

STUDY GUIDE: WEEK FOUR

In the Beginning: Exploring the Origin Stories of Genesis

Fall 2024 ~ Pastor Olson Popp

Class Title: *Stories of Overlooked Women***Overview**

The women in Genesis are often overlooked because the big stories of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph take up a lot of room in the pulpit and in our collective memory. These patriarchs, though important parts of Israel's story, are not the entire story. Genesis is filled with stories of women who we often forget as parts of God's work in the beginning. Some of these women were dealt a tough hand. Others found themselves in an impossible situation. Some were simply mothers who birthed the sons of Israel. No matter where they found themselves, they are important parts of Israel's story, and we are missing out if we forget them.

In this class, we'll take a deep dive into the stories of Hagar and Tamar, two women who were known as "the other" and a "prostitute," respectively, but played a vital role in the story of God's people. We'll spend time going over the numerous matriarchs of Israel, remembering that there are no promised descendants without these strong and courageous women. Finally, we'll end with a couple honorable mentions, before concluding with discussion and key takeaways. My hope is that you walk away with a deeper understanding of the women found "In the Beginning," and how God used them to fulfill God's promise to Israel.

Scripture

Genesis 16:1-15, Genesis 21:8-20 (Hagar)

Genesis 38 (Tamar)

Genesis 24 & 27 (Rebekah)

Genesis 29-31 (Rachel & Leah)

Genesis 35:22-26 (Bilpah & Zilpah)

For Reflection

Why do we overlook the stories of these integral women of Israel?

How did God use these women to shape, build, and create the nation Israel?

Do you resonate with any of these women's stories? How do you see God showing up in your own life as God showed up in theirs?