

# Tamar – A Study of Triumph.

Widows of the Old Testament

Student Study Guide

Sylvia De Jong

Please note:

- a. It will be most effective for the participant to read the study in the *Widows of the Old Testament* book and answer the questions in the Study Guide before class if possible. Answers found in the book will be indicated by (pg. #).
- b. A notebook binder would be useful to organize and keep your Study Guide notes available for easy access from week to week. The Study Guide cover page can be slipped into the front notebook cover if designed to hold a sheet of paper.
- c. The NIV Translation of the Bible is quoted unless otherwise indicated.

## Tamar – A Study of Triumph

There are eight Hebrew words for “triumph” – all used with reference to God in praise and prayer and also in discussion concerning Him (Strong’s Concordance). God triumphs in our lives. The triumph in the study of Tamar is the triumph God brought about by using the life of Tamar. He enabled her to become an ancestress of King David and of Jesus Christ in spite of her failure to trust God and her deceptive scheme. God be praised, for there is hope! God will help us to overcome our failures if we seek Him and His intervention in our lives.

1. In this study, we learn about God and the beginnings of life. Paul describes God’s sovereignty or rule over all in Acts 17:24-28. What are the five actions of God described here?

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did God do these things (v. 27)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How can we know who God is today and what He expects from us (See Psalm 119:105-108)? \_\_\_\_\_

**Discuss:** How did the people in the book of Genesis know about God?

4. Read Ezekiel 28:11-17; Isaiah 14:12-15 and Revelation 12:5-9. Why was Lucifer (created by God as an angel) cast out of heaven with one third of the angels?

---

---

5. Adam and Eve were led astray by Satan (Lucifer) and disobeyed God's commands to them. God gave Satan a promise concerning the curse of sin brought on mankind. What was the promise and who fulfilled it (Genesis 3:15)?

---

---

---

6. Who was the father of the great nation from which Jesus Christ (Messiah) would come (Genesis 12:1-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

7. In what way is Genesis 12:1-4 significant to us today?

---

---

8. How was Judah related to Abraham (pg. 16)?

---

9. What relationship did/does God intend to be the most beautiful fulfilling relationship between humans on earth (pg. 16)? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Judah's and Tamar's story is not often shared. Why do you think that is? Why is it important for the churches today to discuss sexual issues?

---

---

11. What does God offer to people who have lost spouses through death or broken marriage vows, to people who have been morally impure, or to people with HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases?

---

---

**Read Genesis 38:1-7**

12. Who were Judah's three sons born to Shua's daughter? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

13. How did Judah and his nine brothers deceive their father Jacob (Genesis 37:23-31)?

---

---

**Discuss:** Do you suppose Judah thought about Joseph later and wondered what happened to him?

14. Of what descent was Tamar (pg. 17)? \_\_\_\_\_

15. What caused Er's death (Genesis 38:7)?

---

16. Was there another time mankind became so evil it grieved God enough to destroy them (Genesis 6:5-8)?

What did God do (Genesis 6:17-22; 7:6-12, 23)?

---

---

17. What is the Levirate Marriage Law (pg. 19)? Read Deuteronomy 25:5-6.

---

---

**Read Genesis 38:8-23**

18. Why did God take Onan's life (vv. 9-10)? \_\_\_\_\_

---

19. What did Judah promise Tamar when he sent her to live as a widow in her father's house (v. 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

---

20. What were Judah's reasons for grieving? a) \_\_\_\_\_  
b) \_\_\_\_\_ c) \_\_\_\_\_

---

21. Tamar was also in grief for many reasons. What were they? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

22. What are the two things Judah did following his time of grieving (vv. 12-16)?  
a) \_\_\_\_\_ b) \_\_\_\_\_

23. Tamar made a plan to deceive Judah (pg. 21). What was it and how do you feel about it (vv. 17-19)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Discuss:** Is it ever right to be deceptive? Why or why not? You may use Scripture.

24. What did Judah give Tamar – who was disguised – as a pledge for payment (vv. 17-19)? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

25. What happened when Judah sent the goat payment (vv. 20-23)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

26. What did Judah do, three months later, when he heard that Tamar was guilty of prostitution and was pregnant (v. 24)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

27. What was Tamar's response (v. 25)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

28. How did Judah respond when he recognized his seal, cord and staff? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

29. Judah apparently forgave Tamar, allowing her to live. What was the result of her pregnancy (v. 27)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

30. Describe their birth (vv. 28-30)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

31. What is the meaning of the name Perez? \_\_\_\_\_ Of Zerah? \_\_\_\_\_

32. Joseph's genealogy of Jesus is in Matthew 1:1-16. Copy vv. 3 and 16 here.

(v. 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(v. 16) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Perez is also in the genealogy of Mary and Jesus in Luke (Luke 3:33).

**Discuss:** The way Tamar chose to take care of her situation, gave her sons but no husband. Could God have given Tamar a husband and children another way and still allowed her to be an ancestress in the lineage of the Messiah?

**Fill in the blanks.**

33. Christ left heaven's glory to be born into an imperfect human family. Philippians 2:5-11 tells us "Christ humbled Himself and became obedient to death on a cross. God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_ shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every \_\_\_\_\_ confess that \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ to the glory of God the Father."

**Personal Application**

Give thought to the these questions and answer them from your heart.

34. What must it have been like for Tamar to live with a wicked husband – so wicked that God slew him?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Discuss:** What are ways you can deal with painful family situations?

35. Is there any way you identify with Tamar's widowhood or her longing for a child?

\_\_\_\_\_

36. In God's amazing grace and forgiveness, He \_\_\_\_\_ Tamar to be an ancestress of His Son Jesus Christ. God was able to bring triumph out of the tragedy of deceit (pg. 25).

**Discuss:** Tamar felt justified in deceiving Judah to get what she wanted.

a) Does it honor God to deceive people to get what you want? \_\_\_\_\_

b) Earlier we discussed ways Tamar could have addressed her plight of betrayal and rejection without yielding to deception. How should we respond, as followers of Christ, if someone treats us unjustly? \_\_\_\_\_

37. Do you trust God and wait on Him to grant you the desire of your heart? \_\_\_\_\_

38. God's hand is on your life. He wants you to believe and trust Him in all matters of your life. He wants you to be aware of your wrongdoings and \_\_\_\_\_ so His \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ can rule in your life (pg. 25). Repentance means a change of mind and heart which results in a changed life. Grace is undeserved favor. Mercy is compassion or withholding punishment.

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name” (John 15:16).

**Exercise:** (Do this exercise at home) Consider how God wants you to trust Him more. Ask God to show you something for which He wants you to trust Him. Record it here and watch to see how He helps you grow in trust in the weeks ahead. Note that God wants to triumph in your life!

I am going to trust God for \_\_\_\_\_.

Pray a prayer in simple words, and ask God to help you trust Him for this.

## **Prayer**