



The Book of Genesis: The Joseph Narrative
(Genesis 38) “The Brother with Another’s Mother”

“The Bible is a book.” A coherent, covenant document with one message about one person:

ORDO S. = []
 HISTORIA S. = []
 PACTUM S. = []



I. The Context of Scripture: The Book of Genesis

A. The Generations of Jacob (Gen 37:1 – 50:26)

1. Joseph (Short-Range Picture(s) of Christ’s Redemption)
2. Judah (Long-Range Picture(s) of Christ’s Redemption)

II. The Generations of Jacob: Judah’s Interlude in Canaan

A. Judah Gets His Loving on the Run (38:1–10)

1. Judah the High-Functioning Heretic: Running hard—Out of Bounds
 - a. “He-Said/She-Said” (The Opposite of Family Worship)
2. YHWH takes Personal Offense (a targeted act of divine intervention)
3. The primary sin isn’t pleasing the self—It’s denying someone else (1:28)
 - a. The Sin of so-called “Onanism” (A Background Issue)
 - b. God’s Principle to Preserve the Seed (Levirite Marriage)

4. God not ashamed of his chosen Family (Heb 2:11 cf. Rom 1:16) [**Historia**]
 - a. Being Unashamed is a Two-Way Street (Matt 10:32)
- B. Judah Makes a Romantic Promise (38:11)**
1. On-Alert for “Tamar the Black Widow” (in Judah’s eyes)
 - a. Eyes open to her issues / Eyes closed to his own (Grace is required)
- C. Waiting for Love: A Sense of Anticipation (38:12–14)**
1. “The Clothes Make the (Wo)man” (symbolically: you are what you wear)
 - a. Putting off the mourning clothes; Putting on the veil (a symbolic act)
 - i. A *Veil* for Prostitution? (Song 1:7; 4:1–3; 5:2–7*)
 - ii. A *Veil* for Purity? (Gen 24:63–67*)
- D. Miss Identification awaits at the “Opening of the Eyes” (38:15–19)**
1. Looking into her eyes with unseeing eyes at . . . “The Opening of the Eyes”
 - a. Why can’t he see straight? Judah isn’t centered on God’s promises
 - i. *Kalah*: A Family Relation joined by Marriage?
 - ii. *Kalah*: Family Relations joining in Marriage?
- E. Tamar is More Righteous than Judah (38:20–26)**
1. Eyes wide shut to who she was (just a sinful Canaanite stranger)
 2. Eyes suddenly opened to who she is . . . and he is (Rom 1:32–2:16, 25–29)
- F. God’s Concern is for the Seed (38:27–30)**
1. The Prophetic Pattern: First Carnal/Then Spiritual (John 1:30) [**Historia**]
 2. The Spotlight on the Seed: [**Pactum**]
 - a. From His Conception Narrative . . . (Gen 38)
 - b. . . . To His Birth Narrative . . . (Matt 1)