

Lesson Eight (Part #2) – Gen. 38-39: Judah & Tamar; Joseph in Potiphar’s House

Chapter 38 – Judah & Tamar

1. What grave mistake does Judah make in vv. 1-2 in light of what Abraham and Isaac had commanded for their sons? cf. 24:1-3; 28:1
2. Read vv. 6-10. Er, the son of Judah, dies by what means? What significant points are implied by this action?
3. Judah commands Onan, Er’s brother, to do what? While this custom is strange and disturbing to Occidentals, it was widely practiced in the ANE to ensure that a deceased man’s name and lineage would not cease if he had fathered no male heirs. It was called “Levirate” marriage. cf. Deut. 25:5-10. What happened to Onan? Why?
4. Read vv. 11-14. What does Judah tell Tamar, Er’s wife, to do? Judah does not fulfill his end of his promise to Tamar. Why not?
5. Read vv. 15-23. What does Judah mistake his daughter-in-law as being? Tamar demands what pledge from Judah? What was a “signet and cord” in the ANE?

6. Read vv. 24-30. Tamar's pregnancy is discovered. She is still considered in what relationship to Judah? Her pregnancy is judged to be what? How is the truth revealed? What are the names of her twin sons?

Chapter 39 – Joseph in Potiphar's House

7. Read vv. 1-6a. What position in Potiphar's house does he give to Joseph? Why, from both Potiphar's perspective and Moses, the author of Genesis?
8. Read vv. 6b-10. What happens to Joseph in these verses? What is Joseph's response? What does Joseph reveal is his ultimate guide in life?
9. Read vv. 11-18. What terrible injustice happens to Joseph in these verses?
10. Read vv. 19-23. What is Potiphar's reaction to the account of event his wife tells him? What does Potiphar do to Joseph? What happens to Joseph after Potiphar does this to him and why?