

Background Scriptures: Genesis 35:22b-26; 38:12-19, 24-26; 49:8-12

Print Passages: Genesis 35:22b-26; 38:24-26; 49:10-12

# Dynamics of Family Leadership



## WAKE UP!

April, and the two quickly became good friends.

One day, April mentioned that she wanted to meet up with some boys across town. Alexis was willing to go with her, but neither of them could drive. Alexis had an idea. That night, Alexis took a credit card from her mother's purse and opened a rideshare account. Alexis had money saved from recent birthday cards, so she planned to pay the rideshare driver in cash—that way, the charge would not show up on her mother's credit card statement. The next day, Alexis lied to her mother and told her that she was staying late after school for choir and her friend's mother would bring her home. Alexis's mother believed her.

Alexis started thinking about how the lies that other family members had told in the past caused major problems for their family. She also knew that hanging out with boys she did not know was unwise and potentially dangerous. Even though Alexis realized her actions were wrong, the next day after school, she scheduled a rideshare, and she and several friends went to meet up with the boys as planned.

Alexis's mother was on her way home from work when she received an alert from her credit card company about suspicious activity on her card. Around the same time, Alexis's aunt called to tell her sister that she saw Alexis riding in a car that she did not recognize with some other girls. Alexis's mother then realized that Alexis was the one responsible for the unauthorized use of her credit card.

Alexis was dishonest with her mother. What steps should Alexis take to restore her mother's trust?



**ALEXIS BRACED HERSELF TO FACE THE HARSH CONSEQUENCES THAT WERE CERTAIN BECAUSE OF HER DISHONESTY WITH HER MOTHER.** Alexis was a new student at a new school. She hoped to make friends with girls who loved to sing, just like she did, so Alexis joined the school choir. On the first day of choir practice, Alexis met



## WORD UP

**Genesis 35:22b-26;  
38:24-26; 49:10-12**

**22** Jacob had twelve sons: **23** The sons of Leah: Reuben the firstborn of Jacob, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. **24** The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. **25** The sons of Rachel's servant Bilhah: Dan and Naphtali. **26** The sons of Leah's servant Zilpah: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob, who were born to him in Paddan Aram.

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**24** About three months later Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar is guilty of prostitution, and as a result she is now pregnant." Judah said, "Bring her out and have her burned to death!" **25** As she was being brought out, she sent a message to her father-in-law. "I am pregnant by the man who owns these," she said. And she added, "See if you recognize whose seal and cord and staff these are." **26** Judah recognized them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I wouldn't give her to my son Shelah." And he did not sleep with her again.

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**10** "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his. **11** He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. **12** His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk."

### KEY VERSE:

"The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his." (Genesis 49:10)



## THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

# WORK OUT

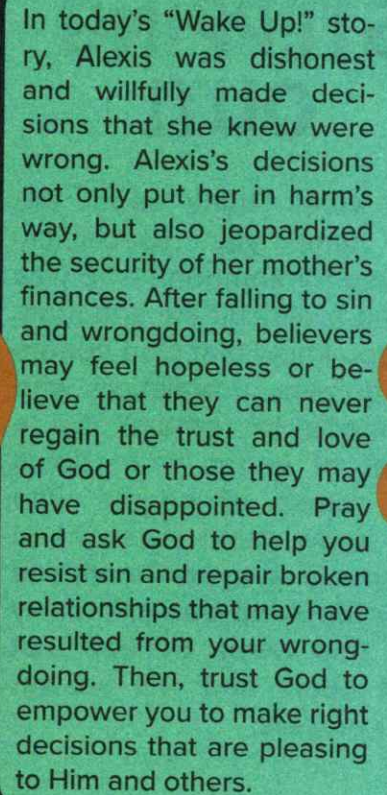
**TODAY'S LESSON HIGHLIGHTS HOW UNGODLY DECISIONS CAN IMPACT A FAMILY.** Our lesson focuses on two of Jacob's sons—Reuben and Judah. Reuben had a relationship with a woman who was already in a relationship with his father. Reuben thought that he had gotten away with this action, but someone told his father about what he did. As the oldest son, Reuben stood to receive a double portion of the family inheritance in comparison to his siblings. Now, because of his wrongful act, Reuben would lose his inheritance. His father decided to give the inheritance to someone else as a consequence of Reuben's disrespect toward him.

Tamar was Judah's daughter-in-law. She was married to two of Judah's sons—Er, and then Onan, after Er's death. It was customary for the living brother to marry the widow of his brother. After Onan died, Shelah was Judah's son who was next in line to marry Tamar. However, Judah did not follow through with the custom again because he feared Shelah would die like his brothers.

Sometime later, Judah had an inappropriate relationship with a woman in Enaim (see Genesis 38). That woman was Tamar, but she disguised herself so that Judah would not know it was her. Tamar became pregnant by Judah. Judah then admitted that he had dealt with Tamar unjustly. She bore no wrongdoing for what she did in response. Both Reuben and Judah committed a sexual sin, but Judah took responsibility for his sin. Because of his sincere regret for his wrongdoing, God used Judah to fulfill a prominent role in history.

## INSIDE OUT

Reuben and Judah's sins resulted in consequences not just for them, but for their family as well. The brothers thought that their sins would not be discovered, but in both cases their sin was exposed. Despite the seriousness of their wrongful acts, God continued to use the family in His divine plan. Judah's leadership played an important role in continuing the royal bloodline. This story reminds believers that God can still use us for His glory if we repent of our sins and are willing to do things God's way.



In today's "Wake Up!" story, Alexis was dishonest and willfully made decisions that she knew were wrong. Alexis's decisions not only put her in harm's way, but also jeopardized the security of her mother's finances. After falling to sin and wrongdoing, believers may feel hopeless or believe that they can never regain the trust and love of God or those they may have disappointed. Pray and ask God to help you resist sin and repair broken relationships that may have resulted from your wrongdoing. Then, trust God to empower you to make right decisions that are pleasing to Him and others.



Are you disappointed in some of the wrong decisions you have made? Sometimes, you may focus on your poor decisions instead of focusing on ways to make better choices in the future. God knows how to restore you and give you renewed hope and joy. Invite God to direct your path and open your heart to His leading.