

The (Rebel)lion of Judah
Genesis 37, 38, 44

I. Not a Flannograph Bible Story
Genesis 38:1-30

A. Tamar- A difficult to celebrate hero

1. She has been wronged
2. What she did is not right

B. Judah- An all around terrible guy

1. Sold his brother into slavery
2. Blamed Tamar for his sons' deaths
3. Withheld Tamar's rights
4. Held a double standard
5. Sought Tamar's death

II. A Deeper Look

A. A Story about God's Promise

1. No concern for Seed
Genesis 3:15, Genesis 12:2-3, 7, 15:5, 22:15-18
2. No concern for Blessing
Genesis 12:2-3, 22:18

B. A Story about God's Priorities

1. Onan is put to death
Deuteronomy 25:5-10
2. Tamar is more righteous
Hosea 4:14

C. A Story about God's Process

1. Imperfect families, bitterness, and blindspots
2. Recognizing our unrighteousness

III. The Judah in Us

A. God is faithful where you are faithless

B. God desires Justice and Righteousness

C. God uses painful experiences to bring spiritual awakening

Questions for further reflection

1. How have you felt reading through these stories of the Patriarchs and other personalities in Genesis? How has this season shaped your understanding of the text? Why has God given us these stories?
2. Tamar is in between a rock and a hard place and acts unethically to insure her rights. Who can you think of in our society that is in the same place as Tamar?
3. Culturally, Levirate marriage seems strange and foreign to us. What does the encouraged practice show us about God's priorities? Are there other laws that, as weird as they seem in our modern context, show us what God values for human flourishing?
4. Go back through Genesis and trace every instance in which the Patriarchs compromised God's promise. What does this teach us about God's faithfulness?
5. Take a look at God's priorities in this story. Are they the same as yours? In what ways are we guilty of making God in our image, concerned about the same things we are concerned about?
6. Is there an instance or relationship where you have felt your moral high ground to be more important than an other person? What motivates us to hold onto our righteousness (or rather, our having the right) over someone else?
7. What is an area of your life that you feel prevents you from experiencing God's promises (family, relationships, bitterness, envy)? Are you open to God using these areas to draw you closer to Him?
8. Describe a way that God has been faithful even while you have been faithless...
9. We often treat righteousness as a religious word. Do a word study of righteousness and define the word based on it's usage in the Bible.
10. Judah came face to face with his sin and it changed him. What sins are you hiding from or denying? As we replace false righteousness with Christ's righteousness, how will our lives change?