



New Covenant

Presbyterian Church

“GOSPEL GRACE FOR THE GREATEST OF SINNERS”

GENESIS 38

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The purpose of Genesis 38 is for us to look back at our heritage and praise God that grace comes to the worst of sinners.

A. Greatness of Judah's Sin

B. Greatness of God's grace

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1. Greatness of Judah's Sin

a. Judah goes “down from his brothers” which is a picture of him leaving the church. His family is the Old Covenant church, God's people.

b. *Application:* This is a warning for any professing believers or for those who grew up in a Christian home. When we stop worshipping faithfully we are putting ourselves in great spiritual danger.

c. Judah takes counsel from his close, unbelieving friend and marries an unbeliever.

d. *Application:* It is good to have unbelieving friends but not to have only unbelieving friends. It is never alright to marry an unbeliever.

*“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?”
(2 Corinthians 6:14)*

2. Effects of Judah's sin:

a. Er is wicked and God killed him. Judah has been a bad father. He blames Tamar for his son's death.

b. Tamar needed a husband so she could carry on the line from which the promised inheritance would come.

c. Judah's son, Onan, marries Tamar.

d. Onan knew Tamar's offspring wouldn't be his so he doesn't allow Tamar to get pregnant. He selfishly would rather have a greater portion. He should have instead earnestly desired to have children in the hopes that one of his children may be the promised Redeemer. Onan hates procreation because he absolutely disregards the promise of God to bring the Redeemer through the seed of a woman.

e. God kills Onan for his sin. *Application:* Does the Lord still give people over to their sin to death? We should not be so quick to think He doesn't.

f. Judah is just as sexually immoral as his son. Tamar knows what kind of person Judah is so she acts like a prostitute and Judah sleeps with her. Tamar's motive, though tainted with sin, is to raise up an offspring from the family line. Judah's motive is selfishness and sexual desire.

g. Judah finds out that Tamar is pregnant and wants her burned for prostituting. He has power that he's using wickedly. He has fallen from anything that looks like a godly man.

h. *Application:* Every person God manifests his grace to doesn't “have it all together.”

B. Greatness of God's grace

a. Jesus takes dishonor to Himself in His genealogy because He came to clothe Himself with humility and humiliation.

b. *Application:* Because our genealogy is so dishonorable we have to trust in the Redeemer to take away the reproach.

c. Judah shows fruits of repentance in saying “She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.” God will oftentimes shock us out of our sin in order to awaken us. He sometimes deals with us painfully and embarrassingly.

d. Judah and Tamar are in heaven worshipping right now.

e. Christ takes all of our guilt and shame. It is covered in His blood.