

# 07. The Redemption of Judah

## Genesis 30-50

1. INTRODUCTION → explain series, reading plan, method of study, why this series
  - a. Today's passage wrestles with the question, "What impresses God?"
  - b. Surely God is impressed with people like Ghandi, Mother Teresa, great doctors/surgeons
  - c. Talent? Good works? Benevolence? Ability? Religious commitment?
  - d. According to God, none of these things impress him
2. WHAT DOES THIS STORY SAY? Jacob and his sons...
  - a. Jacob fears Laban so he flees from him after fleecing him
  - b. Jacob fears Esau so he flees from him
  - c. Jacob's daughter, Dinah, is raped and then the rapist wants to marry her
    - i. "The sons of Jacob answer..." (v13) Jacob is silent, but they request all the men to be circumcised
    - ii. Once the men are circumcised and in pain, Simeon and Levi go beast mode and kill everyone
    - iii. V31, ends w/ a question, making us reflect on who was more righteous in this story? Levi and Simeon or Jacob?
  - d. Jacob is renamed Israel
  - e. Rachel gives birth to Benjamin, but dies in the process
  - f. Reuben sleeps w/ his brother's mom, his dad's concubine, Bilhah and Jacob finds out
    - i. That's all we hear is that Jacob finds out. We don't see any repercussions
  - g. Isaac dies
  - h. Joseph is a dreamer... and kind of a jerk
  - i. Joseph is put in a pit and eventually sold into slavery
  - j. Judah (Gen 38)
    - i. Finds a woman only identified as "Shua's daughter"
    - ii. Has three sons w/ her Er, Onan and Shelah
    - iii. Er marries a woman named Tamar, but he dies because he is wicked
    - iv. Onan is supposed to "redeem" Tamar, but instead he sexually abuses her repeatedly
      1. God kills him because he is wicked
    - v. Judah is supposed to give her Shelah, but he is still kind of young and the Judah is afraid Tamar is cursed so he never allows Shelah to redeem her
    - vi. Shua's daughter dies, Judah mourns and then goes back to work
      1. Finds a prostitute, makes a pledge of his staff and ring as collateral that he will pay her a young goat
      2. She never comes to get the payment
      3. Judah inadvertently "redeems" Tamar by getting her pregnant

4. Judah finds out Tamar is pregnant and wants to kill whoever did it
  5. It turns out it was him
  6. "She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not know her again. (Gen 38:26)
  - vii. Judah's sinful redemption of Tamar turns into his own redemption as he acknowledges his sin. From here, we see a change in Judah (more next week)
3. WHY TEACH ON THIS STORY?
- a. In Genesis 50, we see the blessings from Jacob to his sons
  - b. Birth order...
    - i. Reuben - denied blessing b/c he slept with his dad's concubine
    - ii. Levi and Simeon - denied blessing b/c they killed that whole town
    - iii. Judah - blessed, declared the line through which the Messiah would come, prefigures Christ
      1. Why? Literarily speaking, his is the life that experiences repentance, redemption and change
4. WHAT DOES THIS TEACH ABOUT GOD?
- a. God is holy and all mankind is sinful
    - i. Sinfulness is not determined by comparing one sinful person to another
    - ii. Sinfulness is determined by comparing a holy God to mortal man
  - b. So, what impresses God?
    - i. *"Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things MY hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But THIS is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word." (Isaiah 66:1-2)*
    - ii. *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." (Psalm 51:17)*
      1. Penned by Judah's descendant, David, after his own sexual exploit
  - c. God is holy, and as a holy God, God wants a contrite spirit
    - i. Which leads to what this teaches about man...
5. WHAT DOES THIS TEACH ABOUT MAN?
- a. A contrite spirit literally means a spirit that is crippled or crushed.
    - i. Defined: "A contrite heart is one in which the natural pride and self-sufficiency have been completely humbled by the consciousness of guilt."
    - ii. Contrition is the picture of a conscience that is crushed by the weight of its own guilt.
    - iii. When a human spirit stops justifying its wrong choices, awakens to the depth of its depravity, and humbly accepts God's righteous condemnation of sin, contrition is present.
    - iv. A contrite heart offers no excuses and shifts no blame.

- v. It fully agrees with God about how evil it is.
  - vi. A contrite heart throws itself upon the mercy of God, knowing that it deserves nothing but righteous wrath. (Pastor James McDonald)
- b. That was Judah's situation. He was caught. He didn't dodge it. No excuses.
    - i. He didn't use it for his own pleasure, adding Tamar as a concubine and continuing to sleep w/ her
    - ii. His contrition was genuine. How and why?
  - c. Judah realized what we need to realize
    - i. He was a sinner by word, by deed, by nature
    - ii. His sin caught up with him (as it will inevitably catch up with us all...)
    - iii. He was going to stand not 'just' before a fake prostitute, but before the God of Abraham, Isaac, and his father, Jacob
  - d. Judah acknowledges his sinfulness and we see, in the following chapters, a change in his life and in his humility
    - i. He goes from being selfish to sacrificial...
6. IF IT IS TRUE, WHAT WILL I DO?
- a. For those who don't know Jesus, you need to come to the place where you realize a few things:
    - i. God is holy. You are not. You will need answer to him, but you are unable to answer to him in your own strength.
    - ii. Someone needs to pay the price for your sin, take your punishment
    - iii. Someone did, and it is through faith in his name, birthed out of a contrite heart, that you are saved.
    - iv. Surrendering to him, trusting in the completed work.
  - b. For those who do know Jesus...
    - i. The gospel isn't just some door to begin your journey
      - 1. So many people think you enter through the gospel and then try really hard to do everything else
    - ii. The gospel is the means by which you grow every day
      - 1. Your motivation, your joy, your power for freedom from sin, etc
      - 2. *[3] His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, [4] by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. [5] For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, [6] and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, [7] and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. [8] For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] For whoever lacks*

*these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. (2 Peter 1:3-9 ESV)*

- iii. Introduce gospel grid
  - 1. Growth happens as you see God's holiness more and more
    - a. His holiness isn't growing, you are just more aware
  - 2. Growth happens as you see what you were saved from more and more
    - a. You aren't getting more sinful, you are just more aware of your sinful condition
  - 3. Growth happens as you realize these two things and then see the DEPTH and HEIGHT and WIDTH of the love of God evidenced in his
    - a. Patience, forbearance, kindness, grace, mercy, adoption despite who you were, etc
  - 4. This bursts forth into joy as we realize we aren't held accountable before a holy God for what we have done, but that our sins are paid - not in part - but the whole!
- c. So if this is true, what do we do?
  - i. We acknowledge our sin and stop hiding behind false self righteousness
    - 1. Embrace contrition...
  - ii. We acknowledge the holiness of God and stop dumbing him down
    - 1. Embrace the awe of God...
  - iii. We stop running from him and start running to him
  - iv. We celebrate with joy because in Christ you are redeemed just like Judah because of the work of Judah's descendant, the fulfillment of the blessing and the promise, Jesus Christ
    - 1. The more we see who we are and who God is, the bigger and bigger the Cross looks. We become more and more aware of the gap.
    - 2. This bursts forth in joy!