



Women in the Bible

Tamar

Interpreting the Text:

1. What do the two Tamars have in common? Is there a limit to what the name connection can tell us? Should we think of them together or not?
2. Why are Judah's relations with a sex worker acceptable, but Tamar being a sex worker is an offense that, at first, deserves death? What does this tell us about the gender dynamic of this historical time period?
3. Genesis 38 implies that God, being displeased with two young men, kills them both. In 2 Samuel 13, a brother rapes his sister. How should we, as modern readers, interpret passages like this? What does this tell us about God, or the priorities of the people writing these stories?

Applying the Text:

1. Within her own context in Genesis, what were Tamar's other options? Do you think she made the right choice?
2. Why does Tamar appear in Matthew's genealogy for Jesus? What purpose do she and the three other women serve in that passage?
3. Stories like these two about women named Tamar are often glossed over, seeming too scandalous for worship contexts or Sunday school. What can we learn from these stories? How can we include them in our study and sharing of the Bible?