

Genesis 38

Read Genesis 38 The bible has an ancestry lineage to the messiah called the *scarlet thread*. Are we reading about the ancestry of the Messiah, or about a tragic family history? Both. There does not seem to be anything biblical going on here. God is a transformation artist who can work with any canvas.

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. (Isaiah 61)

God uses the prompting of his Holy Spirit and physical circumstances in our lives to derail us from our unhealthy ruts. Many unpleasant circumstances are bridges to healing. Without force, we tend to follow the path of least resistance. You can really see why God has to allow regional and worldwide events to disrupt the natural trajectory of nations and of men.

The *natural* ways of this world ultimately lead to societal decay. The family of Jacob has spun out of control. They are not honorable men. They are not seeking God. They have agreed to sell their own brother as a slave. They are taking advantage of their aging, remote father. They have committed murder.

This chapter is about how Judah broke away from the family, and he went to live among the idol-crazy Canaanites and marry into their culture. Partaking with prostitutes just fits right into doing his own thing. This is just sordid garden-variety soap opera stuff. These life decisions close the door on any faith development. The family appears to be *spiritually doomed*.

Things have fallen so far that God is killing the evil sons of Judah, and bringing a Canaanite into the family bloodline, just to keep this bloodline alive and semi-functional. Similarly, David's grandmother was Rahab, the Canaanite prostitute. In fact the ancestry of Jesus includes two Gentile prostitutes and a Moabitess.

If Tamar was about to be killed for being an adulteress, then why was Judah spared? Judah failed as a son, as a brother, and now as a father.

What is the spiritual significance of the struggle between the birthing twins; Perez and Zerah? One meant to break forth, and the other meant brightness. Perez is the one known for breaking forth and continuing the messianic bloodline. Perez's name is the equivalent of a new beginning. This all fits perfectly into the gospel message. It is a long history of redemption, mercy, inclusion and new hope in the coming Christ.