

Day 18 :: Feb. 24

The story of Genesis, of the whole New Testament really, is the story of the sons of Jacob. Before the story of Joseph is the story of how they came to be. The story after the story of Joseph is the story of the journey of these 12 sons of Jacob, also known as the 12 tribes of Israel. And even more importantly, it's the story of the lineage of Jesus Christ. And that lineage passes through the young man named Judah.

It is interesting how much of this part of Genesis focuses on Judah. But he is no hero. We first meet Judah when he devises the plan to sell Joseph into slavery. Not a great start. Then we get the long story of Tamar, which in the context of the Old Testament, is as much the story of Judah as Tamar. Another poor depiction of this ancestor of the Messiah. Next, we find Judah trying to convince Jacob to send Benjamin with them to Egypt, and very possibly to his death.

But suddenly we hear this from Judah's mouth: "I personally guarantee his safety. You may hold me responsible if I don't bring him back to you. Then let me bear the blame forever." In an eerie echo of his distant ancestor, we find Judah guaranteeing Benjamin's safety and being willing to take the blame for his death... forever. Does anyone else hear our Redemption in these words? I can just hear Jesus saying this to His Father about us: "I personally guarantee their safety. Let me bear the blame forever." So very unlike, these two. Judah and sneaky profiteer, Jesus the Holy Son of God. Judah who is "out-righteous-ed" by a prostitute named Tamar, Jesus who is righteousness itself. And yet their words: "Let me bear the blame."

Thank God for these little glimpses into His master plan so many thousands of years before it came to be. Thank God that Jesus would take our blame upon Himself so we don't have to bear it. Thank God for Judah, for Joseph, and most of all for Jesus.