

Day 24 of “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

Jan. 24, 2016

- Genesis 38-39 – Judah and Tamar; Joseph and Potiphar’s wife.
- Matthew 27:32-28:20 – The crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 – Enjoy your lot.

Reflections:

1. Genesis 38-39. **In chapter 38** we get a glimpse into strange and evil cultural practices of the ancient Near East among the people of God. Fruitless attempts have been made to justify the characters and put it all in perspective. However, no amount of Near Eastern cultural studies can justify the activities in this chapter. There is no excuse for such behavior, especially among the people of God. It is all so very pagan, ancient Near Eastern pagan, that is. Of course, modern Christians are not guilty of *modern* pagan activities are they—like abortion, sex before marriage, lack of commitment to God, forsaking the local church, gossip, slander, lust, onanism, and living for the same things the world lives for, namely self with all of its insatiable lusts, and all cultivated by a life without God—right? An honest look at ourselves reveals our own sins and evils, which often are “subtly” deplorable and wrapped in a veneer of *modern* respectability and self-righteousness—e.g., “at least I would not do what we see in Genesis 38.” So, why is this wicked story in the Bible? There does not even seem to be a hero in the chapter! Well, to see how God’s grace plan marches on in that Perez, the son of Judah and Tamar, is one in the long list of names that will lead to the birth of the Messiah (Matt. 1:3). Through the unlikely characters of Judah and Tamar, God prepared a way out of sin and wickedness that often defines us. Just like these “snakes,” we are all unlikely recipients of His grace. **Genesis 39** notes the temptations of Joseph. If you ever get a chance to see the movie “Joseph,” which stars Ben Kingsley as Potiphar, Leslie Ann Warren as his treacherous and seductive wife, and Paul Mercurio as Joseph you should, cf., http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0113483/fullcredits?ref=tt_ov_st_sm.
2. Matthew 27:32-28:20. We will be covering some of the details of Christ’s death, details like the Eternal Father forsaking the Eternal Son as *He* bore all of our sins, in our next communion class at FBC (Feb. 7th). Also, note the command for baptism in last two verses of this section. FBC will be offering baptism for believers this summer.
 - **Apologetics.** In Matthew 27:44 we are told that “even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him.” However, according to Luke, only one reviled Him (Luke 23:39) while the other one believed in Him, asking, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom” (Luke 23:42). **Solution.** The difficulty is easily resolved on the supposition that at first both reviled the Lord, but that later one repented. Perhaps, he was so impressed hearing Jesus forgive those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34) that he was convinced that Jesus was the Savior and asked to be part of His kingdom, which is exactly what we find in Luke 23:42.

3. Ecclesiastes 9:7-10. Enjoying life is a gift from God. Even for the unbeliever, God has given him a wife to enjoy in his otherwise vain, fleeting life. Everyone only gets one shot at this life, a shot that counts forever. Today counts forever.

In 'Ehyeh,

Pastor Don