

Ahithophel's Iconoclastic Arrogance; Amnon Rapes Tamar; David's Sentimental Injustice; Absalom Assassinate Amnon; An Uneasy Truce with David

45. Ahithophel was Secretary of State in David's administration and was noted for his great wisdom:
- 2 Samuel 16:23** - In those days Ahithophel's advice was as if one inquired of the word of God.
46. Ahithophel and David were very close. David trusted him implicitly and unfortunately, Ahithophel through arrogance idolized David.
47. When David revealed his feet-of-clay at the expense of Ahithophel's granddaughter, then Ahithophel's self-righteous anger turned into iconoclastic arrogance.
48. Motivated by revenge, Ahithophel entered into antiauthority arrogance. At the same time, Absalom was also in the cosmic system, angry with his father, David, for the leniency given to Amnon following his rape of Tamar \tā'-mar\.
49. Tamar and Absalom were brother and sister; their mother was Maacah \mā'-a-ka\, David's third wife who was the daughter of King Talmi of Geshur. Amnon was their half-brother who was actually David's firstborn from his first wife Ahinoam \a-hi-nō'-am\ making Amnon the crown prince of Israel.
50. Amnon's weakness was sexual arrogance which he expressed by manipulating his half-sister Tamar into a situation where he could have his way with her.
51. Second Samuel 13:22 informs us that "Absalom hated Amnon for humiliating his sister. He was further enraged by his father's failure to have Amnon executed.
52. In 2 Samuel 12:21 we read that David heard about Amnon's rape of Tamar and was very angry. Nothing more is said about David taking any punitive action against Amnon but we get a clue about why not from the Septuagint:

2 Samuel 13:21 - [LXX] And king David heard all these things, and was very angry; [but he did not grieve the spirit of Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his first-born]. [Lancelot C. L. Brenton. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 418.]

53. The latter part of the verse inside the brackets does not appear in the original Hebrew manuscript but does provide a rationale for David's failure to prosecute Amnon, a subject addressed by:

Keil and Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on The Books of Samuel, 400-401:*

The LXX [Septuagint] add to the words: "He (David) was very wroth [angry]," the following clause: "He did not trouble the spirit of Amnon his son, because he loved him, for he was his first-born." This probably gives the true reason why David let such a crime as Amnon's go unpunished, when the law enjoined that incest should be punished with death (Leviticus 20:17); at the same time it is nothing but a subjective conjecture of the translators, and does not warrant us in altering the text. The fact that David was contented to be simply angry is probably to be accounted for partly from his own consciousness of guilt, since he himself had been guilty of adultery; but it arose chiefly from his indulgent affection towards his sons, and his consequent want of discipline. This weakness in his character bore very bitter fruit.

54. Absalom bided his time for two years presenting an overt disposition that concealed his true inner desire to enact revenge against Amnon. Secretly, he devised a plot to kill him.
55. In the north of Israel about a hundred miles from Jerusalem was the city of Baal-Hazor \bā-al-hā'-zor\ where Absalom ran a sheep ranch. It was just across the Jordan River from his grandfather Talmai's kingdom of Geshur.
56. The ranch at Baal-Hazor is where the assassination of Amnon occurred after Absalom convinced David to allow all of the princes to go up to the ranch for a celebration before the annual sheep shearing.
57. David was devastated over the death of Amnon. Absalom left Israel and lived in Geshur in self-imposed exile until David allowed him to return three years later and pardoned him for the murder of Amnon.
58. However, David's pardon did not include forgiveness. He isolated Absalom from the castle for two years before agreeing to an audience.
59. Absalom was willing to accept his father's pardon but he had never forgiven David for his injustice to Tamar. Back in David's good graces he began to plot his revenge with thoughts of revolution.
60. But no revolution can be successful without the support of the people, so Absalom began a political campaign to propagandize the masses