

Genesis - Lesson 38

Genesis 38

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

I. The Shameful Conduct of Judah

Gen 38:1 *And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.*

Gen 38:2 *And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her.*

Gen 38:3 *And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er.*

Gen 38:4 *And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan.*

Gen 38:5 *And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.*

Gen 38:6 *And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar.*

Gen 38:7 *And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him.*

Gen 38:8 *And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.*

Gen 38:9 *And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother.*

Gen 38:10 *And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.*

This follows right after the rejection of Joseph. Judah is joined to a Canaanite, which means "trafficker." He marries the daughter of Shuah which means "riches." This shows the characteristic of the Jewish race ever since their rejection of Christ. Judah had three sons: Er, which means "enmity," Onan which means "wickedness," and Shelah, which means "the sprout." The last may refer to the Godly remnant in the future.

It is amazing how much patience God has with his children, and I am persuaded that because of Christ, we have grace that is so wonderful and probably undeserved today. During the times of the old testament, which is called the Dispensation of the Law, many times we saw swift judgment come when people displeased God. Did God hate their sin more than ours? We know God has never been pleased with any sin, and that is why Christ had to come to pay the penalty for our sins. These examples of swift judgment are here to be a warning to us today.

1Co 10:1 *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;*

1Co 10:2 *And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*

1Co 10:3 *And did all eat the same spiritual meat;*

1Co 10:4 *And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*

1Co 10:5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

1Co 10:6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

1Co 10:7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

1Co 10:8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

1Co 10:9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

1Co 10:10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

1Co 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

1Co 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

1Co 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Gen 38:11 Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Gen 38:12 And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

Gen 38:13 And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep.

Gen 38:14 And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a vail, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

Gen 38:15 When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face.

Gen 38:16 And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me?

Gen 38:17 And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it?

Gen 38:18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

Judah committed wickedness in having sex with his daughter in law, although he thought her to be a harlot. Sin is sin, even if this act was done with a harlot. Tamar covered herself with

a veil and tricks her father in law. She asks for a pledge of his signet, his bracelets, and his staff to hold while he goes to get the kid from the flock to pay her.

Gen 38:19 And she arose, and went away, and laid by her vail from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

Gen 38:20 And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not.

Gen 38:21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place.

Gen 38:22 And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place.

Gen 38:23 And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

This story is sad and probably reflects some of the error in thinking that existed back in these days. Judah is concerned to pay his debts and wants the woman to be paid, but when he sends the kid by his friend to pay her, she can not be found. The men there said there was no harlot in this place. It appears he is more concerned that he might not pay his debt than to consider the wrong in what he had done with the woman.

Gen 38:24 And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

Gen 38:25 When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff.

Gen 38:26 And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.

Judah is giving some strong recommendations to deal with Tamar's sin, and says that she should be burnt for what she has done. But when she comes forth with Judah's signet, his bracelets and staff, Judah had to admit that she was more righteous than he was. We are quick to judge others, but we need to judge ourselves.

Mat 7:1 *Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

Mat 7:2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Mat 7:3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Mat 7:4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Mat 7:5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Gen 38:27 And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

Gen 38:28 And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

Gen 38:29 And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez.

Gen 38:30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.

Even though we have the story of Tamar's awful sin, yet in this we see the power of God's grace! She is one of the four women mentioned in the genealogy of Christ. They are: Tamar, Matt. 1:3; Rahab, Matt. 1:5; Ruth, Matt. 1:5; and Bathsheba, Matt. 1:6. It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah. Heb. 7:14. Divine grace is seen rising above man's sin to bring about His purpose. Man would have never devised such a genealogy.

This chapter also reveals: (1) God's election is by grace, or Judah would have never been chosen as the tribe from whence Christ would come. (2) The glory of Christ is from Himself, and not from His ancestors after the flesh. (3) This also reveals the amazing condescension of Christ that He would be born from such a family.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How did Joseph's brothers first plan to eliminate him?

Planned to kill him and say a animal slew him.

2. Which of Joseph's brothers sought to deliver him?

Reuben

3. How does Joseph being cast into the pit typify Christ?

Jesus was in the grave (pit) for 3 days and 3 nights before his resurrection.

4. What is the New Testament equivalent of the name "Judah"?

Judas

5. Who were the merchants that bought Joseph?

Ishmeelites and Midianites

6. Explain the usage of both Midianites and Ishmeelites in v. 28.

They apparently were two groups traveling together.

7. Give the types of Christ found in the life of Joseph in this lesson?

Some of them included how the brothers conspired against Joseph as did the Jews against Christ. Only one spoke up in Joseph's favor and that was Reuben, as did Pilate in the trial of Christ. No one stepped in to stop the transaction of selling

Joseph to slavery, and no man stopped Christ from dying on the cross. Joseph was put into a pit, and the Lord was placed in the grave/pit for 3 days and 3 nights before his resurrection.

8. Name the women mentioned in the genealogy of Christ.

Rahab, Ruth, Tamar, and Bathsheba.

9. Give the names of the three sons of Judah and the meaning of their names.

Judah had three sons: Er, which means "enmity," Onan which means "wickedness," and Shelah, which means "the sprout."

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.