

Lesson 12 brought us to grips with David at his absolute lowest point. We saw how the sweet psalmist of Israel degenerated to an adulterer, a murderer, and a despiser of the things of God.

His sin serves as a good warning for us today. We observed the many mistakes he made in not dealing properly with sexual sin. Praise God though, David became repentant and God restored him in part. However, David would reap the consequences of his sin for the rest of his days.

These mistakes merit reviewing so that we can strengthen ourselves against them in our lives:

- David had been sowing seeds of this sin through more subtle compromises, becoming desensitized to sexual sin
- He allowed himself to be in a place he should have never been, a place where he was relaxed and vulnerable to temptation
- He failed to put up a barrier around his eyes, allowing his eyes to freely roam and activate lust in his heart
- He ignored warnings from Scripture and his conscience, becoming willfully ignorant of them
- He failed to reprogram his mind for righteousness until his thoughts ran wild in his mind to the point that he acted upon them
- He did not take sexual sin seriously enough, despite the costs of such behavior
- He failed to confess and turn from his sin, allowing God to restore him

By God's grace, David didn't die because of his sin, but the sin cost the life of his child. This week, we'll see the second and third installments of the fourfold curse David dramatically called upon himself.<sup>1</sup>

## DAY 1

### A Disturbed Son 2 SAMUEL 13:1-7

Please Read 2 Samuel 13:1-7 and answer the following questions.

[ 1 ] How do vv. 1-2 introduce the three main characters of this sad story, and what was the problem at hand?

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*Note:* Amnon was David's firstborn son through Ahinoam (2 Samuel 3:2); his name means "faithful," which is from the root word similar to our word *amen*.<sup>2</sup> Absalom was the son of Maacah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur (2 Samuel 3:3); his name means "the father of peace."<sup>3</sup>

Sadly, neither of these people lived up to the meaning of their names! Tamar is described as being lovely. Other translations make it clear that she was one extremely beautiful young woman; her name is suggestive of beauty, meaning "palm tree," which was symbolic in a sensual way as used in Song of Solomon 7:7-8.<sup>4</sup>

[ 2 ] Amnon's friend Jonadab noticed something was wrong. What did Amnon reveal, and what did Jonadab suggest he do about it, the "crafty man" that he was (vv. 4–5)?

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[ 3 ] How does Amnon set up the situation and even dupe his father into getting alone with his beautiful half-sister (vv. 6–7)?

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### **EXPANDED QUESTIONS**

Amnon was quite a piece of work. He thought that he loved this gal. He desired and delighted in her, but it was wrongly placed lust that drove his desire. He became distressed, frustrated, or as the NLT puts it, obsessed with this young woman.

The Hebrew word *distressed* literally means to be cramped in affliction and oppression.<sup>7</sup> The translators have been kind to Amnon in saying "it was improper for him to do anything to her," because as Ronald Youngblood points out, this phrase could be translated that it was awesome or wonderful/marvelous in his eyes to do something to this young virgin.<sup>8</sup>

We don't know his real heart in the matter, but it's clear that this isn't just a story of "love gone bad;" it is a story of lust and sexual desire that he refused to master, letting it dominate his life. He was in love with love, or lust we should say, for that was all she was to him.

[ 1 ] Addictive sexual sins are extremely dangerous. They start out secretly and the more these lusts are fed, the more likely they are to be acted out. They then end in destructive situations like this, if not stopped.<sup>9</sup> If sexual feelings, lusts, or other things tempt us and preoccupy our hearts and minds, what radical steps must we take (Matthew 5:27–30)?

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[ 2 ] Satan always will have a Jonadab, some streetwise person, there to help egg us on to sin and down the path of destruction. How do the following passages warn against being misled by such a so-called friend who wants you to compromise or give into sin?

Psalm 1

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Proverbs 1:10; 13:20

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2 Corinthians 6:14–18

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[ 3 ] How does James 1:13–15 tie in with this?

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**Daily Life Point:** This passage warns us of the dangers of lust and sexual desire. Sadly it is a mirror reflection of David in his son's life. Both father and son secretly desired a beautiful woman they had observed, but were not allowed to have.

Sexual sin is always a potential downfall for any believer—male or female, old or young—and we must guard strongly against any illicit lusts developing in our minds and hearts. Amnon didn't even try to fight it. He dwelt on it daily to the point of being obsessed and ill.

Do you sense any potential for this developing in your own life? Perhaps some young Tamar has crossed your path. She is often on your mind, even in a seemingly innocent way. Maybe you are still single, and sexual desires are overwhelming you, and rather than seeking to become a godly person for someone else, you are dabbling in things you shouldn't.

Maybe you are married and the devil whispers in your ear, "Your spouse just isn't fulfilling you." These things are serious, for sexual sin is a growing problem in the church today. This sin often times makes the church ineffective for the kingdom of God.

What are some of the things that Amnon should have done to short-circuit the sexual impulses that flowed through him? How can you avoid from falling like David and Amnon? Please share some thoughts here and discuss them in the group.

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## **MEMORY PASSAGE**

This week we will memorize Proverbs 11:19–20. Review the passage several times throughout each day. By the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

**As righteousness leads to life, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death. Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the Lord, but the blameless in their ways are His delight. (Proverbs 11:19–20 NKJV)**

## **DAY 2**

### A Desperate Act **2 SAMUEL 13:8–14**

*Please Read 2 Samuel 13:8–14 and answer the following questions*

[ 1 ] Tamar innocently obeyed her father's directive and prepared this special bread for Amnon. What should have been an obvious sign that something was not right with this (vv. 9–10)?

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[ 2 ] Now that they were alone, Amnon made his move, took hold of her, and wanted her to have sexual relations with him. In what ways did she try to dissuade him from this (vv. 12–13)?

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[ 3 ] What was the sad result (v. 14)?

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## **EXPANDED QUESTIONS**

[ 1 ] We must not trivialize Amnon's sexual sin or our own sexual sins. His one goal was to have sex with this young woman. When she would not give him consent, he raped and sexually abused her. As Charles Swindoll well said, "It was a disgraceful, disgusting kind of love. Better defined, it was incestuous lust."<sup>10</sup> What does the Mosaic Law say about this incestuous sin (Leviticus 18:9; 20:17; Deuteronomy 22:25–29)?

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[ 2 ] Amnon's desperate actions not only ignored God's laws against such sexual relations, but also ignored how they would affect his reputation. He only cared about satisfying his lusts. Tamar tried to warn him that his actions would make him like one of the fools in Israel.

What are some of the things that the book of Proverbs warns us about the fool and those walking in sin?

Proverbs 7:21–23

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Proverbs 19:1–3

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Proverbs 26:11–12

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**Daily Life Point:** To think that believers are immune to falling to these same passions is being naïve at best and a fool at worst. To let sexual passions get that out of control is not only possible, but has happened to those proclaiming the name of Christ, who continued to sow to their fleshly nature. Think through the meaning behind Tamar's pleading words and write out some thoughts that can help you when you deal with sexual temptations. Don't ignore the serious warnings in the Bible about sexual sin and God's attitude about this sin.

(1) Sexual sin with your Christian sister is no more than spiritual incest and would seriously shame and damage her life as well as yours:

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(2) Such behavior could possibly damage your testimony and disqualify you from God's service in many ways, making you out to be the fool:

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(3) Sex outside of marriage is ignoring God's Word about marriage. It is adultery, and it is fornication. You may even be taking another man's current or future wife, whom you have no right to:

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## MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

As righteousness leads to \_\_\_\_\_, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own \_\_\_\_\_. Those who are of a perverse \_\_\_\_\_ are an abomination to the Lord, but the blameless in their \_\_\_\_\_ are His delight. (Proverbs 11:19–20 NKJV)

## DAY 3

A Desolate Woman  
2 SAMUEL 13:15–22

Please Read 2 Samuel 13:15–22 and answer the following questions

[ 1 ] What happened after Tamar was raped, and what did Amnon do (vv. 15–17)?

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[ 2 ] How did this rape affect Tamar for the rest of her days (vv. 18–20)?

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[ 3 ] How did David and her brother Absalom react to this (vv. 20–22)?

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## EXPANDED QUESTIONS

How typical the reaction of Amnon was to these deceptive lusts. When we try to act them out, we find out they were empty, unfulfilling, and pointless. This led to Amnon mistreating Tamar, blaming her for the sin and treating her shamefully. Yet this is all too typical of victims of sexual abuse and rape, because there is a very fine line between selfish lust and hatred.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, the victim is often the one blamed.

[ 1 ] We in the church need to stand against and turn from anything that can bring shame upon the cause of Christ, such as sexual abuse and rape. However, the statistics tell us that there is still a problem with this even among the churched. Some 5–15 percent of all males and 15–30 percent of all females in the United States report exposure to some form of sexual abuse at some time in their lives. In 1998, there were approximately 103,845 incidents of children abused.<sup>12</sup> Someone is raped in the United States every two minutes, and it is estimated that only 31 percent of these cases are reported!<sup>13</sup> More often than not, the victim of rape and abuse knows the perpetrator, and it is someone that holds some sort of place of power over them.<sup>14</sup>

What strong words did Jesus have about anyone that would hurt or stumble another person, especially someone unable to fight back like Tamar (Mark 9:42)? Sadly, how did Amnon's action become prophetic in a sense, as God later proclaimed His anger at the actions of the leaders of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 22:6, 10–16)?

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[ 2 ] The rape destroyed Tamar. Her virginity was torn from her like her beautiful, ornate garment was torn in grief. Like many today, her family didn't even deal with it. They told her not to say anything about it, to just leave it as a family matter, "after all, he's your brother." Families often give this incorrect advice to the victims of abuse, rape, and incest.<sup>15</sup> Again, statistics show that a sense of guilt overwhelms most victims of rape and sexual abuse for much of their lives, causing significant emotional and psychological damage.<sup>16</sup>

What hope is there in Christ for restoration, even after such a great trauma?

Psalm 34:4–5; Matthew 11:28–30

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Philippians 4:7; 1 Peter 5:7

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**Daily Life Point:** How frightening it is to see how low a human being can stoop when they let their flesh run unchecked. Part of our problem, as Charles Swindoll well pointed out, is that we are practically trained to sin as new believers. We learn promises such as 1 John 1:9 before we understand what our responsibility is as Romans 6:11–13 points out:<sup>17</sup>

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Take a few minutes to consciously evaluate how much you are doing this. Share some of your thoughts with your group if you'd like, and pray for one another to stand strong against the lusts that can so easily lead to worse actions and sins.

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## **MEMORY PASSAGE**

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

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## **DAY 4**

A Deceived Father  
**2 SAMUEL 13:23–29**

Please Read 2 Samuel 13:23–29 and answer the following questions

[ 1 ] Absalom bided his time, two full years, plotting what he would do about this attack upon his sister. Absalom owned sheep in the area of Baal Hazor, a Benjamite village some 12 miles northeast of Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup> They were going to have a sheep shearing festival and Absalom realized the opportunity to act.

In what way did David's own child—once again—dupe him (vv. 24–27)?

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[ 2 ] What was Absalom's plot, and how did he carry it out (vv. 28–29)?

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## **EXPANDED QUESTIONS**

[ 1 ] Anger, unforgiveness, and sin not dealt with all lead to disaster. In this situation, they led to deceit and murder. Certainly, this was a situation in which forgiveness would be difficult to give, and we have no record of Amnon trying to make things right. "Of all the trials of life, the most difficult to bear are those that come from our own family because of our failures."<sup>19</sup>

As a father, David should have taken the lead in dealing with this sin and destruction within his own household, but he didn't. He was emotionally thwarted by his own hypocrisy and unable to deal with the sins of his children.<sup>20</sup>

How did Jesus Himself set the example of dealing with those who abused and mistreated Him (Luke 23:34; 1 Peter 2:21–23; 4:12–19)?

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[ 2 ] God will take any step you take toward forgiving those who have hurt you and help you from there. We must choose to deal with the unforgiveness, anger, and those things that destroy us. Perhaps someone has become an enemy in your mind. What did Jesus say about this in Matthew 5:44–46? To what extent does God hold us accountable in dealing with those who have wronged us (Romans 12:18; 1 Peter 3:11)?

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**Daily Life Point:** David at this point continued to reap what he sowed. Absalom was both the opposite of David and just like David. Think about it: Absalom treated Amnon just like David treated Uriah, using deceptive methods to deal with the problem, even getting Amnon drunk and then using others to kill him!

F. B. Meyer well observed, "They say a man never hears his own voice till it comes back to him from a recording. Certainly a man never sees the worst of himself until it reappears in his child."<sup>21</sup> Has there been any anger, unforgiveness, sin not dealt with, or other problems growing in your life or family? If so, what are some steps that you can take to deal with these things biblically? Discuss these things with your group and share some ideas that you might be able to implement.

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**MEMORY PASSAGE**

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

As righteousness leads to \_\_\_\_\_, so he who pursues \_\_\_\_\_ pursues  
it to his own \_\_\_\_\_. Those who are of a perverse \_\_\_\_\_  
are an \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord, but the  
\_\_\_\_\_ in their \_\_\_\_\_ are His \_\_\_\_\_.

(Proverbs 11:19–20 NKJV)

**DAY 5**

A Devastated Family  
**2 SAMUEL 13:30–38**

Please Read 2 Samuel 13:30–38 and answer the following questions

[ 1 ] What was the first news that reached David, and what was his natural reaction to it (vv. 30–31)?

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[ 2 ] Who cleared up the story, and what happened next (vv. 32–36)?

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[ 3 ] Absalom fled to the home area of his mother's family, which was east of the Sea of Galilee.<sup>22</sup> He stayed there for three years. What was on David's heart all that time? How did it change toward the end (vv. 37–39)?

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### **EXPANDED QUESTIONS**

[ 1 ] What grief all of this led to. The loss of a loved one, especially a child, is extremely hard to recover from, but we can. In the first place, David needed to seek God's forgiveness for his own failures, forgive himself for his role in all of this, and then get back on the path of righteousness. Perhaps forgiving ourselves and leaving the past behind is the hardest struggle. How do these passages encourage us to leave the past behind and press on to what God wants to do today, and for the rest of our lives?

Isaiah 43:1–2, 18–19

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Lamentations 3:21–26, 31–33

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[ 2 ] The parallels to David's sin would have been so overwhelming for him to deal with, but even in a situation like this, there is hope. But we must remember that "each sin not only fosters more sin, it also fashions it by providing precedents for others to follow."<sup>23</sup> We can view v. 39 in a hopeful light. Some manuscripts of the Old Testament read that the heart of King David ceased to pursue after Absalom,<sup>24</sup> but as Warren Wiersbe explains, it means that his desire was to deal with him more than to see him face to face, because it would be five years until he actually did so.<sup>25</sup> At least he was taking steps again to press on with life and do what is right.

How do the words of Hosea 6:1–3 and Habakkuk 3:17–19 encourage us to press on anew and seek the Lord despite the circumstances we've been through?

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**Daily Life Point:** The grief that all these things brought to David was tremendous. It all started one warm afternoon on a rooftop when David was in a place he shouldn't have been. "The next time sin looks attractive to you, remember David's trials."<sup>26</sup> God help us to avoid David's mistakes!

How has today's study given you some hope in pressing on and getting back on God's path? What are some specific steps you will take in pressing on in His grace and turning from the things that lead you to stumble?

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**MEMORY PASSAGE**

Write out this week's passage by memory. Then review the passage throughout the week.

**Proverbs 11:19–20 NKJV:**

**DAY 6**

Pursuing God's Heart

[ 1 ] These are such difficult chapters, but they teach us how seriously God takes our sin. They also warn us about the consequences of continual sin. David has now paid threefold for his sin. Onefold remains, but there will be other problems ahead for him. Sexual sin is particularly dangerous, as Satan tries to capitalize on that fallen part of our nature.

How did the example of Amnon's obsession with this beautiful young woman serve to warn you to not allow similar seeds of lust to enter your mind? What strategies did you glean as you studied this week? Share your strategies with your group.

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[ 2 ] If the statistics mentioned in this week's study are indeed accurate, then it is very likely that some of you have been involved in some sort of sexual abuse or rape in your own family. You may have even been the victim of such abuse.

How has this week's study shown you how to overcome the devastation that abuse or rape can bring to you and your family? Perhaps you haven't been sexually abused, but you have been misused or mistreated by others. Maybe you're having a hard time granting them forgiveness? How did Jesus' example of handling the mistreatment of others minister to your heart, and what are some of the things that you can do to take steps toward forgiving them and dealing with this?

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[ 3 ] Lastly, please feel free to record here and share with your group anything else that ministered to you.

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### ***MEMORY PASSAGE***

From memory, write out this week's passage below. Then review the passage throughout the day. Be prepared to share the verse with your group.

**Proverbs 11:19–20 NKJV:**

### ***PARTING THOUGHTS***

The difficult days of David can be summarized in his thoughts in Psalm 38. He was driven to the point of illness because of the horrible pain and loneliness he felt in seeing his own sin reflected in his children, knowing he was to blame. This is one of the penitent psalms written after his sin with Bathsheba. This psalm is a cry for mercy and help from the only One who could sustain him through all of this.<sup>27</sup> Regardless of the particular reason this psalm was written, it certainly sounds like what would have been on the heart and mind of David as he suffered the consequences of his own folly.

Psalms 38

A Psalm of David. To bring to remembrance.

O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your wrath,  
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!  
For Your arrows pierce me deeply,  
And Your hand presses me down.

There is no soundness in my flesh  
Because of Your anger,  
Nor any health in my bones  
Because of my sin.  
For my iniquities have gone over my head;  
Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.  
My wounds are foul and festering  
Because of my foolishness.

I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly;  
I go mourning all the day long.  
For my loins are full of inflammation,  
And there is no soundness in my flesh.  
I am feeble and severely broken;  
I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.  
Lord, all my desire is before You;  
And my sighing is not hidden from You.  
My heart pants, my strength fails me;  
As for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me.

My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague,  
And my relatives stand afar off.  
Those also who seek my life lay snares for me;  
Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction,  
And plan deception all the day long.

But I, like a deaf man, do not hear;  
And I am like a mute who does not open his mouth.  
Thus I am like a man who does not hear,  
And in whose mouth is no response.  
For in You, O Lord, I hope;  
You will hear, O Lord my God.  
For I said, "Hear me, lest they rejoice over me,  
Lest, when my foot slips, they exalt themselves against me."

For I am ready to fall,  
And my sorrow is continually before me.  
For I will declare my iniquity;  
I will be in anguish over my sin.  
But my enemies are vigorous, and they are strong;  
And those who hate me wrongfully have multiplied.  
Those also who render evil for good,  
They are my adversaries, because I follow what is good.

Do not forsake me, O Lord;  
O my God, be not far from me!  
Make haste to help me,  
O Lord, my salvation!

## NOTES

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- 3 "Biblical Cyclopedic Index" in *The Open Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 1985), p. 50.
- 4 Ronald F. Youngblood, "1, 2 Samuel" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, ed. F. E. Gabelein (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), p. 956.
- 5 "Biblical Cyclopedic Index," p. 185.
- 6 Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG, 1994), p. 2315.
- 7 Strong, "A Concise Dictionary," p. 101.
- 8 Youngblood, "1, 2 Samuel," p. 957.
- 9 Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker, *Every Man's Battle* (Colorado Springs: Water Brook Press, 2000), pp. 28–29.
- 10 Charles R. Swindoll, *David, a Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997), p. 217.
- 11 Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Restored* (Colorado Springs: Victor Books, 2002), p. 82.
- 12 "National Center for Victims of Crime," October 2002, <<http://www.ncvc.org>>.
- 13 "Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network," October 2002, <<http://www.rainn.org>>.
- 14 "Stand up again and Fight Child Abuse," October 2002, <<http://www.standupagain.com>>
- 15 "Rape, Abuse, and Incest," <<http://www.rainn.org>>.
- 16 "Prevent Abuse Now," October 2002, <<http://www.prevent-abuse-now.com>>.
- 17 Swindoll, *David*, p. 212.
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- 19 Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), p. 398.
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- 21 F. B. Meyer, *The Life of David* (Lynwood, Wash.: Emerald Books, 1995), p. 172.
- 22 MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 446.
- 23 Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*. The New American Commentary, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996), p. 379.
- 24 *The New Scofield Study Bible*, NKJV (Nashville: Nelson, 1989), p. 384.
- 25 Wiersbe, *Be Restored*, p. 86.
- 26 Wiersbe, *With the Word*, p. 399.
- 27 James M. Boice, *Psalms*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994), pp. 331, 337.

