

Genesis 38:1-30

38 At that time Judah left his brothers and visited a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. ² There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shua, and he took her and had relations with her. ³ She conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er. ⁴ She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. ⁵ She again conceived and bore a son and called his name Shelah. He was at Kezib when she bore him.

⁶ Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar. ⁷ But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, so the Lord killed him.

⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, "Go have relations with your brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up descendants for your brother." ⁹ But Onan knew that the descendant would not be his, so when he had relations with his brother's wife, he let his semen go on the ground, so that he would not give a descendant to his brother. ¹⁰ What he did displeased the Lord; therefore He killed him also.

¹¹ Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow at your father's house until Shelah my son grows up." For he thought, "He may die also, just as his brothers did." So Tamar went and lived in her father's house.

¹² As time went on, the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died. After Judah was consoled, he went up to his sheepshearers in Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

¹³ It was told to Tamar, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." ¹⁴ She took off her widow's clothing, covered herself with a veil, wrapped herself up, and sat in an open place, which is by the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as his wife.

¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, because she had covered her face. ¹⁶ He turned to her by the road and said, "Come now, let me have relations with you" (for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law).

And she said, "What will you give me, so that you may have relations with me?"

¹⁷ And he said, "I will send you a young goat from the flock."

And she said, "Will you give me a pledge, until you send it?"

¹⁸ And he said, "What pledge should I give you?"

And she said, "Your signet, your bracelets, and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her and had relations with her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁹ She arose and went away, and taking off her veil, she put on her widow's clothing.

²⁰ Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he

could not find her. ²¹ Then he asked the men of the place, “Where is the cult prostitute who was at Enaim by the road?”

And they said, “There was no prostitute in this place.”

²² So he returned to Judah and said, “I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no cult prostitute in this place.”

²³ Judah replied, “Let her keep them for herself, or we shall be laughed at. I sent this young goat, and you did not find her.”

²⁴ After about three months, it was told Judah, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has turned to prostitution, and what is more, as a result of prostitution she is pregnant.”

Then Judah said, “Bring her forth, and let her be burned!”

²⁵ When she was brought forth, she sent word to her father-in-law, saying, “By the man to whom these belong am I with child.” And she said, “Please identify whose these are—the signet and bracelet and staff.”

²⁶ Judah recognized them and said, “She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son.” He did not have relations with her again.

²⁷ When it was time for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb. ²⁸ While she was giving birth, one put out his hand, and the midwife took and tied on his hand a scarlet thread, saying, “This one came out first.” ²⁹ But as he drew back his hand, his brother came out. Then she said, “How have you made a breach for yourself?” Therefore his name was called Perez. ³⁰ Afterward his brother came out, the one that had the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.

