

GAME OF THRONES

THE REIGN OF DAVID

#TamarToo

Key idea:

Sexual abuse is devastating and must never be minimized or covered up, but responded to with the redemptive grace of God to help those who have been abused to receive healing from Jesus.

Key text:

2 Samuel 13:1-22

In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. ²Amnon became frustrated to the point of illness on account of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her. ³Now Amnon had a friend named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." ⁵"Go to bed and pretend to be ill," Jonadab said. "When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.'" ⁶So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand." ⁷David sent word to Tamar at the palace: "Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him." ⁸So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it. ⁹Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat. "Send everyone out of here," Amnon said. So everyone left him. ¹⁰Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister." ¹²"Don't, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me. Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. ¹³What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you." ¹⁴But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her. ¹⁵Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!" ¹⁶"No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me." But he refused to

listen to her. ¹⁷He called his personal servant and said, “Get this woman out of here and bolt the door after her.” ¹⁸So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing a richly ornamented robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. ¹⁹Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornamented robe she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went. ²⁰Her brother Absalom said to her, “Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet now, my sister; he is your brother. Don’t take this thing to heart.” And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom’s house, a desolate woman. ²¹When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²²Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

Key points:

1. 2 Samuel 13 records the continuing effects of David’s sin against Bathsheba and Uriah, as his son Amnon rapes his sister Tamar.
2. Tamar is completely innocent in the events depicted in 2 Samuel 13 and is likened to Joseph.
3. Amnon is guilty of horrible sin and is viewed as a wicked fool like Nabal or Potiphar’s wife.
4. Neither David nor Absalom are presented as responding properly to help Tamar as she is forced to live with the result of Amnon’s sin.
5. Grievously, at the end of the story Tamar is left abused, bereft, desolate and abandoned by her abuser, her father, and society at large.
6. The only true hope for those suffering the effects of the sin of others is the redeeming work of Jesus, which can restore hope and bring healing over time.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday’s text and teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. How relevant is the story of Tamar to our current cultural moment? What does this tell you about the history of sexual abuse, and the tendencies of humans to abuse and take advantage of those in a vulnerable position?
3. How does Amnon respond to Tamar after he has sexually abused her? Why does he behave in this manner? What does this teach about the nature and effects of sin?

4. What do you think of Absalom's reaction to Amnon's actions? Is there anything he did well? What do you think he should have said or done differently?
5. What do you think of David's reaction to Amnon's actions? Were you surprised at the absence of any note that David comforted Tamar? Do you think he actually did speak to and comfort Tamar? Why do you think David did not confront and punish Amnon?
6. What do you think of the statement that "Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman"? What effects do you think this had on her? How could this situation have ended differently?
7. What emotions does this story produce in your own soul? How are those emotions best handled?
8. What parallels do you see between this story and how the modern church has handled sexual abuse? How do you think the modern church has failed to be the voice and hands of Jesus to those suffering the effects of sexual abuse? Why do you think the church has failed in this way?
9. What is Jesus' heart towards the victim of sexual abuse? How can you walk through the grief and pain of abuse to receive healing and restoration?
10. How can you help to bring the hope and healing of Jesus to those who have been abused? If you know someone who has suffered abuse, pray for them, and ask God to bring healing and restoration to their life.
11. Can you think of someone with whom you can share what you have learned this week? Pray for them and ask God to open a door for you to share His Word this week.