

IV. Tamar's Thriving (27-30)

- A. The Twins and Thriving
- B. A flashback
- C. A look forward
- D. Tamar's dignity has been restored.

LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.
The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an
aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- What are some obstacles that makes Genesis 38 hard to understand? How can we overcome those obstacles?
- Read through chapters 37 and 38. What are some common themes? In 38, can you also see connections with other parts of Genesis?
- How might Tamar be able to relate to the person who has been let down by the church or other Christians?
- Why do you think the person who has entrusted their life to God, but feels they have come up empty, might be encouraged by the story of Tamar?
- How might Judah's life story be an example for the person who has spent much of his/her life in disobedience to God?
- What motivations were at the heart of Onan's wickedness?
- According to the text, is Tamar either promiscuous or a prostitute? How might she be compared to Jacob? ... to Ruth?

Truth for Understanding Our World (26) *Treachery, Trickery, Transformation, and Thriving*

Jerry Cisar — February 11, 2018

Text: Genesis 38

Introduction: "Judah and Tamar"

"It is precisely when the narrative seems odd that we must pay closer attention." — John Walton

I. Judah's Treachery (1-11)

- A. Judah marries and has sons (1-2).
 - i. Judah marries a Canaanite.
 - ii. Judah's relationship to this woman is described as crassly as possible.
- B. Judah's Three Sons (3-5)
 - i. Naming the kids
 - ii. Shelah was born at Chezib.
- C. Judah's sons marry and die (6-11).
 - i. Er, the Firstborn
 - ii. Onan has the same fate
 - a) This is not birth-control but greed.
 - b) Onan wants sex without any responsibility or impact on his finances.

- iii. Judah shames Tamar by sending her to her father's house.
 - a) Judah's treatment of Tamar was *dehumanizing*.
 - b) Tamar resists that which attempts to make her less than one of God's people by every means possible.

II. Tamar's Trickery (12-23)

- A. Judah's wife dies (12).
- B. Sheep-shearing Time (13-14)
 - i. Tamar's Widowhood
 - a) Shame (Isaiah 54:4)
 - b) Tamar is clinging to the promise that she is part of Judah's family line. (Ruth 1:16)
 - ii. Tamar is a victim of Judah's dishonesty.
 - iii. *Judah is going to be deceived through her clothing, just as Judah and his brother's deceived Jacob through clothing— a coat dipped in blood.*
- C. The Sting (15-19)
 - i. Tamar knows her father-in-law well.
 - a) Tamar is not a prostitute.
 - b) Nor is she promiscuous.

- ii. Tamar will obtain by trickery what is rightfully hers.
 - a) At that time, the laws included the father-in-law providing offspring through the son's widow.
 - b) Progressive Revelation
- iii. The Pledge
 - a) His seal
 - b) His staff

Tamar now holds in her hands Judah's legal identity, social standing, and possibly a piece of the birthright.

- D. Judah's Folly (20-23)
 - i. Judah's exchange for fleeting pleasure
 - ii. Enaim: *Two wells*

III. Judah's Transformation (24-26)

- A. This is not an unplanned nor unwanted pregnancy, but it certainly threatens the life of the mother (24).
- B. Tamar's Message (25)
- C. Judah Recognition (26)