnon*, somebody got the story wrong and said that Absalom killed *all 19* of David's sons!

2 Sam 13:32 And Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, "Do not let my lord say, 'They have killed all of the young men, the king's sons;' for only Amnon is dead. For on Absalom's mouth, it was a set *matter* from the day of his humbling of his sister Tamar. 33 "And now, do not let my lord the king lay the word to heart, saying, 'All the king's sons have died;' for only Amnon has died."

O. Lo and behold! Who's on hand again with an enlightening perspective? The same fellow whose counsel emboldened Amnon to carry out his vile misdeed!

P. Our key phrase here is "in Absalom's mouth"

1. This *could* mean that Jonadab had heard, directly or from someone else, about Absalom's desire to kill Amnon
 - a. We wondered last time whether Absalom had told his servants his desire to kill Amnon long before the day
 - b. It doesn't seem likely that Absalom would have confided in a counselor who was close to Amnon
2. But the phrase doesn't necessarily mean Absalom said anything, only that Jonadab *perceived* Absalom's intent: "This is what he's been thinking..."

Q. As we noted on the previous occasion, Jonadab was a "wise" (not "crafty") fellow, 13:3, though he was undiscerning in the use of his insight

1. Could we say that he was unwise with his wisdom?
2. Anyway, despite a direct report, he saw the reality

- a. He figured out that this was an exaggeration
- b. *Because* he had deciphered Absalom's heart, he predicted the situation better than a news-carrier could report it!
- c. We previously commented on wisdom's ability to predict (not prophesy) the future
 - i. Given certain facts, certain outcomes are predictable
 - ii. Some people just see deeper into data and make better connections between the pieces of information

Kid-speak: Jonadab knew that only Amnon was dead, not all David's other sons. How did Jonadab figure that out? He was real smart.

- R. What are we to think of Jonadab's *character*?
- 1. He should have known better than to give his advice to Amnon, though he had only counseled interaction, not rape
 - 2. Was this counsel to David a way of trying to fix his mistake?
 - 3. In fact, was this the beginning of Jonadab 'coming clean'?
 - a. For how else could anyone have know what he had counseled Amnon? How could it have entered the record unless Jonadab himself divulged it?
 - b. Or was this the *chronicler's* own wisdom? He 'read' Jonadab's actions, then confirmed it with Jonadab later?
 - c. Again, I don't think Jonadab had any reason to withhold the info. He would have greatly regretted the rape, but it was not what he had counseled or intended.
 - d. Even advising Amnon to play sick, though wrong, only extended his existing, lovesick thinness, 13:4 ("pretend")

2 Sam 13:34 And Absalom fled.

And the young man *who was* watching lifted up his eyes and looked. And, see! Many people were coming by the highway behind him, by the side of the hill.

- S. An interesting place to insert Absalom's escape. We might have expected it at the end of v 29.
- 1. Perhaps a way to convey the bang-bang nature of the incidents
 - 2. Or maybe Absalom didn't make up his mind what to do immediately. It took him some time to decide to take off.

- a. He might have considered placing himself at David’s mercy: the right thing to do
 - b. But he knew he had acted outside the bounds of righteousness, as Joab had done with Abner, 2 Sam 2
 - c. Ultimately, his self-righteousness guided him. “I’ve done no wrong; I should face no consequences.”
3. “Absalom fled” will be repeated in v 38 & 39
- T. The servant doing lookout does a turnabout and sees a group of folks coming from the west
- 1. Baal-Hazor was to the NE. The messenger had come straight from that direction and had arrived sooner.
 - 2. The sons had doubtless chosen the least dangerous path, or it was the path directly opposite the melee.

2 Sam 13:35 And Jonadab said to the king, “See, the king’s sons have come. According to your servant’s word, so it was.”

- U. Jonadab had crossed all his intuitive t’s and dotted all his logical i’s, but he still must have wondered exactly how it would come good. After all, he hadn’t predicted their western arrival.
- 1. This “I told you so” to the king must have been as much Jonadab’s own sigh of relief!
 - 2. Yet Jonadab was first to gather who the riders were
- V. Consider, then, the HOPE in Jonadab’s counsel
- 1. Jonadab wanted to keep the king from unfounded grief
 - a. But he wasn’t going to just invent a story. He told what was the most fact-based possibility.
 - b. Even willing to contradict someone who *was* an eyewitness or had *heard* from one!
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- 2. Brothers and sisters, we can’t believe our eyes either
 - a. Our experience tells us that this or that trial is dismantling us
 - b. But James says to “count it all joy” (1:2), anticipating the OUTCOME of the trial
 - 3. Paul puts it similarly
 - a. Look at “hope” in Rom 5:2. We boast *now* based on the **hope** of *coming* glory.
 - b. Rom 5:3-4 gives a 4-fold chain: afflictions, which build endurance, which builds character, which builds **hope**
 - c. And **hope** won’t let us down, 5:5, *since the knowledge*

and experience of God's love dwells in us by the Spirit

Kid-speak: Does it always feel like God is with us? No. When we're sad about that, what makes us better? **Hope**, which is knowing that God will make things turn out right.

- d. This **hope** alone will protect us in the hour of temptation!
 - i. If we are missing it, we will fall when tempted
 - ii. If we *keep* falling, we're missing hope based on God's love *ministered by* the Spirit, 5:5
- e. **Hope** brings the elements of salvation into our souls, Rom 5:6-11, especially RECONCILIATION, or peace terms.
- f. Real salvation brings PEACE TERMS/ FRIENDSHIP: no more war with God. *I'm on His side now.*
 - i. I want what He wants
 - ii. He has given me what I need (the Holy Spirit & the Word) to avoid hostility with Him (the works of the flesh, Gal 5:19-21)

V. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, "Uphold the strengthless")
Our lowest low is a hard place, but that's where Gospel hope normally makes its entrance.

VI. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, "Convince, rebuke"): **What have I done wrong?**
How have I lost righteousness?
How often has my impatience shown that I lost hope?

VII. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, "Exhort/encourage"):
How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightnes?
God, connect me to hope in Christ when darkness obscures it.

VIII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**
I resolve to reconnect to this hope daily.

Wrap-up: *We all* received an accurate word of **death**, sentenced by our disobedience to God's laws, Rom 6:23. Let us receive the equally accurate word of **hope**- that Christ has taken our death on the cross, accomplishing AGREEMENT with God.