

April 17th

GOD REDEEMS A MAN'S SIN

"There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. He took her and went in to her..."

GENESIS 38:2

Ever been on a drive and along the way, you don't even remember driving the last ten minutes? We black out the routine because it's every day. That's why God gives these things called...interruptions. They are nuisances. They disrupt our everyday routine. We go a steady pace and life happens. Which really means that the crap hits the fan! God uses these events in our normal, everyday lives to wake us up. Well, this isn't just about events in our lives, it can also refer to our everyday Bible routine. Think about it this way: you have thirteen chapters to unpack the grand story of Joseph. The only patriarch that can compare to the length is Abraham. God has laid the foundation with the favoritism, rivalry, hatred, and betrayal in Genesis 37. And now in chapter 38 we take an intermission to focus on Judah and Tamar? Men, what is God trying to teach us here?

As you begin chapter 38, you can see Judah's lust is like another man's story. Does his sin sound familiar to another man? Samson in Judges 14 also sees a woman and wants her to be his wife. Judah is no different. Sure, there's no Old Testament Law that's been given about not marrying foreign wives. However, Judah's great grandfather and grandfather both took special pains to go back to their own people to find wives for their sons. These are two strikes that we find against Judah here. What is key about Judah's sin is that he just wants to throw Tamar away. Tamar has protection for herself and her children to continue the family tree, but Judah and his sons reject her. What does Judah say to Tamar? "Remain a widow in your father's house, till Shelah my son grows up". Judah is sending Tamar away, probably hoping that she dies and stays away from his sons forever. The narrator of the story states Judah's motive: "for he feared that he would die, like his brothers." Judah is exposed here. He has no intention of giving Shelah to her in marriage.

Judah's wife dies and after the weeklong mourning period, he wants to satisfy his lust. So, what does he do? He searches for a prostitute. Tamar pounces on this moment and uses his lust against him. It's interesting that Judah takes a wife from the Canaanites, gives Canaanites to his sons, has sex with a prostitute, and still condemns Tamar for being pregnant! He is so quick to condemn someone else that he misses his own sin. But God. God exposes his sin and he recognizes that Tamar is the righteous one, not him. God is not finished with Judah here. In fact, we see Judah in Genesis 44 and 49 as a changed man. When Joseph finds the "stolen" goods in Benjamin's sack, who sticks up for him and offers himself as a substitute for Benjamin? That's right...it's Judah. Judah has matured and offers a significant statement on what God is doing in his life. Remember, Benjamin is the son of Rachel and is only a half-brother to Judah. Why would Judah stick up for the youngest? Because God has changed his heart. His heart has been redeemed. This is confirmed by the blessing of Jacob in Genesis 49. The three older brothers lost Jacob's blessing because of their sin. But not Judah. Judah is blessed and will have in his family tree the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! This confirms the ultimate redemption of the sinner that was named Judah.

Men, Judah is no different than you or me. God takes our sin and redeems us. He takes our failures, our regrets, our disappointments and uses them all to make us more like Him. Jesus took our condemnation at the cross. His view of us is final. God doesn't waste anything...even your sin. He uses all of our lives to make us His masterpiece!

Spend some time thanking God for His perfect forgiveness that He gives to you. Praise Him for making us more like Him, even when we sin against Him.

For Further Reading: Genesis 38

