

All or Nothing - Genesis 38:1-30

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Date: 16 June 2024

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[0 : 0 0] So in Genesis 38, if you want to turn there, and Genesis 38 is one of those chapters that's probably not the one you go to when you're feeling down and you just want to be really encouraged and you're going to turn to Genesis 38. You're just going to read what's in there.

There's a lot in here that's, that's kind of put sin in our face. It's not the most uplifting section of scripture. And I've been thinking about that.

And I'm like, Lord, why do you put these things in here? What is this about? And as we saw last week with Joseph, that God's favor cannot be removed.

It cannot be stolen and it cannot be destroyed. That despite all Joseph's circumstances, God's favor didn't leave Joseph. And we're going to see, we're going to take a little bit of a detour from the narrative. We're going to kind of turn the scene. The lens is going to focus off of Joseph.

Joseph. He's been sold off into Egypt. We're going to take this chapter and it's going to cover 20 years. It's not going to take 20 years to cover it. It's going to take 20 years to cover Judah's life, Joseph's brother. Judah and Joseph represent the only two brothers who went out from the family that we see in scripture. Joseph, not by choice. And then Judah decides he's going to go out. He's going to go out into the world, make a name for himself, I guess. And we're going to see, it's going to cover the 20 years of his life because we're going to pick up with him like not until 40, 43 or four before we see him again, before we hear his name, before he speaks and comes on the scene. But last week we saw where he's like, you know what, let's not kill Joseph. He's our brother and we don't want his blood on our hands. Let's sell him. Let's, let's get something from this situation. Let's use his misfortune for our gain. But by the time we see him again, 20 years later, and they're realizing they need to go back to Egypt the second time. Remember Simeon's down there and Joseph has this whole kind of setup where he's like, you're not going to get corn until you bring your younger brother. Cause he wants to see as their hearts changed. And it's Judah who says, look, dad, I'll be responsible for him. We need to take care of the family. They need food. I'll be responsible for him. And if anything happens, I will bear it. I will carry it. Reuben's response, remember was, well, dad, kill my sons. If I don't bring Benjamin back. It's like, thanks Reuben.

[2 : 1 7] Very helpful. But Judah's totally changed. He's like this man who's now willing to sacrifice for his family, willing to do what it takes to care for the people of God and willing to bear it himself.

It's like, well, what happened? That's what we're going to see today. We're going to see what happened. But as we go through this, it kind of throws sin in our face a little bit. And it's like, ooh, well, okay, there that is. Let's move on to, you know, Psalm 23 or John 3 16 or why this?

And it can feel like, well, Lord, that's very defiling. That's because sin defiles. Sin is defiling. But God's word never defiles. God's word does not defile and it never will defile.

But sin defiles. And God's word faithfully shows us how defiling sin is. Because the nature of sin is to hide. It's to hide its true identity from itself and from everybody else, right? What did Adam and Eve do when they first ate of the fruit of the garden? The Lord comes to walk in the garden. He says, Adam, where are you? He's like, what are you doing over there? He's like, well, I was hiding because I was afraid. So their hiding and fear has now entered because of sin. And sin tries to hide itself. It tries to hide its true identity. I don't, my own sin nature. I don't want to accept that I'm a sinner. And so I try to hide that, right? You say, well, wait a minute. The world doesn't hide sin. The world puts sin in our face just as starkly and just as much as, you know, defiles us with its sin.

That's because the world doesn't acknowledge that sin defiles. And so it puts out there as it's a good thing. It's entertainment. It's fun. It's okay. And that ends up defiling us because now we've allowed more sin into our lives thinking that, oh, it's okay because it makes me feel good about myself. That, oh, I'm okay. That's what religion does. Religion is an attempt to further hide sin because only God's word shows us sin for what it truly is. You know, a religion may say, well, you know what? You're in a bad spot. Okay. We're not going to call you sinners, but if you want to be accepted by God or the deity or whatever, do these steps and now you're okay. And it makes me feel really good about myself. Oh, I'm not so lost. I'm okay. I'm not a sinner. But only those who truly understand sin understand what? They understand what Jesus said in Luke 5 32. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. They understand they need a savior. So the scripture, it shows a sin for what it is. And it's like, ooh, oh wow. That's stark. That's so real. That's so in my face. That's so defiling. That's, but the scripture doesn't defile. The word of God cleanses. It heals.

[4 : 55] It brings life. It brings wholeness. But to get to that point, we have to first acknowledge our sin, right? No man comes unto the Father except through Jesus. And nobody's going to Jesus except sinners, right? He's come to call sinners. Galatians 3 13 says that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. So when we come to Christ acknowledging that we are sinners and that this ugly, defiling thing, which is part of my nature, I acknowledge that and I come to Christ, he removes the curse. He redeems me. So what is the curse? Well, Paul writes that in 1 Corinthians 15, he says the sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law, Christ removing the curse of the law. What is the strength of sin? The law. And so Jesus comes and he removes the curse. He removes the sting. And then he gives us victory. So when I come and acknowledge the curse, the failures, the sting, when I come and acknowledge my defilement before him, well, he gives me victory and he removes that.

So scripture shows us sin for the purpose of redemption. The purpose of sin is to display the redemption of God. Why is there sin in the world? So that we can see God's redemption. That is the reason for sin. It's not an accident. It wasn't like, oh, the Lord wasn't ready for this. He had to give his own son just to take care of this problem. No. It's so that he can display his redemption and his love in that. So as we look at this chapter, and we're going to make a run and get through the whole thing.

Might as well get it behind us as quick as we can. Know that God's word doesn't defile, but God's word shows us the defilement so that we can come and be cleansed. But with that preamble, today's message title is all or nothing. It's all or nothing. There's no half measures with the word, and there's no half measures in this chapter. And our outline for today is all or nothing. So verses one through five is all in. Judah is all in. He's taking the family.

He's all in. He's going to the world. Six through eleven is nothing left. He's saying, I got nothing left at this point to offer anyone. Verses 12 through 15, all by myself. Judah finds himself alone in the world. Verses 16 through 19, nothing doing. That's where Judah and his daughter-in-law, Tamar, he's trying to make a deal with her, and she's like, nothing doing. I know you. Verses 20 through 23, almost discovered, where Judah's sin is almost discovered. Verses 24 through 26 is where there's nothing to hide, where he chooses to, in repentance, just put all out there. And then as we end the chapter, the last few verses, 27 through 30, all has been redeemed. So kind of our theme verse for this chapter, we look at this verse a lot. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end, or literally to give you a future hope, a future and a hope, or a future hope, an expected end, a hopeful future, a future anchored in hope, right? So in Joseph, we saw that, man, God's word, it cannot be, his favor cannot be removed, stolen, or destroyed. Joseph's been sold to Egypt. He's on his way down there. And then at some point after that, we see here, we pick up in verse one, and it came to pass at that time that Judah went down from his brethren. So he leaves his father's house, he leaves his brothers, and he turns into a certain, a Dulemite, whose name was Hira. So Judah leaves the family of God. He leaves God's people to go into the world. He's like, I'm going to go out, and I'm going to go into the world.

It's a dysfunctional family. They're a hot mess, for sure. And maybe he's like, I'm so fed up with this. I'm just out of here. But no matter how dysfunctional God's family is, it's still better than the world, right? There's nothing we're going to find in the world that we can't find among God's people. You say, yeah, well, you don't know how burned I was. You don't know how frustrated I was by this situation. True, right? But we can't take that situation and apply it across the board and say, well, I'm going to jettison out of here and jettison from God's family and go and find something in the world. Because in the world, we have no hope of finding what we're hoping to find among God's people.

[9 : 26] The world will say, oh, we accept you. We love you. We care for you. But they don't. And we know the biggest problem with that is those that love the world, what does it say? They have enmity with God. And so it puts you at odds with God right away. Ephesians 1, 22 and 23 says that God has put all things under Jesus' feet and he gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all. That's the only place you're going to find it, is among God's people. That Jesus said, that's my body and I'm the fullness. You're going to find God's fullness here or in a good fellowship, a good place with God's people. We're not going to find it in the world. And Judah goes out and he goes and he meets this guy, Hira. His name means nobility, a noble man. Seems like, hey, an upstanding guy. And he's in a doulamite, which means the justice of the people. And so he said, he's a good friend to have. He's like, Judah, you know, it's okay. You don't need to worry about that. Man, it's too harsh on you. Your dad's too harsh. Your God's too harsh.

You know, he's justice of the people. And he seems like an okay guy and he's nobility. But we're going to see that Judah, this is his friend. He's gone to the world. We're going to see a few things as we step through his life. Judah will go to the world to find friendship here with Hira. He's going to go to the world to find a wife. He's going to go to the world to raise his family. And then he's going to go to the world to find comfort and fulfillment. All of these things Judah is going to look for in the world. So he's met Hira, his buddy. And he's like, man, this, this guy, we're besties for sure. And verse two, and Judah saw there, he saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. And Shua means wealth. And he took her and went in unto her. So Judah goes into the world to find a wife. And he finds Shua, meaning wealth. Man, he's gone into the world. I've just found, I've got a good friend. I've got a wife. I've got wealth. Things are going good. And the wording there took her means to receive or fetch. So it's like mutual. He, you know, he, she's receiving him.

He's fetching her. It's like, this is, this is a great situation. And she conceived and bear a son and called his name Ur. That's because after she gave birth, she's like, Ur. What do you want to call him? And then she conceived and bear a son and his name was Onan. And so you have two brothers, brother Onan and brother Ur. Onan means strong and Ur means watcher or awake. So Ur, one who's watching, one who's awake, and then Onan the strong. And she bear yet again or conceived yet again and bear a son and called his name Shela. And Shela means a prayer. We don't really see much with Shela. He's kind of off to the side in this. And he was Judah at Shabiz or Shazib, sorry, when she bear him. So Judah, he's in the world. He's got a wife. He's just had three sons. You know, things are going good. He's got his good friend whose name means nobility, his wife whose name means wealth. He's got these two sons, watcher and awake, and then Onan the strong. And then he has Shela, a prayer. You know, he, he's still, he's, he's still teaching his kids about God. There's still some religion there, some type of spirituality. But he had them in the world and he has them at a place that means faults. Shazib means faults. And that's where he's raising his kids because he is in a false place. This is not where he's meant to be.

It's a false position. It's false prosperity. And Judah took a wife for Ur, his firstborn. So we just like that Ur just grew up. He went from, you know, that she, his wife just bear this child to now he's, he's out looking for a wife for Ur. So we're covering a lot of ground here. And her name was Tamar. And Tamar means palm tree, you know, just a nice girl. Palm tree. Nothing bad about that.

And so Judah goes out and finds a wife for Ur. And Ur, Judah's firstborn, was wicked. That word wicked means he was, he was evil. He was bad. But it has the idea in it meaning like bad waters. So like when Israel's traveling through the wilderness and they come upon the waters of Meribah, those waters were wicked. They were bad. If they ingested them, they would kill them. And also means sad heart or sad of heart. And so here's this firstborn. He's wicked. We know he's bad water and sad of heart. We don't know anything else about him. We're not told what his wickedness is, what his evil is. But he was so wicked in the sight of the Lord that the Lord slew him. The Lord took this guy out. This is actually the first person that God would step in and personally one-on-one be named that he took out. I mean, sin entered the world. And so Adam and Eve came under sin. God brought judgment at the flood. Lot's wife turned back and was taken in judgment. But this is the first person that God actually steps in to personally take out. And Ur's wickedness was so bad that God looked down there and said, I can't,

[14 : 28] I can't let this continue. I cannot let this continue. Why? Because Judah, through Judah, was the seed to come, was the promise to come. Messiah was to come. And it was not going to come through Ur. It seems a little harsh. Like, Lord, why would you kill this man? But the reality was, was that Ur was already dead. His wickedness just simply proved it. In John 3.18, Jesus says, he that believes on him, meaning the son of man, he that believes on the son of man is not condemned.

But he that believes not is already condemned because he's not believed in the name of the son of the only begotten or the name of the only begotten son of God. He says, if you don't believe, you're condemned already. You're already under death. You're already under judgment. And so Ur was at a point where God knew in his infinite sovereignty, he's not going to change. He's already dead. I'm going to take him out. And Ur, whose name meant to be awake and to be a watcher, he was not awake to the fact that God was watching him. Because it says, in the sight of the Lord, he did wickedness. And so here's this guy who seemed to be woke to the things of the world, but he was not awake to the fact that God saw what he did. And so then Judah does something interesting. He said to Onan, the strong, he said, go into your brother's wife and marry her and raise up seed to your brother. I don't know how many of you out there have brothers. I don't. It'd be very strange to think that if your brother's brother dies, you take his wife now to be your wife. Well, this is called a leverate marriage. And it has nothing to do with a Levite. It's L-E-V-I-R-A-T-E, the leverate marriage. And we see it reflected in the law eventually, that God will actually put this in the law for his people. It says this in Deuteronomy 25, starting in verse 5, it says, if brethren dwell together and one of them die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger. But her husband's brother shall go in unto her and take her to him to wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her. And it shall be that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. So this was God's system, kind of a taking care of the widow, taking care of her and making sure that the bloodline continued. It was also the way that they passed on wealth and they passed on ownership and authority. It was through the family line. So if, you know, your husband dies, now all of his property does not transfer to you.

It'll transfer to a near relative. So instead, the brother can come and the wife, the widow now, she will be able to bear a child. That child then will care for her in her old age as well.

She will have someone to care for her and to carry on the name. That's the idea here. And Onan, in verse 9, he knew that the child, the seed, would not be his. That's not going to be my kid. And it came to pass when he went in unto his brother's wife that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. So Onan, the strong, had no strength of character.

Onan was not about to take on this responsibility. But the wording there isn't that it's just one time. The idea is that he's continuing to go into this girl, into this woman. You see, he wanted fulfillment without responsibility. He was looking to be fulfilled off of using Tamar's unfortunate situation to his advantage. We saw that with Judah, right? In the last chapter with Joseph. Hey, how can we turn this to our advantage? Let's sell him. And you can see that now being passed down in his sons. We don't know what Er did. We do know what Onan did. We say, well, what did he do?

[18:15] He refused to own his responsibility, right? If you remember in Genesis 4, verse 7, Cain is upset because Abel's sacrifice is accepted and his is not. Abel brings a sacrifice according to what he learned from his father, which his father Adam learned from God to bring a lamb. And Cain brings the fruit of the ground, his own efforts. And he's upset. And so the Lord speaks directly to him and says, if you do well, Cain, shall thou not be accepted? And if you don't do well, well, sin lies at the door. And unto you shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. The idea is either sin's going to own you or you're going to own sin, which is it, Cain, because sin's about to own you. And here we see because Onan refused to own his responsibility, he was instead owned by sin.

You think, okay, so he just didn't, he just didn't, he didn't own up to his responsibilities? That, that was so bad? Because it says in verse 10, that the thing which he did displeased the Lord and wherefore the Lord slew him. Judah, you get to be, have the notoriety of having the first two people be your sons, the first two people who the Lord slew personally. And so the Lord looks at Onan and takes him out. But I think what you see here is, oops, I didn't mean to go to that verse yet. But anyway, oh yeah, I did. That's, that's Genesis 4, 7.

Sorry. I think the idea is, as you read through scripture, God has a heart for widows and orphans. And whenever anybody would take advantage of them or oppress them, you see God stepping in and you see a harsh judgment on those that are the least, those that have no ability to take care of themselves. And I think with Onan's refusal to be a blessing here, you see instead he becomes a curse.

Instead of being a blessing in another's name, because he had an opportunity to be a blessing in his brother's name. It's like, no way, I'm not going to do that. And instead he becomes a curse to himself and to his own name. Proverbs 30 verse 17 says, the eye that mocks at his father and despises to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it. And here you have, he's just mocking. He's mocking God and he's mocking Judah, his father, in what he's doing here. The thing which he did displeased the Lord and the Lord slew him.

You see, Onan mocked God's order. God's order specifically that a man shall leave his father and his mother shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one. And then God has a specific way set up in case that union by death is broken and there's been no children. And Onan mocked God's order and he used Tamar for his advantage. And I think the thing that was so bad is because she was a widow, he destroyed her hope. He destroyed her hope for a future. Remember, we read that scripture where he gives us a future and a hope. God wants us to know that his thoughts as a father towards us, they're not evil, but it's to give us a future and a hope. And here Onan is specifically destroying a hope for her, destroying her future and destroying her hope. And so the Lord says, sorry, dude, it's over.

[21 : 29] Exodus 22, verse 22 says, you shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry. Maybe Tamar was crying out.

And my wrath shall wax hot and I will kill you with the sword and your wives shall be widows and your children fatherless. God cares about those who can't care for themselves. And so Onan, as you see, he also falls under God's judgment. And with Onan, we see he was more focused on his own pleasure than on God's displeasure of this, right? Just where his brother was more focused on, you know, what he was aware of, his own weakness, his own ability to interact with the world than he was in the fact that God saw what he was doing. And here we see Onan stepping out, unfortunately, following the same path his father's kind of laid for him of self-fulfillment.

But whose fault is this? I think Judah owned some of this. Judah's taken his family and brought them into the world. He said, yeah, but look how bad the family was back home. You're right. But look how much worse it is now. Immoral influences cannot be offset by family connections, right? We can't go out into the world and let the world influence us and influence our kids and think, well, yeah, but we go to church and we're Christians, right? We have good family connections with God's people. You know, my dad's Israel. I'm part of the 12 tribes. What can go wrong? You know, I'm going to let them know about Yahweh. 1 Corinthians 15, 33 says, That doesn't just mean you're going to, you know, chew with your mouth open. You're not going to have good manners. It means it's going to move you from a place of that which is proper and right.

And no matter how strong we think we may be or our family is, we can resist that. It's not true. God has designed a place for his people and it's not in the world.

Then said Judah to Tamar. So Judah's like son number one and son number two, gone. And the only thing he knows of or that he's actually taking awareness of is the fact that they have in common, they had the same woman to wife. Unfortunately, Judah is not very aware of his son's characters.

[23 : 58] Judah says to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, well, remain a widow at your father's house. Father's house, Tamar. She left that house. He's not responsible anymore. This is actually pretty good of her dad to take her back in. She's Judah's responsibility now. She's part of his house.

Stay there at your father's house as a widow until Shela, my son, be grown. For he said, Lest peradventure he die also. The word peradventure means beware. Lest beware he die also, as his brethren did. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house. Where he says, remain, he's saying, go sit down, settle down, go and live there in your father's house. Judah refused to accept his son's identity. And because of that, he's forcing Tamar into an identity she did not deserve.

That she's being placed there. We're going to see again in this chapter here, she's going to put on widow's garments. She's going to take those off and put on them prostitute's garments. All through this, as we get into Joseph's lives, it's just these garments that are taken off and put on and taken off and put on. Different identities, different things being placed upon people.

And Judah also refused to accept his son's responsibilities that were now him. And by doing what he does to Tamar, Judah is dooming her to an identity she did not deserve into a life of hopelessness. Essentially, he's doing the same thing Onan did.

And in the process of time, the daughter of Shua, Judah's son, or Shua, Judah's wife. Oh, this isn't his son. I keep mixing up the name. The Shela and Shua. I'm sorry. This is his wife. In the process of time, the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died. And Judah was comforted and went up unto his sheep shearers to Timnath. He and his friend Hira, the Dulemite. So his wife dies. He calls his best buddy over. Says, hey, let's go to the sheep shearers. And here we see Judah's wife died.

[25 : 58] And he looks for a place he can be comforted. It means to console himself. And he goes to Timnath, which means portion. And he goes with his friend, who? He goes with his friend Hira, the Dulemite, the one who is the champion of the people. So essentially, he's taking his yes man with him who's saying, oh, Judah, you deserve this. You deserve some comfort. You deserve your own portion.

You've had it hard. And it is hard. His wife just died. But while his wife died, his son's wife is living a living death, right? He subjected her. He subjected her to a life that has no hope.

Judah was quick to do for himself what he was unwilling to do for Tamar. And so he goes to the world to find friendship, a wife, to raise his family. And now he's looking for comfort in the world. And it was told Tamar, saying, hey, behold, your father-in-law goes up to Timnath to shear his sheep. I don't know if this is near where she was or what. And while Tamar, I mean, she may have been out of sight and out of mind, but she was still Judah's responsibility. For him, this has been years now, right? Because his son grows up and isn't given to her. His wife dies. She's out of sight.

She's out of mind. But she was still his responsibility. He still had a responsibility to her. And so she puts her widow's garments off from her. She takes off those garments and she covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath. For she saw that Shalah was grown and she was not given unto him to wife. She's like, hey, Judah is withholding from me. So she's going to come up with her own scheme here. Time does not heal all wounds. You know, you get, well, time heals all wounds. It doesn't. Time doesn't heal all wounds and it does not right all wrongs. Eternity will be full of people who their wrongs have not been righted and their sin has not been repented of. That's what we call hell. But she goes to this place and it says here an open place. Well, that wording is actually in Najim, E-N-A-J-I-M. And it's like, it means the door of the fountain or the door of the eyes, which is very interesting because Judah's going to come and see her as a prostitute, the eye gate, the door of the eyes. The idea is that there's some type of temple here or some type of high place that they're worshiping here. And so she's dressing as a temple prostitute. And Judah's unrepented sin, he continues to not repent of the sin that he's complicit in. It continues to shape his family. It's continuing to shape the identity of his family. Could Judah have ever imagined that his daughter-in-law would become a prostitute? No, no way. But Romans 14, 7 says that no man lives to himself and no man dies to himself.

There's an effect that our lives have on many people, more than we would ever know or guess. To Judah, he's not thinking of Tamar. He hasn't seen her. I doubt she's getting Christmas cards or getting invited to, you know, to the potlucks. And he just thinks she's fine. She's back at her father's house. But no man lives to himself and no man dies to himself. And she goes to Timnah to meet him in the way. Verse 15 says, and when Judah saw her, he thought her to be a harlot because she'd covered her face. Judah does not recognize her. Judah doesn't know this is his daughter-in-law. She's covered her face. Sin steals our identity. Sin erases identity.

[29 : 27] We're in a world right now that is so hyper-focused on who do you identify as? What do you identify as? But it's erasing identity, right? He, her is now they, them. That's not an identity. That's nothing at all.

You know where we see that? We see that in Mark chapter 5 when Jesus goes across the lake of Galilee and he goes to Gennesaret. And who does he meet? He meets a guy who identifies as a they, them there, who has no identity. A man filled with demons. And he asked him and said, what is your name?

And the demon answered and saying, my name is Legion for we are many. We have no identity. We don't even have a name. We're just a bunch. We're just Legion because sin erases identity.

Jesus gives us our true identity, right? In Romans 14, 12, it says, so then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Shall give account of himself, singular, not plural, owning who we are.

We must give account for who we are to God. And I don't want to do that with sin still on me because I'll have nothing to say. Because sin robs my identity. I'm nobody without Christ.

[30 : 43] There's a couple of verses that talk about Jesus giving us our identity. There's a lot of verses, you know, um, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Behold, all things have passed away. All things have become new. Jesus giving us a new identity. But there's some cool verses in Revelation.

When John is writing to the church of Pergamum, he's transcribing what Jesus is saying to the church of Pergamum. It says this, he that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says unto the churches. To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna. And I will give him a white stone and in the stone, a new name written, a new identity, which no man knows saving he that receives it.

Man, look at the world we're in now. They want everybody to know. They want to make it so flamboyant and so out there and in your, our face who they are, who they think they are. And all they're doing is declaring that they're nobody. They're just declaring they've got nothing, that they're bankrupt. And Jesus says, Hey, I'm going to give you a name. No man's going to know it except you that receive it and me. It's going to be our secret. That's going to be a sweet thing. To the church of Philadelphia in Revelations three, verse 12, him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go no, he shall go no more out. And I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem. See, there's tattoos in the Bible, which comes down out of heaven from my God, but I'm not getting one until God gives it to me.

And I will write upon him my new name. We get our identity in Christ. Sin robs of our identity. And verse 16, Judah turned in unto her by the way. And he says, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto you. For he knew, he knew not that she was his daughter-in-law.

And she said, What will you give me that you may come in unto me? The word go to, it means, hey, grant, permit, provide, provide this fulfillment I want for my life. You see, Judah is an old man now, but age did not affect his morality, didn't it? I mean, you've heard the term dirty old man, and this is Judah, right? His morality did not improve with age. Sin is not affected by age.

[32 : 55] And Judah goes in unto her and he doesn't recognize her. She's covered her face. She's faceless. Judah's sin and immorality had rendered Tamar faceless. All he cared about, he didn't care about who this woman was. He only cared about what service she could provide him, right? I don't think I need to say anything more about what our world does with that today. Faceless, no identity. It's just, hey, what can you do to fulfill me and provide me? Proverbs 6.26 says, For by means of a whorish woman or an adulterer, a man is brought to a piece of bread and the adulterous woman will hunt for the precious life. Sin cheapens the most precious things of God's order. The most precious thing of a man and woman coming together in marriage, sin cheapens that. Makes it like a piece of bread.

So here Judah, he's going to go in unto her and she says, Well, let's make a deal first. What are you going to give me? He doesn't know it, but he's about to be Jacobed. He's about to get Jacobed by Tamar.

And he said, Well, I'll give you a goat. I'll give you a kid from the flock, you know? And she said, Will thou give me a pledge till thou send it? How do I know I can trust you? She knows she can't.

She's like, Judah, your word means nothing. I know who you are, Judah. I know your identity, even if you don't know mine. And he said, Well, what pledge can I give you? And she said, Your signet and your bracelets. And so what does that mean? So, oh, and your staff. So they had their staff and then hanging off it would probably be a cord tied to what is essentially their signet, their identity, which would be like in a wax seal. They would put it in that to stamp that.

Tamar, knowing Judah's pledge was worthless and knowing who Judah is, is not going to accept his word. And so he gave it to her and he came in unto her and she conceived by him. Judah was more faithful to the pledge he made to this prostitute than he was to a member of his own family, right?

[35 : 05] He was more faithful to me. Okay, what pledge do you want me to give you? For sure. I'll give you my identity. Judah had taken away Tamar's identity and now she just set him up to remove his identity.

And Judah has gone to the world for comfort, for satisfaction, and that moment's gratification with the faceless woman. It cost Judah his dignity. It cost him his identity. It cost him his purity.

It cost him his family. Because he doesn't know it, but he's going to want to burn her alive. And she arose and went away and laid her veil, laid by her veil from her and put on the garments of her widowhood. Tamar's garments represented who she was perceived to be, but not who she really was.

It's just, this is how Judah saw her. Oh, she's a widow. I know she's a widow. That's her identity. There's no way she'd be over here playing the harlot. Not a chance. And so Judah then sends the kid, the goat, by the hand of his friend, the Adulamite. Judah is a man who fulfills his obligations, said with heavy sarcasm, right? I'm going to make sure to fulfill this obligation, but I'm not going to go myself. I'm going to send my friend to do this. So he sends it by the hand of his friend, the Adulamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he found her not.

Judah wanted the benefits of sin while still maintaining the perception of morality, right? Well, I'm not going to go back up there. What if someone sees me going to pay off this prostitute?

[36 : 38] So Hiram, you go. You do it because I want to be perceived as an upright guy. And so then Hiram goes and he asked the men of that place saying, where is the harlot that was openly by the wayside? And that word literally means temple prostitute. It's not just a licentious woman. And they said, there was no harlot in this place. And he returned to Judah and said, I cannot find her. And also the men of the place said that there was no harlot in this place.

So Judah says, well, let her have it. Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed. Behold, I sent this kid and that was not found her. I've fulfilled my obligation, my end of the bargain.

Judah is mortified that his true identity might be discovered, that these men who are his friends, or maybe that it gets back to his family. Hiram knows about this, but maybe he doesn't want dad to know or the brothers. And it comes to pass after about three months that it was told Judah saying, Judah, Tamar, your daughter-in-law has played the harlot. And also behold, she is with the child by whoredom. And Judah said, bring her forth and let her be burnt. Literally, she is by child, or she is with child by stinking. But she just, this is a stinky situation, Judah. This is terrible what she has done. And Judah says, bring her forth and let her be consumed. I can't believe that. I would never do that. That she would do something like that. She must be consumed. Judah's stinking sin was consuming his family and continuing to consume his family. Sin refuses. Remember how he said it likes to hide? It refuses to place the blame where it belongs. It's happy to place it on someone else.

It's not my fault. It's the woman you gave me, Lord. Why did you eat of it, Adam? It's not my fault. It's his fault because he wouldn't do fulfill his obligations. Remember when Jesus responded to the Pharisees? Because they're like, didn't Moses say that we could put away a woman in divorce? And he said, yes, but it's because of the hardness of your heart God put that in there. What a blow that must have been to them. A shock to realize that God himself is revealing to them that the only reason that was given, that way out, was because God knew your hearts are hard. If you had soft hearts, that wouldn't be an issue. And so sin refuses to place the blame where it belongs. It's happy to place it on someone else. And when she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law saying, by the man who these are, am I with child? And she said, discern.

Acknowledge is what it means there. Acknowledge, I pray you. Own this, Judah. Who's these are? The signet, the bracelets, and the staff. She's brought forth. Judah passes judgment on her, but he's still not seen her. It says it was sent to him to tell him.

[39 : 36] Ephesians 5, 11 says, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

So aren't we speaking of those things of darkness? Yes, but to what end? But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light, for whatsoever does make manifest is light.

Tamar is bringing into the light the things that Judah has done. She's bringing these out. And scripture tells us here, whatever makes manifest is light. All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light. So we're supposed to shine light. Tamar was forcing Judah to examine in the light who he really was. And Judah, to his credit, acknowledged. Discerned is the same word. And Judah acknowledged them and said, she has been more righteous than I, because that I gave her not to Shayla, my son. And he knew her again, no more. The fruits of repentance. You can see that in his actions. He's like, okay, you know what? I'm done with this type of living. I'm not going to take her as my wife. I recognize this situation. And Judah confesses who he really is. So why do we bring things to the light? Why do we bring the junk of our lives? Why do we bring this defilement to the light? He's going to say, it's only when we confess, it's only when we bring it to the light, that there's cleansing. And that's what God's word does. It reveals who we are. It reveals the junk, man, so it can get rid of it. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I've always had this picture of my mind of like one of those little like cartoon rain clouds. It's just like raining on one person. And like, we have the option that we can go and stand under that, stand in the light. Right. And it's like, people are slinging mud balls at you. And if you're not in that, under that rain cloud, they kind of hit and stick. And it's like, ooh, ooh, ooh, that's disgusting. That person, I can't believe they live that way. But if we get in the light, it's like it hits us, but before they can go, hey, it's washed away. Like, oh, I thought I saw something there for a second. My bad. You know, that's what it is to come to the light. We're not condemned. It's not held over us. We're not beaten down. The Lord wants to cleanse and he washes it away. Righteousness pays its debts. Sin does not. Sin just incurs the debt. Righteousness pays its debts.

And she's saying, Judah, you didn't pay my debt. You are more willing to pay your debt to a prostitute. But righteousness also pays the debt that sin incurs. Righteousness goes above and beyond.

Colossians 2.13, Jesus, taking our debt upon him because of our sin. Paul writes, you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, that he has he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us. And he took it out of the way, nailing it.

[42 : 32] To the cross. It doesn't exist anymore. Right? It's not even just that it's covered. Blotting it out. It's just not even there to even try and find the written account of my sin. It is finished. As Jesus hung on the cross and he gave up the ghost and he bowed his head and he said, it is finished. Tetelestai paid in full. All debts paid. All debt canceled.

Judah's repentance here restored relationship, led to purity, and it brought forth life.

You think, well, look at that mess behind him. He can't do anything about that. He can't fix that. But he can go forward. He can go forward in truth and in righteousness and in purity. And it came to pass when she travailed that one put out his hand, one of the twins, and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread saying, this came out first. That sounds very uncomfortable. Like in birth, child's hand comes out. And it came to pass, he drew back his hand and that behold, his brother came out. And she said, how have you broken forth? This breach be upon thee. Therefore, she called his name Ferez or meaning breach. And afterward came out his brother, the one with the scarlet thread. And his name was called Zerah or rising. And that's a very interesting little scenario before us. What's this talking about? Well, if you remember in the New Testament in Romans, Paul is writing in Romans chapter 11, he's writing about our relationship as Gentiles to Israel. And he says in verse 24, he says, if you, the Gentiles were cut out of the olive tree, I'm sorry, if you were cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, the Gentiles, yes, were grafted contrary to nature into the good olive tree, into Israel, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in.

He's essentially saying, listen, you, you came, you went and you displaced Israel. You were a breach upon them. There was a breach opened where Israel should have been the firstborn and the Gentiles now came in. The one with the scarlet thread should have been the firstborn, but he was drawn back to make way for the Gentiles. The one with a scarlet thread, as we've gone through from Genesis 1-1, we've seen that scarlet thread. We've seen it woven through the history, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that scarlet thread that will lead to the Messiah. They should have been the firstborn, but it draws back and the other brother comes forth, the one meaning breach. It's interesting because Zerah, who should have come first, the one with their thread on his hand, his name means rising. In Isaiah 60 verse 3, it says, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy Zerah, to thy rising. There you see that beautiful picture, right at the end of this, God's redemption. That this girl who had waited so long to have justice done upon her, God rewards her with double. He gives her twins. Isaiah 40 verse 2 says, speak you comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she has received at the Lord's hand double for all of her sins. God is able to repay. Redemption is not a half measure. God doesn't do things in half measures. Judah, a man who at one time was willing to sell out any member of his family for some gain. Now he comes around and realizes she has been more righteous than I, that my sin was greater and she has been more righteous. You know, we looked at Hiram, we looked at Shela, we looked at

Brother Onan and Brother Ur, we looked at all these names, but one name we didn't mention. What does Judah mean? Remember? Judah's name means praise. In Genesis 29, the baby boom chapter, Leah at the end of that gives birth to Judah. And she conceived again and bear a son and she said, now I praise the Lord.

[46 : 52] Therefore she called his name Judah and left bearing. It's the first one that isn't about trying to get one up on her sister. She says, now I'll praise the Lord. And here we see the son of praise, Judah, owning the sin of the Gentile bride, Tamar, so that she might own his righteousness. Right? He's like, I'll own that sin. You are more righteous. And so the son of praise takes the sin of the Gentile bride upon himself. And Judah, the son of praise is now going to return home after coming out of his father's house and into the world. He's now going to return home with a Gentile bride. God's redemption is not half measure. Man, he has a perfect, beautiful picture and keeps putting it in here over and over of his redemption. And that Gentile bride, we're never going to hear from her or see from her again.

And the narrative is going to shift back to the sons of Israel and God's plan of protecting Israel during a time of tribulation. It's like, it's everywhere in here, guys. It's everywhere. God's plan of redemption.

God's plan of redemption. And Luke 22, verse 42, Jesus said, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me.

I don't want to go all the way. Maybe just partway. And his humanity said, remove, is there any other way? And we don't hear it, but essentially the father said, no, you got to take this to the full measure.

Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And so Jesus takes that cup and he drinks it to the full measure. Redemption is not halfway. And then what do we do? Man, we take that cup and we drink it to full measure too.

[48 : 38] Psalm 116, verse 13 says, I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. We can't half measure it. We can't be half in the kingdom and half in the world. We can't be half saved. We can't be half redeemed. It's all or it's nothing.

Matthew 12, verse 30 says, he that is not with me is against me. He that gathers not with me scatters abroad. That's either in or out. But man, once we're in, because Jesus went to the full for us, because the son of praise took our sin so that the Gentile bride might receive his righteousness, we can just freely own that cup of salvation.

For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. And as we just spent the morning looking at this chapter of of evil, God's like, no, no, no, I've got an end that's going to end in hope.

And this family is going to go forward. And then Pharaoh's, the son who came out, the breach through him, will the line of Christ come that will lead to Jesus. So I think for us, the application is, man, sin is defiling. That's nasty. And the word of God isn't going to hide it from us. It's not going to hide that defilement. It's not going to hide from us what that'll do in our lives. But what it will do is it'll cleanse it. And it can take the worst situation, the situation with Judah and his daughter-in-law and the children, and it can redeem that. And it can bring about redemption to where it brought Jesus so that we can be redeemed.

In our pasts, it may be as messy as can be. And you're like, I don't even know how to fix that. Don't. Don't. Receive his righteousness as he takes all of our defilement. Receive the cup of salvation and we just walk forward free. But live out that repentance like Judah. Judah stopped. He's like, all right, man, I know who I am. I know what I've done. And I know what God has done on my behalf.

[50 : 36] I should have been cut off like Onan, but I wasn't because I received God's grace and his mercy. And he then walks out a life that shows the repentance to where when we meet him again, he's going to want his only one of his brothers and step in and say, dad, I'll take this. I will own this for the sake of the family. So Lord, we thank you so much. But Lord, you have taken the cup of salvation, Lord. You took the cup of God's wrath, fully poured out so that we may take and drink of the cup of salvation. There's no bitterness in that cup now. We don't have to wonder, is there still a little bit of poison in it? Is there still a little bit of the curse? Is there going to be any defiling here? There's not. And Lord, unfortunately, my sin nature and my flesh, it doesn't want to come to the light. It doesn't want to come to the word because it thinks I'm going to be exposed and I'm going to see myself for what I am. And it's gross and it's nasty and I'm defiled. And what can I do?

But Lord, if we confess, if we bring it to the light, our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And Lord, we know that if we walk in the light, as you are in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. As we're in the light together, and I don't see, I don't see my brother sin. He doesn't see mine. It's too bright. We just see the light and it's just washing us and changing us.

So this morning, Lord, would you transform us, Lord? Would you renew us, Lord? We're not to be conformed to this world, but we're to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Thank you, Lord, the past is gone. Even if the past was yesterday, even if the past was this morning, the defilement is gone because you drank of that cup. I thank you that this morning, Lord, we drink of the cup. And though we don't take communion physically, Lord, we remember, Lord, the body that was broken for us, the blood that was shed for us, so that we, the Gentile bride, may go to the Father's house accepted, clean, clothed, taking off the clothes of defilement and of our widowhood and putting on instead the clothes of righteousness. Thank you, Jesus. We love you. You are a good Father to us. In Jesus' name, amen.