

**God Kills Judah's Two Sons—Er and Onan (c. 1880–1878 BC)**

Genesis 38:6–11

6 And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* Tamar.

7 And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the eyes of Yahweh, and Yahweh killed him.

8 Then Judah said to Onan, “Go in to the wife of your brother and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother.”

9 But Onan knew that the offspring would not be for him, so whenever he went in to the wife of his brother he would waste *it* on the ground so as not to give offspring to his brother.

10 And what he did was evil in the sight of Yahweh, so he killed him also.

11 Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, “Stay a widow in your father’s house until Shelah my son grows up,” for he feared he would also die like his brother. So Tamar went and stayed in the house of her father.

**The Great Famine Begins (Nisan [April] 1878 BC)**

Genesis 41:53–57

53 And the seven years of abundance which *were* in the land of Egypt came to an end.

54 And the seven years of famine began to come as Joseph had said. And there was famine in all of the countries, but in the land of Egypt there was food.

55 And when all the land of Egypt was hungry the people cried out to Pharaoh for food. And Pharaoh said to all the land of Egypt, “Go to Joseph; what he says to you, you must do.”

56 And the famine was over the whole land, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold *food* to the Egyptians. And the famine was severe in the land of Egypt.

57 And every land came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, for the famine was severe in every land.

**Tamar Seduces Judah (c. 1878 BC)**

Genesis 38:12–26

12 And in the course of time the daughter of Shua, the wife of Judah, died. When Judah was consoled he went up to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite, to Timnah.

13 And it was told to Tamar, saying, “Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”

14 So she removed the clothes of her widowhood and covered *herself* with the veil and disguised herself. And she sat at the entrance to Eynayim, which *is* on the way to Timnah, for she saw that Shelah was grown but she had not been given to him as a wife.

15 And Judah saw her and reckoned her to *be* a prostitute, for she had covered her face.

16 And he turned aside to her at the roadside and said, “Please come, let me come in to you,” for he did not know that she *was* his daughter-in-law. And she said, “What will you give to me that you may come in to me?”

17 And he said, “I will send a kid from the goats of the flock.” And she said, “*Only* if you give a pledge until you send *it*.”

18 And he said, “What *is* the pledge that I must give to you?” And she said, “your seal, your cord, and your staff that *is* in your hand.” And he gave *them* to her and went in to her. And she conceived by him.

19 And she arose and left, and she removed her veil from herself and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 And Judah sent the kid from the goats by the hand of his friend the Adullamite to take *back* the pledge from the hand of the woman, but he could not find her.

21 So he asked the men of her place, saying, “Where *is* that cult prostitute *that was* at Eynayim by the roadside?” And they said, “There is no cult prostitute here.”

22 Then he returned to Judah and said, “I could not find her. Moreover, the men of the place said, ‘There is no cult prostitute here.’”

23 And Judah said, “Let her take *them* for herself, lest we be laughed at. Behold, I sent this kid, but you could not find her.”

24 And about three months later it was told to Judah, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the whore, and now, behold, she has conceived by prostitution.” And Judah said, “Bring her out and let her be burned.”

25 She was brought out, but she sent to her father-in-law saying, “By the man to whom these *belong* I have conceived.” And she said, “Now discern to whom these *belong*: the seal and cord and the staff.”

26 Then Judah recognized *them* and said, “She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.” And he did not know her again.

**Joseph's Brothers First Trip to Egypt (1877 BC)**

Genesis 42

**Jacob Sends His Sons to Egypt for Grain**

1 When Jacob realized that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?”

2 Then he said, "Look, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy grain for us there that we may live and not die."

3 And the ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt.

4 But Jacob did not send Benjamin, the brother of Joseph, for he feared harm would come to him.

5 Then the sons of Israel went to buy grain amid those *other people* who went *as well*, for there was famine in the land of Canaan.

### Joseph Accuses His Brothers of Being Spies

6 Now Joseph was the governor over the land. He *was* the one who sold *food* to all the people of the land. And the brothers of Joseph came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground.

7 And Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger to them. And he spoke with them harshly and said to them, "From where have you come?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food."

8 And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.

9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed concerning them, and he said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!"

10 And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.

11 We all are sons of one man. We *are* honest *men*. We, your servants, are not spies."

12 Then he said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land."

13 Then they said, "We, your servants, *are* twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, but behold, the youngest *is* with our father today, and one is no more."

14 But Joseph said to them, "It *is* what I said to you—you *are* spies.

15 By this you shall be tested. By the life of Pharaoh you will not go out from here unless your youngest brother comes here.

16 Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, but you will be kept in prison so that your words might be tested *to see if there is truth* with you. And if not, by the life of Pharaoh surely you *are* spies."

17 Then he gathered them into the prison for three days.

### Joseph Sends His Brothers Back to Canaan But Keeps Simeon

18 On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live; I fear God.

19 If you *are* honest, let one of your brothers be kept in prison where you are now being kept, but *the rest of you go*, carry grain for the famine for your households.

20 You must bring your youngest brother to me, and then your words will be confirmed and you will not die." And they did so.

21 Then each said to his brother, "Surely we *are* guilty on account of our brother when we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded for mercy to us and we would not listen. Therefore this trouble has come to us."

22 Then Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not say to you, do not sin against the boy? But you did not listen, and now, behold, his blood has been sought."

23 Now they did not know that Joseph understood, for the interpreter *was* between them.

24 And he turned away from them and wept. Then he returned to them and spoke to them, and took Simeon from them and tied him up in front of them.

25 Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain and to return their money to each sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them.

26 Then they loaded their grain upon their donkeys and went *away* from there.

27 And one *of them later* opened his sack to give fodder to his donkey at the lodging place and saw his money—behold, it *was* in the mouth of his sack.

28 And he said to his brothers, "My money was returned and moreover, behold, *it is* in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and each of them trembled *and* said, "What *is* this God has done to us?"

29 And when they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan they told him everything *that* had happened to them, saying,

30 "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly to us and treated us as *if we were* spying out the land.

31 But we said to him, 'We *are* honest; we are not spies.

32 We *are* twelve brothers, the sons of our father. One is no more and the youngest *is* with our father now in the land of Canaan.'

33 Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you *are* honest. Leave one *brother* with me, and take *food* for the famine in your households and go.

34 And bring your youngest brother to me. Then I will know that you *are* not spies but you *are* honest. And I will give your brother *back* to you, and you will trade in the land.'"

35 And it happened *that when* they emptied their sacks, behold, each one's pouch of money *was* in his sack. And when they and their father saw the pouches of their money, they were greatly distressed.

36 And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me—Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and Benjamin you would take! All of this *is* against me!

37 Then Reuben said to his father, "You may kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my hand and I myself will return him to you."

38 But he said, “My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead and he alone remains. *If* harm meets him on the journey that you would take, you would bring down my gray head in sorrow to Sheol.”

### Tamar Gives Birth to Twins—Perez and Zerah (c. 1877 BC)

Genesis 38:27–30

27 And it happened *that* at the time she gave birth that, behold, twins *were* in her womb.

28 And it happened *that* at her labor one *child* put out a hand. And the midwife took *it* and tied a crimson thread on his hand saying, “This *one* came out first.”

29 Then his hand drew back and, behold, his brother came out, and she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself!” And she called his name Perez.

30 And afterward his brother who *had* the crimson thread on his hand came out. And his name was called Zerah.

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