

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
July 24, 2016**

2 Samuel 13:1–39. Sin and murder of Amnon.

2 Peter 1:9–15. The imperative of virtue.

Psalms 140:1–13. Prayer for deliverance from evildoers.

COMMENTS:

2 Samuel 13:1–39. What a horrible scene we have in the first nineteen verses of this chapter. Absalom, son of David by his wife Maacah (**3:3**), had a beautiful sister named Tamar. Amnon fell in “love” (sensual love/desire) with Tamar. Frustrated in his attempts to win her favor, Amnon sought the counsel of his shrewd cousin Jonadab. Jonadab advised Amnon to pretend to be ill and then to plead with his father to have Tamar bake him bread and bring it to him. **13:7–14:** After she had prepared the bread before him, Amnon told her to dismiss all the servants. Then, despite her urgent pleading, he grabbed her and *raped her*. Such loss of a maiden’s virginity was an unbearable curse in Israel (Deut. 22:13–21). Moreover, such relationships between half brothers and sisters were strictly forbidden in the Law. Those guilty of such things were to be cut off from the covenant community (Lev. 20:17). In this case, of course, Tamar was innocent since she had been assaulted (Deut. 22:25–29). **13:15–19:** In revulsion at what *he had done*, Amnon now hated Tamar more than he had previously “loved” her. This indicates, of course, that his original feelings had not been intellectual love but only sensual love. Sensual love for someone is often mistaken as true intellectual love, the latter of which delights in the good of the beloved whereas the former is only about fulfillment of one’s own senses/lusts. On a metaphysical level, both sensual love and intellectual love share the same principle of seeing an object as a good. You should know that the phrase “*and he loved her*” is a correct translation of אָהַבָהּ, which is the same verb used for loving God. As per our studies, this just goes to show the fallacy of building doctrine on word studies rather than metaphysical reality. Yes, he really did love her, but it was a concupiscent love, not an intellectual or personal love. Moreover, this shows that one cannot base love on sensual feelings for obviously he had strong feelings for her, perhaps even lovesick over her. I am always surprised when I hear Christians talk about how unregenerate or degenerate believers do not have the capacity to love. This is false. They do have the ability to love—they just do not have the ability to love the true, good, and beautiful. Unbelievers do *love (agapao)* darkness rather than the light (John 3:19). Degenerate believers do *love (agapao)* the world rather than the Lord (2 Tim. 4:10). What makes love a virtue is not the love itself, but the object and kind of love. Just because someone “feels like they are in love” does not mean in and of itself it is a good love. It could very well be an illicit and therefore evil love. In this case, the object of Amnon love was her beautiful body. He just wanted to have sex with her. After his lusts were fulfilled, he added insult to injury, and in further violation of the Law, by sending her away. Tamar’s reaction to all this—putting ashes on her head and tearing her royal robe (**2 Sam. 13:31**)—shows the intensity of her sorrow at losing her purity and perhaps any further opportunity for marriage. Amnon was the oldest of David’s sons and apparent heir to the throne, so perhaps he felt he was entitled, perhaps he felt that since David “took” Bathsheba, he likewise could take a woman he lusted after. This would account for the fact that God told David that because he did this thing that this kind of trouble would follow. As

I see it, either God made Amnon rape Tamar as judgment on David, truly a blasphemous concept, or God's words to David were simply predictions of the results of his actions on others. In other words, because David had done this thing there would be great evil because people would use what David did as motives for similar acts of evil. Given that God is never the Author of evil or evil-testing, the judgment on David's house is simply a result of letting human free will choices choose their evil and live with the consequences. In other words, perhaps Amnon was thinking, "If my father committed adultery and murder and got away with it, surely I can get away with rape." Such is the destructive power of a bad example. "If the godly compromise with the wicked, it is like polluting a fountain or muddying a spring" (Prov. 25:26). David's family was now polluted and the consequences would be calamitous. David was known for his wisdom and keen insight (2 Sam. 14:17, 20), but after the "Bathsheba affair," he seems to have lost ground. By ordering Tamar to obey her half-brother's wishes, he sent her into pain and humiliation; and when two years later David allowed Amnon to attend Absalom's feast, he sent his firstborn to his death. David the deceiver was himself deceived! As Paul put it, Galatians 6:7 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.*

2 Peter 1:9–15. Note the concurrence of divine and human activity by connecting verse five's "for this very reason" of being partakes of the divine nature to "making every effort" to "add" the seven virtues that are found in the previous section. By the way "add" is in the imperative and it is where we get the word choreography (ἐπιχορηγήσατε). We are to *diligently add to our Christian faith* the five virtues that pertain to one's inner life and relationship with God and the last two that relate to others. This "choreography" begins with faith and ends with love. Note the alternative to growing in virtue in verse 9: *being blind and nearsighted*, the idea being that such a believer lives in darkness and is myopic about his life. Even more troubling, note the alternative to growing in these seven virtues in verse 10: *not making one's calling and election sure*. As I have noted, regardless of how one views "calling and election," there can be no doubt about the seriousness of God's call to true spiritual growth *in virtue*.

Psalm 140:1–13. In this psalm David calls on the Lord to deliver him from the wicked who planned on destroying him. The psalm consists of two prayers (1–5, 8–11) each followed by an affirmation (6–7, 12–13). The first prayer is for protection, the second for disaster; the first affirmation acknowledges the God of salvation in personal, protective care, the second affirms the God of righteousness in public oversight of society. 8–11: presents the 'problem' of imprecation. But it is a revealed truth that sin boomerangs (8, 9, 11), that the characteristic judgments of God on the wicked are fire and flood (10). In committing all in prayer to the Lord—leaving all to him, resting in prayer, purposing no retaliation—David realistically verbalizes what the God to whom vengeance belongs has said He will do.

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don