

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

Genesis 38:6–11

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

7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD took his life.

8 Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother."

9 Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so when he went in to his brother's wife, he wasted his seed on the ground in order not to give offspring to his brother.

10 But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD; so He took his life also.

11 Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up"; for he thought, "*I am afraid* that he too may die like his brothers." So Tamar went and lived in her father's house.

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

Genesis 41:53–57

53 When the seven years of plenty which had been in the land of Egypt came to an end,

54 and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said, then there was famine in all the lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

55 So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread; and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, you shall do."

56 When the famine was *spread* over all the face of the earth, then Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine was severe in the land of Egypt.

57 *The people of* all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.

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

Genesis 38:12–26

12 Now after a considerable time Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died; and when the time of mourning was ended, Judah went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 It was told to Tamar, "Behold, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep."

14 So she removed her widow's garments and covered *herself* with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in the gateway of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought she *was* a harlot, for she had covered her face.

16 So he turned aside to her by the road, and said, "Here now, 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 me, that you may come in to me?"

17 He said, therefore, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." She said, moreover, "Will you give a pledge until you send *it*?"

18 He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" And she said, "Your seal and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave *them* to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.

19 Then she arose and departed, and removed her veil and put on her widow's garments.

20 When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her.

21 He asked the men of her place, saying, "Where is the temple prostitute who was by the road at Enaim?" But they said, "There has been no temple prostitute here."

22 So he returned to Judah, and said, "I did not find her; and furthermore, the men of the place said, 'There has been no temple prostitute here.'"

23 Then Judah said, "Let her keep them, otherwise we will become a laughingstock. After all, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her."

24 Now it was about three months later that Judah was informed, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and behold, she is also with child by harlotry." Then Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"

25 It was while she was being brought out that she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "I am with child by the man to whom these things belong." And she said, "Please examine and see, whose signet ring and cords and staff are these?"

26 Judah recognized *them*, and said, "She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not have relations with her again.

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

## Genesis 42

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

1 Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, "Why are you staring at one another?"

2 He said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy *some* for us from that place, so that we may live and not die."

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

4 But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "I am afraid that harm may befall him."

5 So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan *also*.

**Joseph Accuses His Brothers of Being Spies**

6 Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with *their* faces to the ground.

7 When Joseph saw his brothers he recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. And he said to them, "Where have you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food."

8 But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him.

9 Joseph remembered the dreams which he had about them, and said to them, "You are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land."

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

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

12 Yet he said to them, "No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!"

13 But they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers *in all*, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive."

14 Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies;

15 by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here!

16 Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies."

17 So he put them all together in prison for three days.

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

18 Now Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God:

19 if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; but as for *the rest of you*, go, carry grain for the famine of your households,

20 and bring your youngest brother to me, so your words may be verified, and you will not die." And they did so.

21 Then they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us."

22 Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood."

23 They did not know, however, that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between them.

24 He turned away from them and wept. But when he returned to them and spoke to them, he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.

25 Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain and to restore every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. And thus it was done for them.

26 So they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there.

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

28 Then he said to his brothers, "My money has been returned, and behold, it is even in my sack." And their hearts sank, and they *turned* trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

29 When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying,

30 "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly with us, and took us for spies of the country.

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

32 We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.'

33 The man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me and take *grain* for the famine of your households, and go.

34 But bring your youngest brother to me that I may know that you are not spies, but honest men. I will give your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'"

35 Now it came about as they were emptying their sacks, that behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack; and when they

and their father saw their bundles of money, they were dismayed.

36 Their father Jacob said to them, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me.”

37 Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, “You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring him *back* to you; put him in my care, and I will return him to you.”

38 But Jacob said, “My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.”

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

Genesis 38:27–30

27 It came about at the time she was giving birth, that behold, there were twins in her womb.

28 Moreover, it took place while she was giving birth, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet *thread* on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.”

29 But it came about as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out. Then she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself!” So he was named Perez.

30 Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet *thread* on his hand; and he was named Zerah.

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