

## Pagan Thinking In A Christian Family

### 2 Samuel 13:1-18

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 6-16-2013

**Introduction – Note the author’s deliberate connection of this story with that of the rape of Dinah in Genesis 34 and the resistance that Joseph showed to the advances of Potiphar’s wife.**

Today we are going to look at a somewhat embarrassing topic. I will try very hard to be discrete in the way that I discuss it. In fact, I won’t be dealing as directly with the incest as I will with the pagan thinking that was behind that abominable act and the scenario leading up to it and following it. And when you realize that even the family of a prophet can have pagan thinking, you will perhaps be more open to reexamining if there are any dangers you are exposing your own family to through less than Biblical viewpoints and less than Biblical discipleship. If it can happen to David’s family, we too need to be on guard.

Some people wonder how David could be so careless with his family when he was an inspired prophet. Surely a prophet’s family is going to do better than the average Christian. But that is simply not the case. It is true that David’s *prophecies* were 100% inspired, inerrant, and life changing because they were the direct word of God and prophets were never moved by their own will. They were 100% moved by the Holy Spirit to so write. But that did not mean that all of David’s thinking was in conformity with the Word of God that he received. Just like the prophet Jonah, David could ignore God’s Word. And in this David was just like so many modern Christians who have the Word of God, but still follow pagan thinking. David clearly followed pagan thinking in chapter 11. He followed pagan thinking in his polygamy. He followed pagan thinking in the criteria by which he chose a wife. And most commentators believe that David’s parenting was just as influenced by paganism as it was by the Word of God. But I will hasten to say that we can’t point the finger. It is so easy for any of us to slip into the cultural way of doing things just like David did.

And I want to first of all point out that this passage is written in such a way that the author wanted us to think of these descriptions as pagan love versus Biblical love; the wisdom of the world rather than the wisdom of God, etc. How did he do it? He did it by creating parallels in language

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between this story and two pagan incidents that happened in the book of Genesis. Tamar is paralleled to Joseph in five ways. There is the coat of many colors and there are three parallels between the language of her resistance to Amnon and Joseph's resistance to Potiphar's wife. So it is setting Tamar up as being a righteous person like Joseph. And then of course Joseph suffers horribly because of his resistance to Potiphar's wife. There is a parallel there. He was rejected just like Tamar was rejected. That is one story in Genesis that makes us immediately think of the disastrous things that can happen when pagan views on love are adopted.

Some people might think that the Canaanite name Tamar shows a connection to Judah's incest with his Canaanite daughter-in-law, whose name was also Tamar. I don't think so. First of all, because that was her real name, not something the author came up with. And secondly, she is clearly being set up as righteous in this account, and not like the first Tamar. So I wouldn't make that parallel.

But a second clear parallel is that Amnon is being compared to the Canaanite prince, Shechem, in Genesis 34, and Tamar is being compared to Jacob's daughter Dinah, who was raped by Shechem. And I won't show all the parallels, but an unusual term for the rape is used both here and in Dinah's story. Both were left desolate women. In both cases the father holds his peace and does nothing to the perpetrator. In both situations a brother plots revenge that goes way beyond what the law would allow. And in both stories the father seems reluctant to take the actions that the law would have allowed against the rapist. And in both stories, huge numbers of people die as a result. There are other parallels that I would rather not get into with the Dinah incident in mixed company. But it is crystal clear that the author wants us to think about those two stories that illustrate the disasters that can arise from pagan views of love. It's very deliberate. The author wants us to realize that Christians can think and live like Canaanites without even realizing it.

## **I. Pagan thinking in David's family**

### ***A. World's love versus Biblical romance (vv. 1-2)***

The first evidence of this worldly thinking is that the love Amnon had for Tamar is exactly the love that the world celebrates. They may not justify incest, but the concept of falling in love for the world is often blind love, not Biblical love. And if it is blind, it can easily become immoral.

**1. Hebrew derivation of נָחַח is “to breathe heavily, to be excited” – Halot)**

The Halot dictionary of Hebrew says that the root meaning of this word is “to breathe heavily, to be excited.” It has to do with hormones and emotions.

**2. Various translations as “loved” (NKJV), “infatuation with her” (HCSB; JPS), “fell in love with” NIV; NJB; NRSV), “fell madly in love with” (NET), and “fell desperately in love with” (NLT).**

And if you look at the eight Bible versions I have listed in your outline, you will see that some versions try to nuance the meaning with these translations: “Amnon was infatuated with her.” “Amnon fell in love with her.” “Amnon fell madly in love with her.” “Amnon fell desperately in love with her.” Those translations are trying to distinguish this term “love” from Biblical love. And this passage indicates that if romantic love does not flow out of agape love, anything can happen, including falling out of love rather quickly – as certainly happens with Amnon. Eros without agape has spiritually poor vision – sometimes almost to blindness.

And I don’t think there can be any denying the fact that most Christian families have adopted the world’s definitions of love as “falling in love.” Christian forums ask, “How do you know if you are in love or not?” Well, that’s not a Biblical question. The distress and distraction that verse 2 talks about is common among young people in their relationships to each other, and it shows that agape (which is God-given sacrificial love), phileo (which is friendship love), and eros (which is either romantic or sexual love) have become unhinged from each other and have blinded people to potential problems. This concept of breathing heavily and being excited is not a good basis for marriage. It is certainly present in marriage, but it must flow from agape love rather than being the foundation.

And the implications for this are huge – too huge to even develop adequately this morning. But you young men and women need to be asking yourselves if you are allowing your gut emotions and excitements to govern your relationship with each other or if you relate to the other young people in this church as brothers and sisters should. Until a father gives permission, you should not be relating to each other romantically. You should treat each other as brothers and sisters. The only love that should be evident is the agape and phileo love that is appropriate between a brother and sister. You have no right to get into the “breathing heavily” kind of love until a father

says “yes.” Protect your hearts and protect the hearts of your brothers and sisters in Christ. We’ve got to think about love Biblically and not like the Canaanites.

### ***B. Social inhibitions versus Biblical inhibitions (v. 2b)***

The second evidence of pagan thinking is in the second sentence of verse 2. But let’s read the whole verse. “**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.**” Commentators point out that the grammar indicates that if she had not been a virgin, he would not have thought anything about it. And we are led to wonder if Amnon was loose with other girls. As one commentator worded it,

Had she been any other girl, Amnon would probably have sent for her as his father had sent for Bathsheba. Since Tamar was the daughter of the king, however, and had great political value as the possible wife of the son of a potential ally, she was carefully guarded.<sup>1</sup>

So what kept Amnon from Tamar was not his spiritual character; it was social stigma and lack of opportunity. As verse 2 words it, “...**she was a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her.**” Social stigma is not an enduring basis for purity of heart, mind, and body. Some people won’t go into a porn store because of the social stigma, but they don’t have any problem watching porn if no one sees them. They have the same heart problem that Amnon had – it’s a worldly integrity that won’t be caught dead in a porn shop, not a Biblical integrity that flows from the heart.

### ***C. World’s wisdom versus Biblical wisdom (v. 3)***

Verse 3 highlights the world’s *wisdom*, saying, “**But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David’s brother. Now Jonadab was a very crafty man.**” The word “crafty” is simply the word for wise. They have nuanced the word by saying he was crafty because it is obviously not the Bible’s wisdom that is being talked about. But it is appropriate to speak of it as wisdom, since Scripture does. Turn to James 3, which contrasts the wisdom of the world with the wisdom of the Bible. James 3:13-18. It says,

**James 3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.**

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth L. Chafin, *The Communicator’s Commentary: 1, 2 Samuel* (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1989, p. 316.

So there is one kind of wisdom – a wisdom produced by the Holy Spirit. The next verses highlight another kind of wisdom that is quite different:

**James 3:14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.**

**James 3:15 This wisdom** [notice that it is still called wisdom, but it is the world's wisdom, which is foolishness in God's eyes. This wisdom] **does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.**

**James 3:16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.**

**James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.**

**James 3:18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

I hope you are seeing by now that there is a demonic counterfeit for every grace that comes from God. And the fruits of every one of those counterfeits are horrible. Those who use the Classical system of education frequently use Bill Bennett's book, *Book of Virtues*, which mixes freely virtues from the Bible and virtues from the ancient Romans and Greeks, as if the virtues were one and the same. But they are not. The Greek virtues were consistent with a horrible culture. And the wisdom of Jonadab is Canaanite wisdom, not Biblical wisdom. Parents should never be satisfied with making sure that their children are smart as a whip in the wisdom of the world. The Hebrew model of education calls for a different kind of wisdom, which I think is illustrated so well in Vision Forums book, *Safely Home*, written by Eldredge. It groves me to see homeschoolers who are academically smart, but they are little pagans in their thinking just like Jonadab was.

#### ***D. Worldly friendship versus Biblical friendship (v. 3)***

I'll need to hurry through these, but the fourth counterfeit that we see in David's family is counterfeit friendship. Verse 3 says, "**Amnon had a friend...**" That was one of Amnon's many problems. He had a worldly definition of friendship. And the book of Proverbs contrasts these two kinds of friendships. True Biblical friendship according to Proverbs would have rebuked Amnon and called him to repentance. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Why would an enemy kiss you? He is kissing you because he and everyone else think he is your friend, but his friendship is really enmity, when you analyze it. When you get down to verses 32-33 you will realize that Jonadab is no friend. He just wants to be friends with whoever is power. Worldly friendship is often too nice to ever bring a rebuke. Instead, it enables.

And you need to ask yourself what kind of friendship you give to your friends. Is it a worldly friendship that wants peace at the expense of holiness and at the expense of God's good pleasure? If so, you are an Amnon and a Jonadab. You're no good for each other. In fact, there is more likelihood that you will push each other into sin than that you will push each other into righteousness. Even on friendship we need to think Biblically and not like a Canaanite. That's why the author is wrapping this whole package in the allusions to Canaan and Egypt. Don't get your cues for friendship from the world, and from movies, and from novels.

### ***E. World's compassion versus Biblical compassion (vv. 4-5)***

The next counterfeit is the world's compassion. Look at verses 4-5 where Jonadab acts as a good worldly friend should, and gives good worldly advice that will make his friend feel affirmed and fulfilled. That's what it's all about, right? Making sure that we are fulfilled. Look at verses 4-5:

**2Samuel 13:4 And he said to him, "Why *are* you, the king's son, becoming thinner day after day? Will you not tell me?"** [He's showing compassion, right?] **Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."**

**2Samuel 13:5 So Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. And when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me food, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see *it* and eat it from her hand.'** "

"Here's how you get alone with her. Here's how you can get around the protective layers that your dad has put around Tamar." He's showing compassion for Amnon's misery, right? And the Bible would say, "Wrong. If Jonadab was truly compassionate, he would have not only rebuked Amnon, but he would have also told him how to get rid of his ungodly feelings, how to crucify his flesh, and how to be renewed in mind and spirit. That would be true compassion. Ignoring issues in the lives of your friends if those issues are ruinous is not compassion; it is the opposite. And yet I see some of you young people doing exactly that. You ignore ruinous issues because you don't want to be unsympathetic or unkind. But that is worldly compassion, not Biblical compassion.

### ***F. World's indulgent parenting versus Biblical parenting (vv. 6-7)***

The sixth way that David's family was following the wisdom of the world is only hinted at here, but it is certainly illustrated over and over in upcoming chapters. And that is that David was an indulgent dad. If a son wanted something, he thought it was love to grant it. Verses 6-7:

**2Samuel 13:6 Then Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, “Please let Tamar my sister come and make a couple of cakes for me in my sight, that I may eat from her hand.”**

**2Samuel 13:7 And David sent home to Tamar, saying, “Now go to your brother Amnon’s house, and prepare food for him.”**

We will see with Amnon, Absalom, and some of his other children, what they wanted they generally got. You might think this request sounded legitimate. But think about it – these were grown men with servants and their own houses. Why did Amnon need his sister’s nursing, especially since, if he was truly sick, it could endanger her health? That’s odd. She had never done that before. She didn’t need to do it. He had servants. But David’s reflex response was to always say yes to any request from his children. Whether he felt guilt over his many wives and children and his inability to spend adequate time with them or whether he had some other reason, he was soft. 1 Kings 1:6 says about Adonijah, “**And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, ‘Why have you done so?’**” And, the Hebrew is even stronger. The Hebrew says that David had never pained him at any time. He was an indulgent father. It’s easy for parents who have gone through hardship to want to protect their children from all pain, but this indulgent parenting produces disaster.

### ***G. World’s propriety rather than Biblical propriety (vv. 8-10)***

The seventh thing that resembled the world’s wisdom more than Biblical propriety was for Amnon and Tamar to be alone together in a bedroom. David probably wasn’t anticipating any alone time because Amnon’s house was full of servants. But verses 8-10 say,

**2Samuel 13:8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house; and he was lying down. Then she took flour and kneaded *it*, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes.**

**2Samuel 13:9 And she took the pan and placed *them* out before him, but he refused to eat. Then Amnon said, “Have everyone go out from me.” And they all went out from him.**

**2Samuel 13:10 Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand.” And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* to Amnon her brother in the bedroom.**

Alone time of two siblings of the opposite sex in bedrooms was always forbidden in our household. And some people think that is being overly cautious. Many people assume that because incest is such a strong social stigma that it won’t happen. But if counseling statistics across American churches are even remotely correct, it happens quite frequently,

and to ignore the subject is like an ostrich hiding its head in the sand. It's not like families need to be paranoid on this subject. I'm not saying that. They don't. But Biblical propriety is a bit stronger than even secular propriety.

#### ***H. Worldly sense of manhood versus Biblical manhood (vv. 11-14)***

Eighth, if my jobs as a janitor, as a factory laborer, as a lumber industry worker, and as a maintenance man are any indicator of what pagan men generally talk like, and if their boasting is any indicator of what actually happens, then pagan manhood is often seen as conquest and domination – the opposite of Biblical manhood. And verses 11-14, which we need not read again, reveals a man who is not a real man. He was selfish, arrogant, abusive, insensitive, domineering, and thought much more of himself than he should have. In fact, commentators point out that he seemed surprised that Tamar would resist. He must have thought that he was irresistible. Adonijah and Absalom were the same way in later chapters, indicating that an absent father had somehow failed to communicate the kind of self-sacrificing, humble, and gentle ways that David was usually characterized by. They had never been taught how to have a servant's spirit. Those things don't happen on their own. They must be instilled and trained and insisted upon. They don't happen automatically.

#### ***I. Worldly irresponsibility versus Biblical responsibility (vv. 15-17)***

Ninth, Amnon showed himself utterly irresponsible in verses 15-17. He had hurt his sister, but rather than owning up to his responsibilities now, he cruelly shoved her out of his life. As to her arguments as to why shoving her away and refusing to marry her was even worse than the rape itself, Chafin says,

At this point in the story Tamar probably felt that she now belonged to Amnon; she was no longer a virgin and couldn't be married to one of her father's potential allies. Rather than loving her, and claiming her for his own once he had made love to her, the Scriptures record that Amnon hated her now more strongly than he had loved her before. p. 317)

It shows utter irresponsibility. But this irresponsibility in men seems to be pervasive in America. Feminism has in part produced it and men's sinful natures have liked it.

#### ***J. Worldly comfort versus Biblical comfort and defense (vv. 19-20)***

Verses 19-20 then show Absalom trying to comfort her, but he himself does not do it in a Biblical way. Rather surprisingly, he says, "**But now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this**



**thing to heart.”** He doesn’t want Tamar telling. Unfortunately, even Christian families often circle the wagons and keep a strict code of silence when incest has happened. And that’s what Absalom does. He doesn’t want the scandal of incest getting out, and he doesn’t want her taking this too badly. Weird. Of course she should take this badly. It is not a surprise to us that hushing this incest up was no comfort to her whatsoever, and verse 20 says that “**she remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.**” Biblical comfort would have brought resolution, and if that was not possible, would have at least sought to bring healing. But she was never rescued from her desolation of spirit. And what is she doing in Absalom's house anyway? She is there because Absalom at least showed that he cared. He took the place that David should have taken, of being her protector.

***K. Worldly anger versus Biblical anger (v. 21)***

Next we have worldly anger versus godly anger. Verse 21 says,

**2Samuel 13:21 But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry.**

Very angry, yet not moved to action. Biblical anger was designed by God to move us to action against an abuser, and David did nothing to Amnon – not even a rebuke. One person said that his silence shouts from the pages. It makes you cringe. His failure to minister to Tamar left her desolate. His failure to punish Amnon left him a menace. His failure to caution Absalom concerning his hatred and bitterness led to murder and disaster later in the chapter. He knew Absalom hated Amnon and wouldn't talk to him. that's what makes David so surprised later in the chapter that Absalom invites Amnon to a party. David knew all these things, yet kept silent.

And such silence is not unheard of even in Christian families where incest has occurred. Why do spouses not do something when they see evidence of abuse? Sometimes it is naiveté; sometimes ignorance. There are many reasons why, but rest assured that a David can get angry (in other words, he knows - he is not ignorant) and yet still not do anything about it. And if that was true of David, you know there are other households that are the same. And sometimes those silent people need to repent and need the healing grace of God for their guilt that the conclusion speaks about.

***L. Worldly vengeance versus Biblical vengeance (vv. 22-33)***

In verses 22-23 Absalom refused to talk to Amnon. Instead, he internalized a grudge, until at some point later in the chapter, Absalom killed his brother. Bitterness must never be harbored even when abuse has

happened because bitterness and fantasizing vengeance defiles and can eventually lead to destructive behaviors, including murder. Romans 12-13 says that vengeance does not belong to us, it belongs to the state. We need to be able to shed it. It's not our jurisdiction. And that's why God set up the state.

So I think you can see that David's family was at least in some ways used to thinking like the world thought. And it's no wonder that David failed to have the influence that he should have upon his children. With several wives, he had little influence and daily discipleship in their lives. In fact, the inability to adequately discipline that you see in some divorced families (where a father's hands are kind of tied, and the children automatically know that neither parent will back up the other, and the kids can get away with anything), always seems to happen in polygamous families. So you can learn a lot about the problems in broken families today but examining the polygamous families in the Bible. He spoiled his children and didn't make them work hard and learn a good work ethic - probably in part because he couldn't with the dynamics going on with his wives. The children had David wrapped around their finger. He failed to pass on to them the good characteristics that he had. And if there is one thing that we parents should learn from this passage, it is how important it is for fathers to be involved in their children's lives and to be giving discipleship. The Old Testament ends with these solemn words:

**And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children (not the mothers, but the fathers), and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.**

Biblical fatherhood is essential if we are to avoid the curses that we see illustrated in this chapter. And we could highlight and amplify any one of these points that we have gone over. But under Roman numeral II, I am just going to deal with one: lust. Let me give you fifteen reasons why it is imperative that you help your children to crucify the lust of their eyes and the lust of their flesh before their lust kills them.

## **II. Fifteen reasons why lust must be crucified rather than ignored**

### ***A. Because lust is not true love***

The first reason has already been mentioned, and that is that lust is not true love. We must distinguish lust from even Biblical eros. Biblical eros always flows from agape and it is always connected with phileo. Because the

three loves are linked in a Biblical ethic, Christian eros is not blind love. Because they are always linked together by the Spirit, they are characterized by the other fruits of the Spirit, such as gentleness, meekness, self-control. Lust is unhinged from agape, and it has a hard time being gentle, meek, and in self-control. So it is important to distinguish lust from even true sexual love.

***B. Lust is all-consuming (13:2a)***

Second, verse 2 illustrates that if lust is not crucified, it is a monster that just keeps growing and growing and eventually consumes a person's entire life. Verse 2 says, "**Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick.**" Like the porn addict, the object of desire has an idolatrous hold upon the person and it consumes his thinking. If left unchecked, it grows in the mind; it does not diminish. Eventually, if you do not kill it, it will seek to destroy you, just as it destroyed both Amnon and Absalom.

By the way, I should point out that commentaries say Amnon had aspirations for the throne, and so did Absalom, and that this lust for power destroyed both. Don't think of lust as only sexual. People addicted to tobacco begin to find lust rising in their hearts, and they must crucify it. Lust can go in many directions. It is an inordinate desire for something that does not operate under the lordship of Christ.

***C. Lust is destructive (13:2b)***

**1. Destructive to his body**

Third, lust is destructive. And that it is destructive is hinted at by the fact that it was making him sick. He was wasting away. How does the world deal with this so-called "love sickness"? They think that suppressing lust is unhealthy. The Bible's way of thinking is that suppressing lust is the only way to truly live. It must be crucified.

**2. Suicidal to his career and position**

And of course, it wasn't just destructive of his body. Amnon destroyed any chance of getting the throne through this stupid act. But lust blinds us and keeps us from seeing or caring about the consequences. It makes people become incredible risk takers. Tamar tried to reason with him of how destructive this would be to his career, but he wouldn't listen.

***D. Lust wants to break down moral barriers (13:2c-d)***

Fourth, lust wants to break down all moral barriers and all social norms. While I'm sure it is shocking for us to see a son of David engaging in incest, if your lust is not held in check, there is no limit to the depths of depravity that a person can go. This is why porn leads to such a slippery slope. I won't read you the statistics, but porn addicts (who by definition do not crucify their lust) are much more likely to "commit rape, incest, violence, exhibitionism, other sex-related crimes and even suicide. Millions of men have lost their families, their careers, their reputations, their good names, and their freedom just to satisfy their addiction." And I don't need to go into this in any more detail, but when lust is not mortified, it eventually can break down all moral and social barriers, as is clearly evidenced by the bizarre behavior of the GLBTQ crowd. They are THE illustration of this point.

***E. It totally skews a person's perceptions (13:3)***

Fifth, lust so distorts one's perception of reality that some people actually use the term "brain damage" for porn addicts because of all the stupid irrational things that they do. Amnon's lust for a sibling is stupid, his admissions to his friend are stupid, he accepts stupid advice, he gives up his reputation, the throne, and eventually his own life. But all of those stupid decisions are because lust unchecked totally skews a person's perceptions. It's an enemy. You don't ever want to fool around with it for even a second. If you aren't serious about avoiding all porn you are already on the stupid road to stupid decisions. Your perception of reality is already skewed and it will get increasingly skewed as time goes on.

***F. Lust looks for reasons to act out – often from enablers and the wisdom of enablers can easily appeal to lust (13:4)***

Sixth, lust unchecked looks for reasons to act out. They don't have to be good reasons. Any reason will do. He wasn't able to act out prior to this, but Jonadab's advice was reason enough for Amnon to act upon it. Somebody wasn't shocked by what he said, and that was enough. Likewise, enabler's such as Jonadab (who obviously was trying to get into the graces of the future king) know that they can appeal to a person's lust to advance themselves. He was in this for himself, as is evidenced later on in the chapter.

***G. Lust is deceitful (13:5a)***

Related to this looking for reasons to act out is that lust is deceitful. It *wants* to be deceived into thinking that the lust is OK. And we can see that from verse 5. I'll just mention as a side note that just as David deceitfully sent a message of Uriah's death through Uriah without Uriah knowing the reason behind it, Amnon sends a message through David without David knowing the reason behind it. In this and many other ways the chickens of the previous chapter have come home to roost. But lust is usually accompanied by deceit. A lustful person deceives himself and he deceives others.

***H. Lust uses anyone (13:5-6)***

Eighth, lust is willing to use anyone or abuse anyone in order to be fulfilled. This is true whether it is lust for power, lust for money, lust for approval, lust for sex, or some other manifestation of lust. In verses 5-6 he uses Tamar's trust, her naiveté, her good work ethic, and her servant's heart. Where love is about serving, lust is about taking. He takes advantage of her. He uses her.

***I. The dangers of lust are easily missed (13:7)***

Ninth, the dangers of lust are easily missed. In verse 7 David was oblivious to the danger. He never had problems in this area so it didn't dawn on him that his children might. But lust is initially easy to hide. It only becomes visible when people have given in to it for so long that they don't care what others think. Parents have been shocked at the experimentation that their children have done because the parents naively didn't think it couldn't occur. And so they never put hedges in place that would protect their children. They never compassionately talk to their children about their sexual struggles so that they can help their children learn how to conquer them. But ignoring them or pretending like they don't exist is not going to help. You should assume that your children will have problems and help them to work through them. So the dangers of lust are easily missed by parents.

It is not surprising that in our porn saturated country it is estimated that 20-30% of girls and 10-20% of boys have experienced sexual abuse. To put that into a bit of perspective, physician and abuse expert, Charles Whitfield said that there are approximately 50,000 names on the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, DC. It's huge. If we were to make a similar memorial to children in our society who have been sexually abused, it would

have to be 1300 times larger than the Vietnam Memorial. If you've ever been to that memorial, that is astonishing. 1300 times as many victims as on the Vietnam Memorial - in America alone! And yet it is often missed because parents don't disciple their children into godliness in the area I'd sexuality. It's too embarrassing.

***J. Lust overlooks true character and treats people as objects (3:8-10)***

Tenth, lust overlooks true character in others and treats other people as objects to be used. Porn users frequently do not think about the harm that porn brings to women. Over time they are conditioned to dehumanize and depersonalize women. Over time they are conditioned to think that perversity is normal. In fact, statistics show that it doesn't take much porn exposure to make men think that women like the bizarre things in the porn. Study after study has shown that after men are exposed to porn, they are much more likely to think that women can enjoy rape and other abuses even if they say that they don't. As I mentioned, commentators say that it is obvious that Amnon was surprised that she would resist and would not like his advances. And why would he be surprised? Because lust makes people blind to the good character of the very ones they are abusing. It dehumanizes.

Tamar had kindness. She was self-sacrificial and generous with her time. She was willing to serve the sick. She was willing to do menial labor, even though she probably had plenty of servants to cook. But she had the character to not think that work was beneath her dignity. In verse 9 she has the character to see evil as being truly evil. In verse 12 she has the character to refuse his advances. In verse 13 she has the character to feel total shame over this act. Yet lust made Amnon blind to all of that, and made him assume that she would enjoy incest as much as him, if she could just be forced to it. I hope by now you are seeing that ignoring lust is ignoring a forest fire next to your home. Lust must be mortified or put to death.

***K. Lust is violence prone and demanding (v. 14)***

Eleven, lust is prone to violence and makes people demanding. You can see that in verse 14. She doesn't want any part in it, but he insisted, and he forced her.

***L. Lust resisted can turn to hate (v. 15)***

Twelve, lust resisted can easily turn to hate. While verse 15 may seem absolutely shocking and hard to believe could happen, counselors who have

dealt with porn addicts say that this love/hate or love/despising paradigm happens over and over again. And I believe it is in part demonic, but even apart from demons, it is of the very nature of lust to be paper thin close to hatred. In fact, the guilt of those guilty of rape, incest, homosexuality, and other crimes can often make them blame the victim for what they have just done and get angry with the victim as if it was all their fault. They seek to deal with their own guilt by shaming, blaming, and demeaning their victims. And even to hate the victim as if it was their fault. Lust can easily turn to hate. That's why we must destroy it.

***M. Lust discards those that it uses (v. 15b)***

Thirteen, lust often discards those that it uses. Verse 15 says, “**Amnon said to her, ‘Arise, be gone!’**” What hurtful words. Yet a person wrapped up in himself is less and less likely to care about the people he or she hurts. And I say “she” because these things can apply to women too, though usually in different ways. Don't think that lust is only a man's problem. It is not.

***N. Lust has no sense of responsibility (v. 17)***

Fourteen, we have already seen that lust has no sense of responsibility. Maybe in the initial stages of lust people will feel guilt and remorse, but as lust consumes a person, he takes less and less responsibility for his actions and puts more and more blame on others.

***O. Lust has no concern for the feelings of others (v. 16)***

And then finally, lust has no concern for the feelings of others. And I'm not just talking about discarding Tamar and locking her out. I'm talking about the emotional pain that he didn't care about, and the scarring that he didn't care about, and the absolute desolation of life that Amnon created for Tamar. He doesn't care that he has just ruined her life. It may not have started off that uncaring in his early years, but lust unchecked eventually led to that.

## **Conclusion**

### **1. Speak up (Prov. 24:11-12)**

I want to close with four summary points on this difficult topic that are only hinted at here. First, speak up. The tendency of families is to circle the wagons and enforce a strict code of silence. David seems to have done that. Absalom seems to have done that. And even Tamar did it. But such silence led to thousands of deaths in the next chapters. Silence may seem

like love, but it is not. Whether sexual abuse is from an adult or a child, it is something that must be dealt with and not ignored. Proverbs 24:11-12 shows that you are no friend if you are an enabler of an Amnon. You are no friend if such conduct is swept under the carpet. The Bible treats it as a serious iniquity that must be punished, and that must have Biblical wisdom applied to it if it is to be conquered.

## **2. Don't blame the victim (Ex. 23:7)**

Second, don't blame the victim. Exodus 23:7 warns us to keep as far as we can from engaging in false charges. This means false charges against a person who has been accused of being an abuser, yes – something that the government agencies have routinely engaged in. They often do not follow proper process. Nowadays they aren't always the best answer. But it also means false charges against a victim. And if you are a victim of sexual abuse, this means that you need to stop blaming yourself. There is never an excuse for rape, even if the rapist has put the blame on you.

## **3. Look to Jesus for hope and healing (1 John 1:9; Heb. 4:15-16)**

Third, look to Jesus for hope and healing. And I say this both to those who have been abused as well as former abusers who might hear this online. Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us that Jesus faced every kind of temptation and trial that we do, yet did so without sin. He can sympathize because he faced horrible abuse. He faced horrible verbal abuse. He faced such horrible physical abuse that He died of the abuse. And He at least understands sexual abuse, if you remember that he was crucified naked in front of mocking crowds. If you have been abused, know that Jesus cares and look to him for strength and comfort. And by the way, don't be angry at God for forgiving abusers and bringing them healing. Instead, ask God for the grace to do as Jesus did, and grant forgiveness to those who have repented and have received God's forgiveness.

And to former abusers – know that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And when He says “all unrighteousness,” that includes the unrighteousness of incest and abuse. The all includes all kinds of sin. Go to Jesus for forgiveness, healing and for the grace to conquer all lust.

## **4. Do a Romans 12:1-2**

And then lastly, I would say to all of us, there but for the grace of God go you and I. And this is why it is so imperative that we do a Romans 12:1-2 repeatedly. I've preached on that before, but I will just read it,



**Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.**

**Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

May it be so Lord Jesus. Amen.

# Pagan Thinking In A Christian Family

## 2 Samuel 13:1-18

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 6-16-2013

Introduction – Note the author’s deliberate connection of this story with that of the rape of Dinah in Genesis 34 and the resistance that Joseph showed to the advances of Potiphar’s wife.

### I. Pagan thinking in David’s family

#### A. World’s love versus Biblical romance (vv. 1-2)

1. Hebrew derivation of **אהב** is “to breathe heavily, to be excited” – Halot)
2. Various translations as “loved” (NKJV), “infatuation with her” (HCSB;JPS), “fell in love with” NIV; NJB;NRSV), “fell madly in love with” (NET), and “fell desperately in love with” (NLT).

#### B. Social inhibitions versus Biblical inhibitions (v. 2b)

#### C. World’s wisdom versus Biblical wisdom (v. 3)

#### D. Worldly friendship versus Biblical friendship (v. 3)

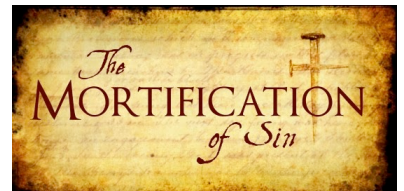
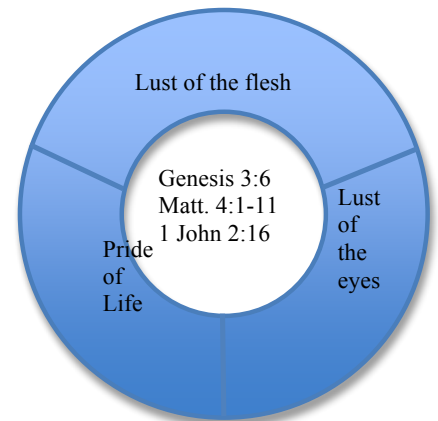
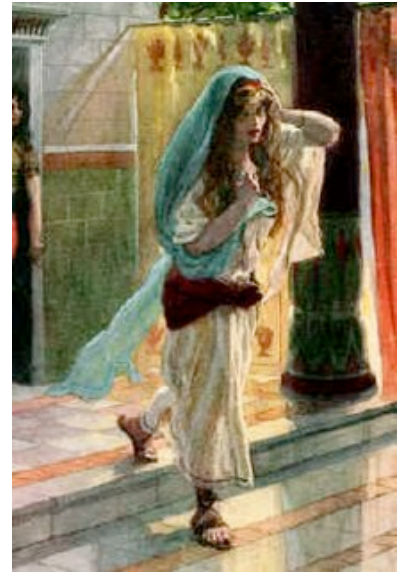
#### E. World’s compassion versus Biblical compassion (vv. 4-5)

#### F. World’s indulgent parenting versus Biblical parenting (vv. 6-7)

#### G. World’s propriety rather than Biblical propriety (vv. 8-10)

#### H. Worldly sense of manhood versus Biblical manhood (vv. 11-14)

#### I. Worldly irresponsibility versus Biblical responsibility (vv. 15-17)



- J. Worldly comfort versus Biblical comfort and defense (vv. 19-20)
  
- K. Worldly anger versus Biblical anger (v. 21)
  
- L. Worldly vengeance versus Biblical vengeance (vv. 22-33)
  
- II. Fifteen reasons why lust must be crucified rather than ignored
  - A. Because lust is not true love
  
  - B. Lust is all-consuming (13:2a)
  
  - C. Lust is destructive (13:2b)
    - 1. Destructive to his body
    - 2. Suicidal to his career and position
  
  - D. Lust wants to break down moral barriers (13:2c-d)
  
  - E. It totally skews a person's perceptions (13:3)
  
  - F. Lust looks for reasons to act out – often from enablers and the wisdom of enablers can easily appeal to lust (13:4)
  
  - G. Lust is deceitful (13:5a)
  
  - H. Lust uses anyone (13:5-6)
  
  - I. The dangers of lust are easily missed (13:7)
  
  - J. Lust overlooks true character and treats people as objects (3:8-10)
  
  - K. Lust is violence prone and demanding (v. 14)
  - L. Lust resisted can turn to hate (v. 15)
  - M. Lust discards those that it uses (v. 15b)
  - N. Lust has no sense of responsibility (v. 17)
  - O. Lust has no concern for the feelings of others (v. 16)

Conclusion

1. Speak up (Prov. 24:11-12)
2. Don't blame the victim (Ex. 23:7)
3. Look to Jesus for hope and healing (1 John 1:9; Heb. 4:15-16)
4. Do a Romans 12:1-2