

Judah and the Line of Christ

Genesis 38:1-30

“Luther said that the story of Judah and Tamar was included in Genesis for two purposes: first, to rebuke presumption, and second, to challenge despair. It rebukes presumption in that if Judah – who was an ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ and was instructed, as we have been, in the religion of his father Jacob and his ancestors Isaac and Abraham – if he sinned so easily in going to Tamar, then any of us can likewise sin, regardless of our background, privileges, or training... The story challenges despair, because in the midst of this great sin, we nevertheless see the great mercy of God. Luther wrote, ‘The church of God has great need of these examples. For what would become of us? What hope would be left for us if Peter had not denied Christ and all the apostles had not taken offense at Him, and if Moses, Aaron and David had not fallen? Therefore, God wanted to console sinners with these examples and to say: ‘If you have fallen, return; for the door of mercy is open to you. You, who are conscious of no sin, do not be presumptuous; but both of you should trust in my grace and mercy.’” Boice

- I. At first glance, the events that take place in chapter 38 seem out of place. Chapter 37 gave us a major shift in the historical narrative of the patriarchs. We’ve been studying about the inception of the nation of Israel since chapter 12, where God chose Abraham and his line to bring forth the great nation of Israel and ultimately the deliverer from man’s sins, Jesus Christ. Twelve chapters were devoted to Abraham, one chapter to Isaac, twelve to Jacob, and twelve to Joseph. Just as we get into Joseph’s faith journey, it is interrupted by the account of Judah’s transgression. **Why?** We know that the Holy Spirit is the one doing the writing, so He put it in there for a very good reason. Chapter 38 is parenthetical (a side note). When the flow of the narrative is interrupted, it is interrupted to either clarify or make a point to help us understand of the overall context of the book better. It’s there to give us insight into God’s sovereign control of redemptive history despite the will of man. In this case, it is the life of Judah that comes to light. It’s not there to just point out another man’s sin, but to show us that despite Judah’s sinful actions, God works. Once again, it’s an incredible picture of **God’s grace** and **God’s sovereign control** over the sinful affairs of mankind. Please remember, as we see and feel the effects of what’s going on today with the insidious woke movement, the nation’s moral decline, and the stupid godless socialist agenda of those in leadership, that God is in control and will bring his wrath upon it all. Meanwhile, we are to stand firm in the faith as we wait for the **harpazo**, the snatching away of the saints (1 Thess. 4:13-18), before it all begins. Be ready! Maranatha!!

Romans 6:1-2 *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer.*

II. Judah is a picture of man who was not careful with the responsibility of embracing God's covenant promises. He failed to understand the seriousness of keeping the Abrahamic line morally and spiritually pure. As a result, he introduced the influence of wickedness into his family line that could have prevented God from fulfilling his covenant promises through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Fortunately, God's grace kept that from happening. Judah provides us with a powerful reason why we must not in any way be yoked to those who want nothing to do with God's righteousness. To be yoked to someone, be it an unbeliever or even to a "carnal" believer, brings the world into the life of a believer in a very intimate and compromising way. This can happen in marriage, business, friendship, and in churches that embrace the godless woke agenda of Satan. The result is not only the loss of God's blessings, but also the onset of dire consequences that could have been prevented simply by staying true to the Lord in heart devotion to him and his commands.

Gen. 38:1-14
2 Cor. 6:14-18
Deut. 25:5-10
Mt. 22:23-33
Acts 28:26-27

1 John 5:2-4 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.³ In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

"A yoke is a wooden bar that joins two oxen to each other and to the burden they pull. An "unequally yoked" team has one stronger ox and one weaker, or one taller and one shorter. The weaker or shorter ox would walk more slowly than the taller, stronger one, causing the load to go around in circles. When oxen are unequally yoked, they cannot perform the task set before them. Instead of working together, they are at odds with one another." gotquestions.org

III. What does it take for wayward believers to wake up to the fruitless deeds of darkness in their lives and the effect it is having on those closest to them? God used Tamar for that very purpose. It's a mystery why God would allow Tamar to disguise herself as a prostitute and lay with Judah. Did He give her the wisdom to concoct the ruse she did? Was what she did justifiable in any way? We don't know, but the result shows a man humbled and humiliated by not providing a husband for her. It was what was needed to get his heart right with the Lord. He truly repented, and as a result God's grace blessed Judah, and especially Tamar, with the privilege of being a part of the genealogy of His Son, Jesus Christ. True heartfelt repentance always unleashes the power of God's grace and mercy to bless and restore anyone back into a loving relationship with Him. He is always working to bring the wayward back into the safety of His will, that's grace.

Gen. 38:15-30
Eph. 5:8-14
Num. 32:23
Gen. 49:8,10
1 Jn. 1:9
Mt. 1:1

Perez or Pharez = "breach" or "break through"

Zerah or Zarah = "rising" or "dawning, shining"