

**One messed up family!
Is that Really in the Bible?**

1. Read Genesis 38:1-2. Who is Jacob? What do you know about him? Who is his brother (look at the chapter before and after this one)? What do you know about him? Which brother would you describe as more righteous?
2. What do you think the scriptures mean when they say, “he turned aside”? Where was his wife from? What do you know about this place? What does that tell you about the direction Judah’s life is headed?
3. Read Genesis 38:3-14. Who is Tamar? What are the names of Judah’s sons that she married and in which order? Why did the Lord kill her husbands? Why do you think Judah sent Tamar away from his home until his 3rd son had time to grow up?
4. Read Deuteronomy 25:5-10. This was a law given to Moses by the Lord specifically to the Children of Israel and is referred to as the “Mosaic Law”. Why do you think the Lord would make this law? What do you know about the culture during this time? In what ways would this law protect women? Why were children so important at this time? How is this different than polygamy?
5. Reread Genesis 38:11. How long do you think Tamar had to wait in her father’s house? How do you think she felt during this time? What would have been your thoughts and worries, if you had been Tamar?
6. Reread Genesis 38:13,14. Why do you think Tamar removed her “widow” garments and covered herself before meeting her father-in-law on the road?
7. Read Genesis 38:15. Why did Judah think she was a prostitute?
8. Read Genesis 38: 16-23. There are so many things wrong in these verses!!!! What is your reaction to these verses? What did Judah do wrong? How did God and the Jewish culture feel about Jewish men (or women for that matter) having sex with “pagan cult prostitutes” (1 Kings 14:22-24 – “Judah” here is referring to the descendants of Judah)? Why do you think Judah was willing to have sex with a prostitute? How was he feeling at this time? Who had he re-hooked up with? (Genesis 38:12, Genesis 38:1). Do you think Hirah was a good influence on Judah? Do you think Judah sinned more in that one night than he ever intended to?
9. What did Tamar do wrong? Why do you think she did what she did?

10. Genesis 38:24-26. When Judah realized he had been caught in his sin, what did he say about Tamar (v. 26)? Have you ever compared your sin with someone else? When compared to someone else, do you usually feel better about yourself or worse? Why is comparing our sin to others wrong? What does God say about our righteousness in Isaiah 64:6?

11. Read Genesis 38:27-30. What were the names of Tamar's sons? Who was their father? Use one word to describe God's thoughts on this whole chapter?

12. Read Matthew 1:1-3. Whose names are listed in the genealogy of Jesus? Does this surprise you? Why do you think Jesus chose Judah over Joseph to be in his family tree?

13. How does this give you hope if you come from a "messed up" family? How do we break the chain of generational curses and sin? What lessons can you learn from this story about sin? About Righteousness? About comparison? About Jesus?