

June 7, 2026

Pastor Andy McClellan

Title: "Meanwhile..."

Series: Genesis: Beginnings

Text: Genesis 38

1. Sinners turn holy blessings into **UNHOLY** actions, vv. 1-11 (*see also 3:1-7; Deuteronomy 25:5-6; 1 Chronicles 2:3; Psalm 106:34-39; Romans 1:21-25; 1 Corinthians 11:20-22; James 1:14-15*).
2. God turns unholy actions into **UNEXPECTED** means in His plan, vv. 12-30 (*see also 50:20; Leviticus 20:14; Esther 9:1; Habakkuk 1:5-6; John 11:49-52; Acts 2:23-24; 4:27-28; Romans 8:28; 11:33-36*).
3. And He turns unrighteous sinners into **UNLIKELY** instruments of His promises, vv. 27-30 (*see also 12:3; 17:7; 25:24; 46:12; 49:10; Numbers 26:19-20; Ruth 4:12; Matthew 1:3; 21:31-32; Acts 9:1-16; 1 Cor. 1:26-29*).

FOR FURTHER STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. Read Gen. 37:26-38:11. How would you describe Judah and his sons so far in this story? While they experience the blessings of marriage and family, how do they turn those holy gifts into unholy actions? Where do we see God's justice on wickedness displayed in this story, and where do we see His mercy? How is that mercy connected to His covenant with His people? What blessings from God are we prone to corrupt with our sin? How have you experienced/observed both God's discipline and mercy when that happens?
2. In vv. 12-26, what sins do we see in Judah and Tamar? How do their sins reflect a pattern of deception, sexual sin, and unfaithfulness to God that we've seen in this family since Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? As sinful as these actions are, how does God use these events toward accomplishing His plans, both in Judah's repentance (v. 26), and in bringing Jesus in the line of Judah (see vv. 18, 27-30; Gen. 49:10; Matt. 1:3)? While this is, in no way, an encouragement to sin, how does it affirm, yet again, God's power to use even our sin toward the accomplishment of His plans and fulfillment of His promises? Why is that encouraging for you? How is the cross of Jesus the greatest example of this truth?
3. If you were recruiting someone for a task that would change history forever, what character qualities would you look for? What flaws would disqualify a person? In your evaluation, would Judah or Tamar make the cut? Why or why not? Would you? What does it tell us about the heart and wisdom of God that He chose both Judah and Tamar to be instruments in His eternally important work of bringing Jesus into the world? How does this help us understand why the Gospel is such GOOD news, and why we need Jesus and His righteousness so desperately?

NEXT WEEK: Genesis 39, Pastor Andy McClellan

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