

General Church Education



Amnon and Tamar

2 Samuel 13:23-39

Lesson 28

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is Our King

For ages 10-11

Amnon and Tamar

2 Samuel 13:23-39

Teacher Background

David had several wives and therefore some of his children were half-siblings. One of his sons, Amnon, became attracted to his half-sister Tamar and began to lust for her. Amnon's shrewd cousin Jonadab suggested a way that he could see Tamar alone so he could take advantage of her, which he did. Tamar begged him to take her as his wife but Amnon rejected her. She left weeping. King David was furious but did nothing. Tamar went to live with her brother Absalom. Two years later Absalom took his revenge. He got Amnon drunk and killed him during a sheep shearing festival. David mistakenly heard that all his sons were dead, but Jonadab told him the truth. Absalom ran away, and for three years David longed for him.

This story illustrates the disorder of adultery. David ignored Amnon's evil act, and in doing so demonstrated his own falling away from the Lord. He ignored his responsibilities as a parent, and as a ruler. When Absalom took the law into his own hands David overlooked his behavior and longed to have him back by his side.

Focus Points

- Amnon deceived his half-sister Tamar and assaulted her but David did nothing.
- Absalom took Tamar in, plotted his revenge against Amnon, and killed him.
- Absalom fled and David mourned for three years but did nothing.

Readings from the Writings

A judge acts charitably when he imposes the sentence prescribed by law, for by so doing he prevents a person from doing further wrong and harming the community. See *True Christian Religion* 459.15

“Order cannot be maintained in the world without governors, who are to observe all things which are done according to order, and which are done contrary to order; and who are to reward those who live according to order, and punish those who live contrary to order.... Wherefore, unless [people] were kept under restraint by the laws, and by rewards suited to their loves, which are honors and gains for those who do goods; and by punishments contrary to those loves, which are the loss of honors, of possessions, and of life, for those who do evils; the human race would perish.” *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 312

“Those whose lust is for the deflowering of virgins...undergo a most severe punishment in the other life.” *De Conjugio* 125

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following choices:

Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

“You have heard that it was said to those of old,

‘You shall not commit adultery.’

But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her

Has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28)

Projects and Activities (see back of lesson for answers)

Amnon and Tamar Matching Activity

Match each person with something they did.

Types of Touch

Decide whether different types of touch are positive, negative, or neutral by drawing a smiley face, frowning face, or neutral face next to them.

Marriage Song

Listen to *O Precious Sign*, a song about marriage. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-o-precious-sign/>

Additional Project and Activity Choices

David Forgives Absalom Readers Theater

Read and act out the story using a prepared script. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/play-david-forgives-absalom-2-samuel14.pdf>

Absalom Takes Revenge Readers Theater

Read and act out the story using a prepared script. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/play-absalom-takes-revenge-2-samuel13.pdf>

Marriage in Heaven

The New Church teaches that true marriage lasts to eternity. The special love between an angel husband and wife is called ‘conjugal love’. The Lord promises that couples can achieve the happiness of marriage as they turn towards Him. Color a quote from Conjugal Love. Online at <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-the-states-of-conjugal-love-conjugal-love-180.pdf>

Amnon and Tamar

2 Samuel 13:23-39

Vocabulary

deceitful—dishonest

committed—carried out or did something

disorder—something that is not according the Lord’s laws of order

David broke the Lord’s commandments and suffered for disobeying Him. In this story we learn about the trouble that David’s disobedience brought him and his large family.

David’s Family

In those days kings had many wives. Therefore David had many wives and many children, but they did not all have the same mother. Many of them were half-brothers or half-sisters.

This story is about Amnon and his half-sister Tamar. Amnon was the son of David’s second wife, Ahinoam, while Tamar was the daughter of David and Maacah. As David’s first-born son, Amnon would be king after his father.



Amnon’s Shameful Deed

Amnon should have protected his beautiful half-sister, Tamar. But all he wanted to do was use her selfishly. He knew that the law of Moses strictly forbade this. But he could only think of what he wanted. He wanted it so much that it made him ill.

“Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick; for she was a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her.” (2 Samuel 13:2)

Amnon’s friend, Jonadab, thought up a plan to help Amnon get what he wanted. Jonadab was crafty, but Amnon agreed to his deceitful plan. Amnon pretended he was ill. When his father came to see him he asked David to send Tamar to prepare special food for him. So David asked Tamar to go to her brother’s house. She baked little cakes of dough, but

Lesson 28 • Amnon and Tamar

when she took them to Amnon he refused to eat. He sent his servants away, and told Tamar to bring the cakes into his bedroom to feed him. Then he did something very evil. He abused his half-sister, and ignored her when she begged him not to do such a wicked thing.

Amnon Sends Tamar Away

Amnon may have said that he loved Tamar. He may have even thought that he did. But once he got what he wanted, he hated her. Then Amnon committed another evil and broke the law of Israel by refusing to marry her. He cruelly sent Tamar away, telling his servants to put her out of the house and bolt the door behind her.

Tamar cried bitterly all the way home. She tore her robe of many colors and put ashes on her head to show her terrible grief. At first, the people who learned about Amnon's wickedness did nothing to bring him to justice. Tamar's brother Absalom told her:

“Hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this thing to heart.” (2 Samuel 13:20)

However, Absalom hated Amnon for what he had done. He also wanted to be king instead of his older brother, so he plotted a terrible revenge.

King David also heard what Amnon had done and although he was very angry he apparently did nothing. So Tamar went to live in Absalom's house.

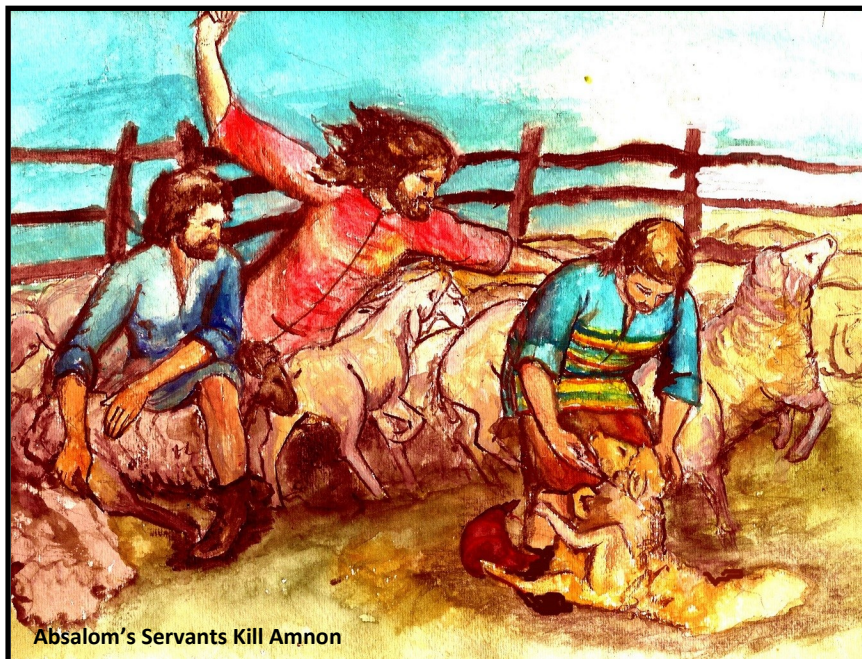
Absalom Seeks Revenge

Two years later, Absalom thought of a way to get revenge. Some men were coming to shear his sheep. This was a special event so he invited David and his servants to come and celebrate with

him. David refused his invitation, but gave Absalom permission to invite Amnon and all the king's sons. This gave Absalom the perfect opportunity to have Amnon killed.

Absalom commanded his servants,

“When I say to you, ‘Strike Amnon!’, then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant.” (2 Samuel 13:28)



Does this seem courageous? Amnon had done what was evil, but he could have been punished in other ways. As Tamar's father, David should have made sure Amnon was punished according to the law.

Absalom Flees

When David heard that Amnon had died he mistakenly thought that all of his sons had been killed. He was devastated and tore his clothes. Then Jonadab told David that Absalom had only ordered Amnon to be killed. When David was united with his sons they all wept.

Absalom thought that David would punish him and ran away. But after three years David began to long to see his son. Again, his feelings were more important to him than making sure justice was done.

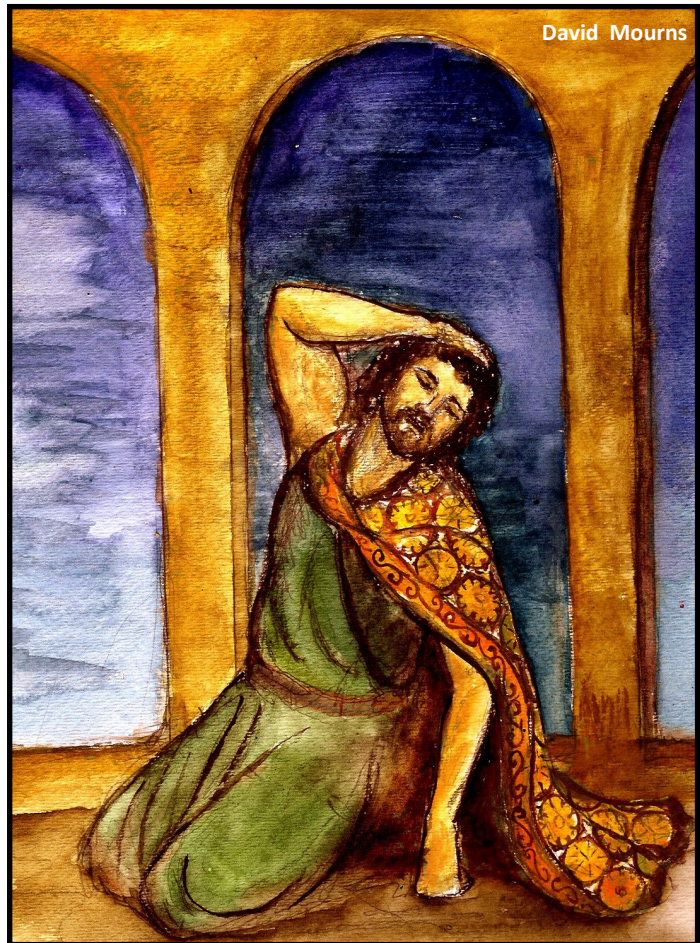
Obedience to the Lord's Laws

The Lord's Word tells us about terrible things so that we can learn to stay away from these evils. The actions of some of the people in this lesson illustrate that choosing to do what you want to do instead of doing what is right creates great sadness and disorder.

In this story we heard how Amnon abused his sister Tamar. This deeply hurt and saddened Tamar. We also learned how Absalom took the law into his own hands and had Amnon killed. In both cases David did not do what the law required, but did what he wanted to do. People who do this make it impossible for the Lord to bring them true love and happiness.

A Gift From the Lord

The Lord wants to give everyone love and happiness. He has provided for a special love between husbands and wives called conjugal or marriage love. This gentle love protects and cares for the happiness of another person. The Lord promises everyone this kind of love, but He can not just give it to us. We have to work for it by avoiding thinking, saying or doing things that might hurt marriage. This is the life of religion, and religion and married love go hand in hand.



Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“You have heard that it was said to those of old,
‘You shall not commit adultery.’
But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her
Has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28)

Projects and Activities (answers are at the back of this lesson)

Choose one or two.

Amnon and Tamar Matching Activity

Match each person with something they did.

Types of Touch

Decide whether different types of touch are positive, negative, or neutral by drawing a smiley face, frowning face, or neutral face next to them.

Marriage Song

Listen to *O Precious Sign*, a marriage song, at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-o-precious-sign/>

Amnon and Tamar Matching Activity

2 Samuel 13

Match the person in the left column with what they did in the right column. Then write down what you think would have been a good punishment for Amnon.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Amnon | was angry but did nothing |
| 2. Tamar | made a crafty, wicked plan |
| 3. Jonadab | abused his half-sister |
| 4. David | killed Amnon at the sheepshearing |
| 5. Absalom | sought revenge for his half-sister |
| 6. Absalom's servants | mourned with ashes and torn clothes |

Who should have been responsible for punishing Amnon and what do you think the right punishment would have been?

Types of Touch

The Lord gives us five senses to enjoy the world around us. The sense of touch is one of the most important senses because we interact with our world and connect with other people by touching.

Decide whether each type of touch given below is positive, negative, or neutral by drawing a smiley face, frowning face, or neutral face next to it on the line.

- _____ cuddling with a baby
- _____ hurting your toe
- _____ being hugged by a grandparent
- _____ shaking hands with your teacher
- _____ brushing arms with a stranger
- _____ walking on warm sand with bare feet
- _____ getting a vaccination at the doctor's office
- _____ being patted on the shoulder by someone you don't know
- _____ being scratched by a kitten
- _____ jumping into a cold swimming pool
- _____ a friend slapping you a high five
- _____ a kiss from your parent
- _____ your sports coach ruffling your hair

People have different opinions about what is comfortable for them. It is important that you respect others, as well as standing up for your own right to be respected.

Answers

Lesson 28

Amnon and Tamar Matching Activity

1. Abused his half-sister, 2. Mourned with ashes and torn clothes, 3. Made a crafty, wicked plan, 4. Was angry but did nothing, 5. Sought revenge for his half sister, 6. Killed Amnon at the sheep shearing.