

### **Context**

- 1] Joseph's brothers had agreed to murder him (37:18)
- 2] Judah, with profit in mind, had them sell him into slavery in Egypt (37:25, 26)
- 3] After leading their father to believe Joseph was dead, he permanently mourned (37:31-35)

### **Judah's Flight (1)**

- 1] At that time – 'father in permanent mourning' (37:35)
- 2] left brothers, 'went down' to stay with man of Adullam, Hirah (Canaanite)  
*Nb 'went down' lit 'turn aside' usually moral choice - deviating from loyalty/righteousness*  
*Nb Adullam SW of Jerusalem. Will be Judah's after the conquest of Canaan*  
*(cf 2 Chronicles 11:5,7).*  
*Cf running away? (Ps 139:7ff; Jonah 1:3)*  
*Nb Bad company corrupts good character' (1 Cor 15:33)*  
*\*God permits His children to do wrong /go the wrong way\**  
*\*Do not run and avoid God / difficulties – do your God's will\**

### **Judah's Family (2-11)**

- 1] met ...married...lay with...pregnant – Son (Er) (3) cf. Esau marries a pagan wife (28:1ff)  
*\*right thing at wrong time / situation = the wrong thing\**
- 2] repeated – 2 sons, (Onan and Shelah) (4,5)  
*Nb 'Kezib' where Shelah was born, related to Hebrew – 'to tell a lie'*
- 3] Er and Onan 'wicked in God's sight .. the Lord put him to death' (6-10)  
*Nb Onan's wickedness = not fulfilling Levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-6)*  
*Cf wages of sin are death (Rmns 3:23) Lord put him to death cf (1 Cor 11:29,30) Breathed life into man (Gen 2:7)*  
*\*God deals / will deal with wickedness\**  
*\*Do not seek to avoid your responsibilities before God\**
- 4] Judah 'protects' Shelah - puts child before God (11)  
*Cf Boaz seeking the closest relative to Ruth (Ruth 3:9)*  
*Cf Abraham and Isaac (22:1-14), The Father and Jesus (Jn 3:16)*  
*\*by God's grace, put Him first\* \*Face up to your challenges under God\* \*Do not rationalise disobeying God\**

### **Judah's Fancy' (12 -14)**

- 1] Wife dies – grief – then 'sheep shearing' with Hiram the Adullamite (12a)  
*Nb sheep shearing related to Canaanite fertility cult – sex & prostitution*  
*Cf Warning of the Prophets (Jer 2:20ff; 3:1ff; Ez 23::37-45; Hosea 2:2-5)*  
*\*Beware the temptation that thinks that weakness can justify / earn the right to sin'*
- 2] J. to Timnah – on boundary of land given to Judah (12b)  
*\*beware the boundaries of God's promise\**
- 3] Tamar (13, 14)
  - a) told his Father 'on way to shear sheep' – sexual licence
  - b) covered head with veil cf a prostitute
  - c) reason – Shelah had not been given her as wife

\*Allow your actions to be guided by the spirit (cf 26)\*

### **Judah's Foolishness (15-23)**

1] Approached her thinking she was a prostitute (15,16a)

2] Tamar – what will you give me? (16b)

3] The deal (17,18a) = Judah – a young goat. Tamar – a pledge? J – what like? T – your seal, cord and staff. (unmistakeable sign of id)

*Nb the Lord must have directed her path – what if ....not approached, no pledge, other offer, no sign?*

\*Trust in the Lord ---He will direct your paths\*

4] The transaction (18b, 19) – gave them to her, slept with her and she became pregnant.

*Nb took off veil put on clothes – solely for this action*

5] Judah sent a goat with Hiram Adullamite for the 'shrine prostitute' (19-21)

\*Don't get others to do your dirty work!\*

6] No sign – No action = a laughing stock? (22, 23)

*Nb admission of guilt*

### **Judah's Folly (24, 25)**

1] 3 months later – pregnant. cf Mary stayed with cousin Elizabeth (Lk 1:56)

2] Judah - 'guilty of prostitution' (24a)

*I.e. no indication of betrothal?*

3] 'burned to death' (24b)

*Nb Take out the spec in your own eye first (Luke 6:41, 42)*

\*Look at your own sin before condemning others\*

4] The pledge returned (25)

*Cf your sins will find you out (Nu 32:23) Nathan to David - You are the man (2 Sam12:7)*

\*Be sure that your sins shall find you out\*

### **Judah's Future (26-30)**

1] The issue = *unrighteousness before God*

*Nb r = a blameless state before God brought about by faith (15:6)*

\*The marginalised 'foreigner' Tamar was the righteous one cf JESUS\*

2] Repentance (26b)

*Nb Admitting sin (cf 2 Sam 12:13) ie didn't sleep with her again*

\*GRACE He allows repentance after sin - Repent of your unrighteousness.\*

3] The heir (27-30)

*Nb twins in womb cf His Grandfather and gt Uncle (Jacob and Esau) were twins (25:22)*

*Nb as with Judah's repentance – the birth was a struggle but the Lord's will was done*

\*Don't presume – wait till the end to determine God's will\*

**MP** A recognition of our unrighteousness is the first indication of repentance

**KV** "She is more righteous than I.... and he did not sleep with her again" (26)

### **Conclusion**

1] Timing - Events in ch 38 may have taken c **20 yrs** +. Meantime, Joseph was 17 at start, (37:2), 30 when he became prime minister (41:46), 37 when the 7 years of famine started – **20 yrs!!!**

2] Judah a) 4<sup>th</sup> Son of 1<sup>st</sup> wife Leah – name means 'praise' (29:35) b) Leader – i) J sold into

Egypt (37:27) ii) spokesman for bros. (43:1ff; 44:10ff) iii) Repentant - offered self for brother (44:33,44), c) Blessed by Jacob – lion of Judah (49:9)

3] This chapter ‘interjected’? - Judah, the line of Messiah, must be brought to repentance before he re-engages with the story of his people’s deliverance to Egypt.