

Study Guide

Pray: Pray that God will show you something new in His Word and that you will be fully present as you consider these questions.

Read: Begin by reading Genesis 38 straight through, as you would read the chapters of any book.

Questions:

1. There were a lot of surprises, twists and turns this week - was there anything one particular thing that surprised you or impacted you personally in the chapter this week?
2. Judah left his home (the house of Jacob/Israel) and married a woman of his own choosing from Canaan. How was this a break from the family tradition and why would it have been rebellious? See Genesis 24:3&4 and also Genesis 28:1

Judah is the son of the birthright - he was fourth born, but the first three have displeased their father and disqualified themselves – Reuben (#1) slept with his fathers' wife Bilhah (Genesis 35:22), Simeon and Levi (#2 and #3) revenged their sister's rape by killing the Shechemites, raping, pillaging and stealing.

3. Judah returns to family tradition and selects a wife for his first born Er. Who killed Er and why is this surprising?
4. Who does Judah blame for the deaths of Er and Onan (his two eldest sons)? Where should the blame lie?
5. Tamar is patient, but seeks justice and what is due to her. What must she have known about the habits of Judah for her plan to work?

6. Tamar uses a garment to disguise herself & trick Judah – does this remind you of anyone else's deception? See Genesis 27:15,16 & 27 and Genesis 37:31&32

7. Judah is quick to condemn Tamar...but her revelation as to the father of her pregnancy brought Judah up short....what emotions do you think ran through Judah's mind when his behavior was exposed?

8. Judah makes a statement of comparison – that Tamar is more righteous than him (please note this is comparative "than I"....(neither of them were righteous in the sight of God). Do you think had he not been tricked Judah would have changed his behavior?

Read the story of King David and Nathan (2 Samuel 12) for another example of how someone was brave enough to confront someone in authority over them.

9. Personal question: Have you ever (or ever wanted to) confront someone about their behavior? Did you? Why did you not?

God used Tamar and she is the first woman honored in the genealogy of Christ – see Matthew Chapter 1. Who are the other women named...if you know their stories - were they all women who we would boast about in our genealogies?

Tamar

Rahab (prostitute)

Ruth (Moabite)

Uriah's wife (Bathsheba - adulteress)

Why do you think Tamar and these other women are mentioned so prominently?

Read Psalm 75:3-7 and consider how relevant it is to our current situation and to that of Tamar and Judah.