

Hatred without Restraint

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Preacher: Dan Calkins

[0:00] 2 Samuel chapter 13 verses 22-39 in the title of the message, Hatred without restraint.

! This is the word of the Lord. But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar.

After two full years, Absalom had sheep shearers in Baal Hazor, which is near Ephraim. And Absalom invited all the king's sons. And Absalom came to the king and said, Behold, your servant has sheep shearers.

Please let the king and his servants go with your servant. But the king said to Absalom, No, my son, let us not all go, lest we be burdensome to you.

He pressed him, but he would not go, but gave him his blessing. Then Absalom said, If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said to him, Why should he go with you?

[1:16] But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. Then Absalom commanded his servants, Mark when Amnon's heart is merry with wine.

And when I say to you, strike Amnon, then kill him. Do not fear, for I have not commanded you. Or have I not commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant.

So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose and each mounted his mule and fled. While they were on their way, news came to David. Absalom has struck down all the king's sons and not one of them is left. Then the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. And all his servants who were standing by tore their garments.

But Jonadab, the son of Shemiah, David's brother, said, Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men, the king's sons.

[2:22] For Amnon alone is dead. For by the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day he violated his sister Tamar. Now therefore let not my lord the king so take it to heart as to suppose that all the king's sons are dead.

For Amnon alone is dead. But Absalom fled. And the young man who kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked.

And behold, many people were coming from the road behind him by the side of the mountain. And Jonadab said to the king, Behold, the king's sons have come, as your servant said, so it has come about.

And as soon as he had finished speaking, behold, the king's sons came and lifted up their voice and wept. And the king also and all his servants wept very bitterly.

But Absalom fled and went to Talmai, the son of Amihud, king of Gesher. And David mourned for his son day after day.

[3:34] So Absalom fled and went to Gesher and was there three years. And the spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom because he was comforted about Amnon since he was dead.

So this is the beginning of several chapters where the key figure is Absalom. Absalom. And so this is really a good title, Hatred Without Restraint, because it does describe Absalom in this point.

The idea that he did hate Amnon. And we may think he has a good reason to hate Amnon. If we were honest, we would probably say that we might hate someone that would do such a vile act as Amnon did.

And so we can understand that. However, murdering your brother is never right. As the old saying goes, two wrongs don't make a right.

And this is definitely the case here. However, you also can understand why he might want to do such a thing as this.

[4:58] If you backed up to verse 21, we talked about this last week. But it said when King David heard all these things, basically Amnon raping his sister Tamar, he was very angry.

And it stops there. You would think he was very angry and justice was served to Amnon, whatever that looked like. No, no, nothing was served to Amnon.

He was just angry. And that's all that happened. And even Absalom didn't do much at the time. He waited. We'll get to that.

But at the same time, we might think justice was not served. Therefore, there needed to be something that happened. There was no justice that happened.

David here was angry without justice. And when justice doesn't happen in our world, in any case, in any way, when things like this happen, or whatever it might be, and these issues are not dealt with in a just manner, we do find people taking matters into their own hands.

[6:19] And we see that a lot. In all kinds of different venues where you talk about politics, whether you're talking about family issues, church issues, all kinds of things, you see people taking matters in their own hands whenever the leadership in place does not take care of the situation as they should.

So, what was the justice supposed to be? This may be something that might be of interest.

This idea is, should Amnon have died for his crimes? Should Amnon have... What should he have done? What should have happened in this situation? Well, the Bible has something to say about rape.

It has a lot to say about incest. Now, rape, if you were to rape a virgin like this case, and it's very obvious from the first part of chapter 13 that Tamar was very much a virgin, It is a crime, but it is not a capital offense.

And the reason it's not a capital offense is because the violator must pay a monetary fine and then must marry the victim. Now, the violator must take care of that victim for the rest of that victim's life, and the Bible also says they are never to divorce.

[7:50] So, this is basically what has to happen when someone rapes a virgin. They are to take that person, they take that lady as a wife, and they are to never divorce, and he is to take care of her the rest of his days.

And as, of course, if other things in Scripture are taken care of, that is going to be his only wife, because the Bible does not allow for polygamy.

And so, now, but incest, is that a capital offense? And that one is a harder one to answer, because there's a lot said about incest.

So, the short answer is, well, possibly. But there's several places in Scripture, in Leviticus, in Deuteronomy, and even in Ezekiel, that talk about incest. The Ezekiel passage, there was incest. It was one of many different sins that were committed by the Jews as a reason why God allowed Babylon to overtake them and allow the Jews of Judah to be exiled to Babylon.

[8:57] And so, that was just one of quite a few different things that are listed in chapter 22 of Ezekiel for those reasons. So, very serious issue at that point.

But also, in Leviticus, you see that it is called a disgrace whenever a man is having sexual relations with his sister or half-sister or even a stepsister as well.

And so, but there's also a phrase that is said here, too. They are to be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. Now, there's a lot of times that phrase is used.

And many times when that phrase is used, it means they are to die. They are to be executed. Early on, earlier in this passage, in chapter 20 of Leviticus, talks about parents that sacrifice their children to Molech, are to die, are to be cut off from their people, is what it says.

And then it says a little bit later on, another verse later, it says they are to be executed for that crime. And so, they're very serious about that. At the same time, there's another place where it's a lesser violation that we might consider to be a lesser violation.

[10:18] And yet, it's also said to be cut off from their people. But earlier in another chapter, it says they are to be separated for seven days.

So, I guess in some regard, in some figurative sense, they are to be cut off of the people for a week. Still a serious situation. You know, you're not to be protected in that week's period as well.

So, this is hard to say whether it is capital offense or not. But we see that phrase, they are to be cut off from their people. And we do see a very fine example of two men in this passage of Scripture who are, one way or the other, cut off from their people.

And this is what happens with hatred without restraint is allowed. And so, these two men, as you may guess, are the two brothers, Amnon and Absalom.

And this passage of Scripture is, you can separate this passage of Scripture into two parts. Amnon being cut off by his people, and Absalom being cut off by his people.

[11:35] So, let's separate that out. First part, Amnon is cut off by design. And you'll notice that there is no justice that's being displayed here, either.

David did not bring justice when he should have. And Absalom, well, he couldn't bring justice even if he was, well, I guess he could. But it would have definitely looked a lot different.

This was revenge. This was vengeance. And we've seen all over the places in Scripture, when Jesus, or when Christ, or when God said, Jesus would be quoting Old Testament, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.

Vengeance is mine. You see that in Romans 12, as a quote from the Old Testament as well.

Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. And it's all over the place in the Bible.

So, are we ever to commit revenge on people? No, we never are to. That is God's work. That is what God does, ultimately.

[12:40] And so, we need to trust in him for, you know, well, for his plans to be carried out, for his will to be done. And so, he's the only one that can perfectly do that.

And he does. And so, this is the, but nonetheless, this Amnon is cut off by design, and by Absalom's design.

So, we see the design conceived in verse 22. We see that Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, and he waited two full years.

And so, it's taking this time for this plan, for this design to be conceived, to be allowed, and to have happened as well.

And of course, there's plenty of reasons why it was allowed to be conceived, like we talked about already. David did not do his job as king and father to Amnon.

[13:38] So, when justice doesn't happen, people take matters in their own hands. And this is no exception to that. So, the design was not only conceived, but it was also concealed.

And this is a really sad part. And we see that quite, quite clearly there in verse 22. He just simply did not speak to Amnon at all. Neither good nor bad.

Just didn't speak to him. That's a real problem. The communications, the line of communication was completely cut off. You don't see the line of communication all that much between Amnon and David either.

And so, this is a really sad effect that's going on here. Matthew Henry says this as well. He says, if Absalom had reasoned the matter with Amnon, he might have convinced him of his sin and brought him to repentance.

That could have happened. You never know. And nonetheless, so whenever we don't allow these, we allow these communications to be cut off. We allow things not to be discussed.

[14:47] Yeah, there's bitterness that's nursed during that time. And there's things that are allowed to come to a boil. Anger that's allowed to come to a boil. And how long did it happen?

Well, two full years. Oh, man, you can get angry. You can get real angry in two years. Especially if you don't take care of that situation. And so, we see that all the time.

There's a place in this passage of Scripture that we can really apply to us. It's this point right here at the beginning. It's this idea that when we allow plans, especially vengeful plans or things to happen in secret that are going to harm those that we feel like deserve to be harmed, that's a problem.

So, we need to be careful about those things. So, we need to have a plan that is able to gently correct as the Bible says to correct, to gently restore as the Bible says to do that.

We need to recognize that and to understand that we need to keep these lines of communication open. Proverbs 19, 14 says this, Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

[16:06] That is a wonderful word. That it is the glory of someone to be able to overlook an offense. But what if that offense cannot be overlooked? Then what?

And you know what? Not all offenses can be overlooked. And so, when a brother has done you wrong, a sister has done you wrong, first of all, think, hey, can I overlook this offense?

It may take a few days to figure that out. It may take a few seconds to figure that out. It shouldn't take any more than a few days, by the way. And if you're not able to overlook that offense, what

does the Bible say to do?

Especially for those who are in the church, for those who are believers, brothers and sisters in Christ. Well, Matthew 18 has that. If our brother or sister sins against us, we go and talk with them. Brother to brother and sister to sister. Just the two of you. We are to go to them. If they understand that, yes, I have sinned.

[17:11] And I need to repent. And there is a restoration of that relationship and repentance. You have won your brother. That's a wonderful thing. But if that doesn't happen, then what does it say?

We're to take one or two others. And that's an interesting concept. It comes from Deuteronomy 19, 15, saying from two to three witnesses.

It's by the word of two to three witnesses that something can be backed. That testimony can be backed. But it's also a concept called mediation as well. And it's an idea that maybe someone, these two people have something that felt like something's wrong going on.

And there's an argument going on. And we bring someone else involved, especially someone that is able to be trained in this concept of mediation. And they are to help each side to understand their faults and where things are going wrong in this situation to help to restore that relationship as well. And so this is an extreme example right here in the Old Testament. This Amnon and Absalom situation. But it's so sad whenever, especially people that are considered God's people, like the church or like the royal family of Israel.

[18:40] Especially when people are considered to be those who have been saved, who have been sanctified, and who are following in Christ to come to a disagreement.

And to argue and to bicker and to gossip about one another. And to allow there to be a big wall of miscommunication. Does anybody have any idea what I'm talking about?

I think we all do. I think we've all seen this. And so it's a sad thing when we see that happening. And that's what happens when these things get concealed.

Like this situation, this design, this plan that Absalom had was concealed. He never told Amnon what he was going to do.

Of course, it wouldn't have happened if he would have told him. And then the signs laid out. In verses 23 and following, you see after two years, there's a celebration happens.

[19:49] Absalom has a field, a major field, a whole lot of sheep and goats. And they're going to have shearers come up. And back in these days, and probably still in places where there's a lot of sheep and goats.

Whether in Israel or Middle East or even Australia. Those places, when there's sheep shearing going on. Especially a lot of sheep that are being sheared.

There's generally a celebration that goes on along with that. There's an animal that's slaughtered. And there's a whole lot of festivities going on. And Absalom's doing this.

He is going to have a feast. And so he's planning this great feast. He goes to his father, his king. And says, I would like for you to be a part of this feast.

Be a wonderful guest of honor to come up to the feast. And it's a pretty good distance from Jerusalem. About 12 miles. And we may think 12 miles is not that big of a deal.

[20:51] You've got to remember, there was no Highway 75 cutting through Israel. It was not a 65 mile an hour roadway going up to this Bal Hazor city going on there.

12 miles was quite the trek. It could be like trying to go to Houston or something like that. Or going to Tulsa by walking. I mean, it would be, it may not even describe, that may not even describe how difficult that kind of trek would be.

But nonetheless, he was inviting David to come. And of course, David had done that many, many times before. Especially as a shepherd himself.

And so, well, nonetheless, there was a reason for David to say no. And he said no. Even at his request, at Absalom's request, beckoning for him to come.

And he still was not able to do that. And there's a lot of commentators that said here that Absalom probably knew that David was going to say no.

[22:04] I mean, there's kind of some bargaining type things going on in this conversation throughout. It's not just a technical conversation or not just a casual conversation.

There's some bargaining type things happening as well. And so, there's a bit of a negotiation going on. He invites him, not just to, he said he wasn't going to go.

So, can you send your son Amnon, my brother, to come in your place? Amnon being the firstborn, being the crown prince, come in your place.

And, of course, with some negotiation, not only Amnon came, but all of his brothers came. And right here, there's probably not all the brothers, not all the youngins and such.

Probably all the ones that are of age. And so, Amnon, the brothers all came to this great feast. And so, there were plenty of things going on, plenty of animals that were slaughtered to be able to feed them.

[23 : 16] And most importantly, plenty of wine as well. And that wine plays a big role in this scenario.

So, what do you see? You see in verse 28, Okay, I can't imagine what they were thinking at that request right there.

So, then kill him. Do not fear, for have I not commanded you. So, if you were to kill Amnon, all you are doing is just simply doing what your boss is telling you to do.

What one of the princes of Israel is simply telling you to do. And so, you wouldn't have anything on your own. In effect, your hands would be cleaned. Kind of like Pontius Pilate's.

Doesn't really work that way. So, and then it says, be courageous and be valiant. Similarly to the way Joshua was telling his people in the Israelites to be strong and be courageous.

[24 : 35] Absalom is saying these very words, really the same Hebrew words, or at least the same form as Joshua.

Very different situations going on. Where the Israelites were taking the land that God had promised them. And Absalom's men is taking a guy's life in a vengeful way.

Very different scenarios going on. And so, Absalom made his ploy. Absalom was able to even trick David in another form and fashion.

Just like he did beforehand. Or like Amnon was able to do as well. So, David sent his sons. Did he forget what happened two years before?

I don't know. Amnon's sister had been raped. Or Absalom's sister, full sister, had been raped by Amnon. I mean, doesn't he remember that? It doesn't make a lot of sense.

[25 : 40] But nonetheless, this is what's going on. And it seems as if they have moved on. It's kind of strange. But then again, didn't we just talk about a few chapters ago that David had taken the life of Uriah the Hittite and brought Bathsheba into his house and married her.

And she was pregnant and about to have a child. It's pretty much life is normal. And this is another way.

I guess life is normal happened. Amnon raped his sister. Yeah, Tamar's disgraced. That's unfortunate. But Absalom's taken care of her. That's all taken care of.

It's okay. Of course, the law says that Amnon needs to take care of her. But it's all taken care of. All within the family. It's all been taken care of.

It's another day as usual. And so it's almost like they've just allowed that to get behind them, moving on with their life. And because of that, David was able to easily be tricked into allowing this to happen.

[27 : 00] And this design. And then we go into the design laid out and then the design executed. And so as it happens right there at the end of 28, be courageous and be valiant, 29.

So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Wow. So Amnon was killed.

And then it says that the king's sons arose and each mounted his mule and fled. They got out of there.

They didn't want to have anything to do with that. Also, they didn't know whether it was going to be an ambush. They had no idea about that. I mean, we see it later on. We'll get to that.

But, yeah, they had no idea that it could have been ambushed. They could have been going after them. But, no, that was not the plan. The plan was to kill Amnon. And we certainly understand why.

[28 : 03] Okay, so Amnon cut off by design. But the second part is now Absalom cut off by default. Maybe not the best word.

He was avoiding justice. He was escaping, evading, you know, what would be lawfully happening to him in a way.

When premeditated murder happens, when someone commits premeditated murder, what does the law say should happen to him?

They should die. They should be executed. It's not just biblical law. That's just about every law except for liberal law. I don't want to go there.

We all know what we're talking about. And so, but nonetheless, it also seems like a normal, you know, it's like, okay, it says, you know, that's the law of retribution.

[29:02] It's an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life. I mean, that all makes sense. It's easy to line out that that's what's supposed to happen.

When you take a life, your life's taken from you. It makes a lot of sense for that to go on. And, of course, we see in the Bible that to be laid out.

Deuteronomy 27, 24. Cursed be anyone who strikes down his neighbor in secret. Leviticus 24, 17. Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death.

And that's what should have happened to Absalom at this point. And so, but what happens? Well, Absalom flees.

He just gets out of there. And he flees alone, which is very sad. By the way, Tamar is now someone who is under Absalom's care.

[30:05] But after verse 22, she just, like, completely disappears from the narrative. And, I mean, I don't know where she is.

Is she with him? Is she still in Jerusalem? I'm not really sure. But the fact is, she's under Absalom's care. And now Absalom is fleeing and running away because of a crime that he committed.

So, now, wow. I mean, it's just, it seems to me that it's just further and further hardship for Tamar as well. Okay, so what we have in verse 30 and following, we have several things going on here, too, that set up Absalom being cut off.

Really, by default, you see fake news going on. We love fake news, don't we? It's all over the place now.

And it's all over here, too. You see, in verse 30, it's, News came to David. Absalom has struck down all the king's sons, and not one of them is left.

[31:12] Okay, well, let's stop here. If this were true. Can you imagine the horror of that effect?

The outrage of that? I mean, the servants, everybody in his household. I mean, that would just be the most outrageous thing that could happen.

I mean, that was an attack on, I mean, you're attacking the king of Israel, and you're killing all the sons of the king of Israel. Any son of the king of Israel, really.

But all the sons of the king, especially? That's attacking Israel. It's now Absalom against Israel. What's going on right here?

It's staging a war. It's staging something that's about to happen. Or could happen. And so, yeah, it can be, you know, heartache.

[32:13] It could be a ton of weeping that happens. It's, you know, I'm sure they're torn apart like crazy about it. But at the same time, it's starting a war.

They're vengeful now. And you see that in verse 31. The king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. You know, he's now turning into Job in many ways at this point.

And all his servants who were standing there also tore their garments. This was a serious, serious situation. And without knowing anything else, yeah, this is a terrible, terrible shock to them.

Okay, but there's another guy that comes back into the story. If you remember him from early on, verses 3 and 4.

Jonadab, he was able to help Amnon to set up a scenario to allow Tamar to come into his presence. And he's now able to soften the blow a bit.

[33:26] Now, there's a lot of people that are saying things about Jonadab here. You know, maybe he was, there was like a, you know, maybe a conspiracy between Absalom and Jonadab.

And, you know, they wanted, Absalom wanted to take the throne. And, you know, he probably did anyway. But he wanted to take the throne away. And the crown prince was Amnon.

So let's get Amnon out of the way. And, well, you know, if Tamar has to be wiped out, that's fine.

But, you know, so long as Amnon is getting out of the way and Absalom can get right into there and be the next king after David.

And maybe there's a conspiracy going on. And there's some people that are actually saying that that could be happening here. I don't know. But, but nonetheless, this is an interesting thing that he knows this about, about the situation.

And, you know, the things that he actually knows, it is, it is surprising. And so, again, he's a wise guy. He is, he is a person that knows and has great understanding.

[34 : 30] But what we talked about last week, he has wisdom without scruples, wisdom without ethics. And so he can give his wisdom to just about anyone.

He's kind of like Balaam, the prophet. Remember him, the seer from the book of Numbers, that the king of Moab came down and brought him out and said, You need to curse the Israelites.

And, of course, God told him through the voice of a donkey. Donkeys don't have voices. But, nonetheless, through the voice of a donkey, that you need to be speaking what God tells him to speak. And Balaam did that.

But then Balaam did other things as well. And, you know, so he had great wisdom. But, but it was wisdom for hire at the same time. You know, so consummate politician in many ways.

And so he knew how to get things done. And he was doing that. He was now coming to comfort David. He was a servant of David. He was actually a relative of David.

[35 : 27] So he's comforting David and letting him know, don't worry, not all of your king's sons are dead. Just one. It's hard to call that a comfort.

But, nonetheless, I think in some ways it probably was. And so, he's bringing this up. And he's bringing his words of comfort to David.

And it turned out to actually be true. But he tells in verse 33 and says, Now, therefore, let not my lord the king, so take it to heart, as to suppose that all the king's sons are dead.

For Amnon alone is dead. We'll see in a few verses that his words ring true. But before we get to that point, we see that Absalom has fled.

Just simply says that. Right there in verse 34, without moving on, it just says, But Absalom fled. He got out of there. He did not want to face the justice that he needed to face, that it was right for him to face.

[36 : 33] He got out of that place. And then, even with some help, it says, The young man who kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked. And behold, many people were coming from the road behind him by the side of the mountain.

So, this is an interesting thing. It just says, but Absalom fled. And then it goes back to Jerusalem. Interesting thing is, and Jonah was able to tell David that the words that he comforted him with were true.

And they all wept bitterly about it. This was something that was a complete attack. They didn't know. They could have been killed as well.

And verse 36, it says, The king also and all his servants wept bitterly even after the king's sons came home. And they all wept together.

For they had lost, well, the rightful heir to the throne. You see two more times in this passage of scripture. Verse 37 and also verse 38.

[37 : 40] It just says, once again, Absalom fled. They're making a big deal about that. Three times, Absalom fled. Where does he flee to? Verse 37, He flees to Talmi, the son of Amihud, king of Geshur.

Okay, so here's this idea. What's being set up? We talked about. When you kill a king's son, you attack the king.

It's like attacking the king himself, like attacking the king's ambassadors, attacking the king. The crown prince is like the head ambassador. You're attacking the king himself.

You're starting a war. That happened in chapter 10, right? You know, when just the simple ambassadors, not even family, got attacked, a war was started.

And now another war is about to be started, but this time it's a civil war. It's a war within the family. Wars are never civil. I don't know why we name it that way.

[38 : 42] I do, but, you know, it's still. But nonetheless, they're not civil. But, and this one's certainly not going to be either. But now it's even getting further into the family as well.

It's not just Israel either. Now he's fleeing to Geshur, which is in Syria. And you're like, well, that's a foreign nation. Okay, so a foreign nation coming up against Israel.

Or got to remember, Absalom's grandfather is the king of Geshur. And so he's just basically going to see his family. And if you can imagine, now, just the thoughts that could be going on, more of this possible fake news.

Gesher and Israel come into war. It could happen. Israel has gone to war with some of the Syrians before.

Some of the people up in those territories. So, it could definitely happen. And now it's even a family affair. Because they have had a marriage for advantage between those two nations as well.

[39:49] Oh, man. So, chickens are coming home to roost in many ways. We just talked about that this morning with Pastor Tim.

He's saying, you reap what you sow. That's in Galatians 6. You reap what you sow. David's reaping what he's sowing. Okay.

And then the last verse. And this will be leading into next week's message. The spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom because he was comforted about Amnon since he was dead.

Whether the king is just so heartbroken about the situation. Or if the king is just so mad and wants to get back at him. He's just not able to do it.

It would start a war. It would start an unnecessary war. Why would you go out after your in-laws? You don't have to. So, it would start a war that doesn't need to be started.

[41:02] It's not really anyone's fault but Absalom's. And so, there you go. Absalom under the protection of grandfather. And if you notice also in the last part of verse 38, he's going to be there for three years.

So, this passage of scripture wasn't very long. But five years passed. Two full years of waiting and planning and scheming. And now three years of hiding.

Five full years passed at this point. Without justice. Also, most importantly, without God.

Because where have we seen the word God in here? Where have we seen Yahweh in here? Not at all. He's not in this text. But we need to remember, he's here.

Absalom had to flee away alone. But he's not alone.

[42:15] you