

Study Notes and Questions for Genesis 37 and 38

Chapter 37

- What is chapter 37 about and is there a main character?
- What does God allow to happen in 37:1–36?
- What character qualities does each person show in this chapter?
- What could Jacob have done differently to protect Joseph from his brothers?
- How does the role of the father come into play in this event?
- What could Reuben have done differently in this story?

Chapter 38

- What is chapter 38 about and who are the main characters?
- Why did the Lord put Judah's two oldest sons to death?
- How does Judah behave in 38:1–30?
- How was Tamar treated unfairly?
- How did Tamar respond to being treated unfairly and what could she have done differently?
- Tamar's actions were clearly wrong, and yet God used what she did to expose Judah's hypocrisy and duplicity. How can we explain God using people's sinful mistakes to bring about His will?
- Read Matthew 1:1–16 (especially verses 3, 6, and 16). What does Genesis 38 reveal about the ancestry of King David and Jesus Christ?
- Can you think of anything God might want to teach us through this information about Jesus' ancestry?
- What is the most important lesson that you learned from this chapter?