

A Hypocrite Transformed By Grace

Genesis 38

Context: Joseph is now in Egypt at Potiphar's house. Genesis shifts to the story of Judah. His morality is directly contrasted with Joseph and Potiphar's wife. This chapter shows us the redemption of the wicked Judah before the brothers are confronted by Joseph in Egypt. Reuben, Simeon, and Levi disqualified themselves regarding the first-born inheritance. But God will mold Judah's heart to make him ready to be who God calls him to be.

- The family of God is a mess – brothers are all wicked
- Judah's idea to sell Joseph to the slavers
- He is opportunistic and out for self

- I. Judah Starts His Family (1-5)
 - a. Judah Leaves His Brothers (v.1)
 - i. At that time – when Jacob was continually mourning and inconsolable Judah left the family – Why?
 1. Trying to escape being confronted with guilt?
 - ii. Goes to a friend named Hirah (Adullamite – a Canaanite city)
 - b. Judah Bears Sons From Canaanite Woman (v.2)
 - i. Judah's Wife is not named – daughter of Shua – a Canaanite
 1. Judah has joined himself to the Canaanites
 2. Something warned against from Abraham's time
 3. Already see Judah's judgment is not good
 4. Looks like he is heading down same path as older brothers
 - ii. Judah is given three sons by the Canaanite woman (v. 3-5)
 1. Er is the name of the first-born
 2. Onan is the name of the second-born
 3. Shelah is the name of the third-born
 4. Judah was living in Chezib when his third child was born
- II. Judah's Sin Against Tamar (v.6-11)
 - a. Tamar is Given in Marriage to Er, the first-born (6)
 - i. Judah took Canaanite woman for wife of his heir
 - ii. Not told specifically she is Canaanite but high probability
 - iii. Tamar and Er's Son will be the inheritor of Judah's line
 - b. Er is put to Death Because of His Wickedness (7)
 - i. God strikes Er dead for his wickedness
 - ii. 1st person in the Bible said to be struck dead by God
 - c. Judah commands Onan to Fulfill Levirate duty (8)
 - i. Levirate marriage means the brother of the deceased husband would father children for his brother. They would be the deceased's heirs
 - ii. Onan refuses to impregnate Tamar (9-10)
 1. He knew the offspring would not be considered his
 2. Er's offspring would receive the inheritance
 3. He selfishly refused to do his duty

4. God put him to death for his wickedness
 - iii. Judah Dishonor's Tamar (11)
 1. Judah sends Tamar to her father's house as a widow
 2. Judah promises to give her his son when he grows up
 3. Judah does not intend to fulfill his vow
 - a. Judah has a duty here
 - b. Tamar is the wife of the 1st born
 - c. Her child will be the heir to Judah's line
 4. Judah fears Shelah will die like his other two sons
 - a. Does he feel what Jacob felt when his son was taken?
 5. Judah obviously blames Tamar for their deaths
 6. Tamar obeys Judah and leaves
 - iv. Judah's Character is Revealed
 1. He did not take responsibility
 2. He never intends to keep his word
 3. He shuns Tamar as an outcast
- III. Tamar Acts To Restore Her Rights (v.12-19)
- a. Judah's Wife Dies And He Goes To Sheer Sheep (12)
 - i. Some Time has passed (will see Shelah is grown now)
 - ii. Sheering sheep was a festive time
 1. They would work during the day – celebrate at night
 2. Would take many days
 - b. Tamar Dresses Herself As A Harlot (13-14)
 - i. She took off her widows garments
 - ii. She covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself
 - iii. She went to the entrance to Enaim
 - iv. She does this because Judah has forsaken his vow to her
 1. How would she know Judah would take the bait?
 2. What does this say about Judah that she thinks this will work?
 - c. Judah Makes a Deal With A Prostitute (15-18)
 - i. Judah did not recognize Tamar – thought she was a prostitute (15)
 - ii. Judah makes a deal to have sex with her (16-18)
 1. They agree on a young goat as the price
 2. She demands a pledge as collateral (17-18)
 - a. She asks for his signet, cord and staff
 - b. These would be identifiably his – ornate and marked
 - c. Would be like modern identification
 3. She conceives by Judah (18)
 - d. Tamar returns to her Father's home and widowhood (19)
 - e. Why would she do all this? – desire son for covenant family? Desire line of Judah to continue? Right or wrong?
- IV. Judah Attempts To Conceal His Sin (20-23)
- a. Judah Sends Payment but the Prostitute Can't Be Found (20-21)
 - i. He doesn't go himself but sends his friend

- ii. His friend cannot find her
 - iii. No one living there knew of her
 - b. Judah Cuts His Losses to Save Face (22-23)
 - i. Judah's friend reports that she cannot be found
 - ii. Judah decides to forget his pledge
 - iii. Judah does not want to be mocked for his act
 - iv. This is the Father of the Messianic Line?
- V. Judah Is Brought To Confess His Sin (v.24-26)
 - a. Judah is Told of Tamar's Pregnancy (24)
 - i. It is three months later – Tamar is now showing
 - ii. Technically she is still betrothed to Judah's third son
 - 1. But she has been sent back to her father's house
 - 2. She is no longer living with the family – she is put away
 - iii. Judah reacts with indignation and offense (24b)
 - 1. Though Judah doesn't want her in his household, he will not stand for being sinned against –
 - 2. Judah reveals his hypocrisy
 - 3. Judah demands that she be brought out and executed
 - b. Judah is Presented with The Pledge He Gave The Prostitute (25)
 - i. Tamar sends Judah's items saying the owner is the child's father
 - ii. "please examine it" – exact same words brothers used when presenting Joseph's coat to Jacob
 - 1. Wonder if those words haunted him?
 - c. Judah Confesses His Sin (26)
 - i. She is more righteous than I – (declaring that he has done wrong)
 - ii. Admits that he did not give her his third son
 - iii. Judah's statement is a confession of sin and wrongdoing
 - 1. Why the sudden change? This isn't characteristic of Judah
 - 2. Grace of God infiltrated his heart
 - 3. He could have said she stole it – killed her anyway – been rid of her
 - 4. Something has changed his heart – as he owns his sin
 - iv. This is a redemptive moment in Judah's life
 - 1. This story covers the span of about 20 years
 - 2. Very close to when brothers are called to go to Egypt for grain
 - 3. When they will be confronted by Joseph
 - 4. God is preparing Judah's heart – converting the hypocrite – to be the father of the blessed seed
- VI. Judah's Line Continues (27-30)
 - a. Tamar is Pregnant with Twins
 - b. One sticks out his hand and is marked with a scarlet cord
 - c. But before he is born, there is a struggle in the womb and the younger is born first
 - d. The Younger is named Perez – which means breach

e. The Elder is named Zerah which means dawn

Judah's line is saved by a Canaanite woman who is pictured as more righteous than Judah.

Ruth 4:18-22 shows the lineage of Perez – the younger son

18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, 19 Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, 20 Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, 21 Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, 22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

Likewise, there are four women in Jesus' genealogy presented in Matthew 1. Three of which are not Israelites.

Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Mary