

Judah is the son of Israel and one of the brothers of the dreamer Joseph. Judah is the one who ended up suggesting to his other brothers that they should not just allow Joseph to die in a hole, his blood on their hands, but to sell him into slavery. They get rid of him and make a profit at the same time.

In Genesis 38 we see that Judah takes a multitude of women to bed, his first-born son named Er. But Er was evil in the sight of the Lord. We are unfortunately not told what happened to cause Er's death.

Chapter 38 continues with Judah having a second son named Onan. Onan is pressured by his father to sleep with his dead brothers' wife. He wastes his semen, which is seen by the Lord as wicked, and is then killed by the Lord. Judah now wants to give his third son, Shelah, to his daughter-in-law but he fears until his son grows up, he would be killed by the Lord also.

Later on, his daughter-in-law, Tamar, disguised herself and tricked him into sleeping with her. She became pregnant and was found out, Judah wanted her to burn but then the truth came out that she was pregnant with his child, he removed all connection to her.

The next time we see Judah is in Genesis 43, the famine is still raging on and his father wants to send them back to Egypt to get more food. Judah makes it clear the only way they could go back is if his youngest brother, Benjamin, goes with them. Israel does not want that to happen because he already lost one son, but Judah and his brothers convince their father to let them take him.

They go back and actually have a good time. They eat and drink with Joseph, and he sends them off with food, but he tricks them and tests them, almost having Benjamin through into the dungeon. We don't know whether Judah was true of heart when he wanted to take Benjamin to Egypt or if he was looking to sacrifice another brother for his own sake, but whatever his heart was, it seems like he had a change of heart.

Chapter 44 after Benjamin was caught, Judah launches into this long narrative, pleading for the life of his brother. Judah pleads with everything that he is, that his brother would be spared. We do not know if it was because of Judah's speech or if Joseph planned to release them all along but that is now the story of Judah ends.

What can we take from this? I am a middle school and a high school youth leader, and this sounds like something I would teach to our high schoolers. What would our takeaways be?

1. Do not give into jealousy or greed. Imagine if Joseph's brothers did not get jealous of him. Imagine if Judah did not let greed consume him.

None of this had to happen, all of this could have been avoided. How do we not give in? We focus on the things of God. We dive into His Scriptures. We pray, pray with everything we have. We get into good Christ-centered communities that hold us accountable.

2. Do not sleep around. Need I say more? You are ruining God's perfect design of marriage. You are corrupting yourself. You are corrupting whoever you are sleeping with.
3. No one is too far gone. Despite all of that, God can redeem anyone. It does not matter what you have done, what you are ashamed of, whatever haunts you. God forgives, He washes us white as snow.

That is all for my first writing assignment in BIB102.