

2 Samuel 13: vv 21-22, Feet of Clay & Role Model Arrogance

2 Samuel 13:21 - Now when King David heard all these things he became extremely angry. ([LXX]: But he did not trouble the life of Amnon his son because he loved him and because he was the firstborn.)

Had David executed the law and done his duty as king of Israel he would have sentenced Amnon to death. David's weakness was personal guilt over having raped Bath-sheba. He was reluctant to punish Amnon for the same crime of which he was guilty.

Thus, a combination of factors led to David's miscarriage of justice: (1) He still carried guilt from his abuse of Bath-sheba; (2) his love for Amnon was greater than his love for doing the right thing; and (3) His desire for Amnon to succeed him was greater than his obligation toward the laws of Israel.

Absalom cannot believe it. He was confident that if he handled the problem in a poised and aristocratic manner that establishment authority would dispense justice and execute Amnon. His confidence in establishment authority was directed toward his father David who was his role model.

When a weak David failed to preserve the honor of his own daughter, Absalom's sister, in favor of an obviously perverted commoner, Absalom snapped.

Rather than taking the good advice he gave Tamar and leaving it in the hands of the Supreme Court of Heaven, Absalom began his own trip down the road of the loser believer. Absalom reacts to David's failure and enters into the emotional complex of sins.

2 Samuel 13:22 - Absalom did not speak to Amnon either good or evil, for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar.

David has revealed his feet of clay by failing to execute Amnon. Absalom is not yet advanced enough into the reversionistic spiral to focus his iconoclastic arrogance directly upon his father.

David is king. He is Absalom's father and Absalom loves him. He is not yet able to bring himself to assassinate his father—at least not yet.

David's failure is reacted to by Absalom. But instead of striking out at his father directly, he does the next best thing. He focuses his attention on Amnon, the Crown Prince whose position both through birth and politics enabled him to violate his sister with apparent impunity.

It would be wrong to imply that Absalom ever held any respect for Amnon. He didn't. But he had reluctantly oriented and adjusted to the system of primogeniture. Absalom was an aristocrat. His mother was the daughter of Talmai, King of Geshur, his father of course was David, King of Israel.

He was raised in one royal household and occasionally visited another. He understood the monarchical system, a system which often places unqualified and incompetent men into maximum power.

Amnon on the other hand was slug slime. He was a commoner, his mother being just another of David's tarts. She was Jezreelite hoi polloi with no social graces and no idea of how to raise a child to meet the demands of royalty. Therefore, Amnon was a self-centered boor whose only goal in life was self-aggrandizement—whatever the first husband wants the first husband gets.

Interestingly enough, Absalom was just as self-centered as was Amnon, the difference being that where Amnon was lascivious, Absalom was ascetic.

When Amnon raped Tamar, Absalom immediately oriented to the system. *“Amnon is Crown Prince but is unqualified to be king. However, this is a capital offense. My father David, my role model, will see that justice is served. Chileab will become the new Crown Prince. We will all soon be rid of Amnon.”*

All of this can be summarized by two words: unrealistic expectations. Because of role model arrogance and unrealistic expectations, Absalom enters into iconoclastic arrogance. Circumstances prevent him from destroying his father directly but he can go after him indirectly while at the same time avenging his sister’s rape. He decides to murder Amnon. He enters into revenge motivation and revenge tactics. His revenge tactics are molded by his personality and lifestyle of royal aristocracy.