Tamar: An Abused Woman December 4, 2022

*Genesis 38:6-26 Series: God's Love Overcomes People’s Rejection*

When you feel unlovable and unworthy, it’s hard to remember how God sees you. The truth is that when God speaks of you, he rejoices… – Darby Strickland

Intro: “I’ve never been able to scrub the sick feeling off my soul”

1. God punishes abusers
2. Judah had turned away

v. 1 *Judah went down from his brothers and turned aside*

*Genesis 28:1 Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, “You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women.*

v. 2 *Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite*

vv. 2-3 *He took her and went in to her*

1. The first two individuals God directly put to death for their sin

v. 7 *Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD put him to death.*

v. 10 *And what [Onan] did was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death also.*

1. Justice in this life often brings collateral damage

v. 11 *Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, “Remain a widow in your father's house, till Shelah my son grows up”—for he feared that he would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went and remained in her father's house.*

* Why is “turning aside” from your brothers often the first step toward sin and compromise?
* Some people think, “With someone that evil, God should just strike them down.” Why didn’t that solve things for Tamar?
1. God uses evil for good
2. Tamar knew where her father-in-law would go on payday

v. 13 *Tamar was told, “Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep …”*

v. 14 *she took off her widow's garments and covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah*

v. 14 *For she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage.*

1. Judah was deceived by Tamar as Isaac was deceived by Jacob

v. 15 *When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face.*

v. 16 *He turned to her at the roadside and said, “Come, let me come in to you,” for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law.*

1. Tamar had her baby in spite of the sins of Judah and his sons

v. 18 *So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.*

Genesis 50:20 *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good …*

Romans 8:28 *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

* How did Judah’s sinfulness make it easier for Tamar to pull off her plan?
* What other examples are there of God using evil for good in Scripture or your own life?
* If “all things work together for good” for “those who love God” why aren’t Christians’ lives more comfortable?
* How can you use Romans 8:28 to encourage you in trials?
1. God vindicates the righteous
2. Sinful people are extra self-righteous in judging others

v. 24 *About three months later Judah was told, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality.” And Judah said, “Bring her out, and let her be burned.”*

1. God can humble the self-righteous and honour the righteous

v. 25 *As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, “By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant.” And she said, “Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff.”*

v. 26 *Then Judah identified them and said, “She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.”*

Matthew 1:3 *and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron*

1. God is the strength of oppressed

Psalm 9:9 *The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.*

Psalm 55:22 *Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.*

Isaiah 62:4 *You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her …*

* Why would Judah call for such a harsh penalty for Tamar’s actions when he himself had been so immoral?
* How does God vindicate Tamar?
* How can you remember how God sees you when you’re tempted to doubt His goodness and love?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Matthew 1:5; Joshua 2:1-14

Notes