

**HERITAGE PRESERVED**

Tamar had clung to her heritage as the wife of Judah's son and, through devious means, ensured that the family name of her deceased husband, the eldest son of Judah, had been preserved. This required her to trust in God, who is the giver of all life and rely upon Him for justice to be done.

**JUDAH'S UNPAID DEBT v 19-23** – once back home, Judah arranged for the goat to be sent to Tamar, via Hirah, the Adullamite whom he had first visited in Canaan. However, the harlot with whom Judah had consorted was nowhere to be found because Tamar had discarded her disguise. This was of great concern to Judah, because it did not enable him to recover his personal items that enabled him to be identified. He had no guilt about purchasing the services of a harlot, only that he was identifiable as someone who had not paid their debt.

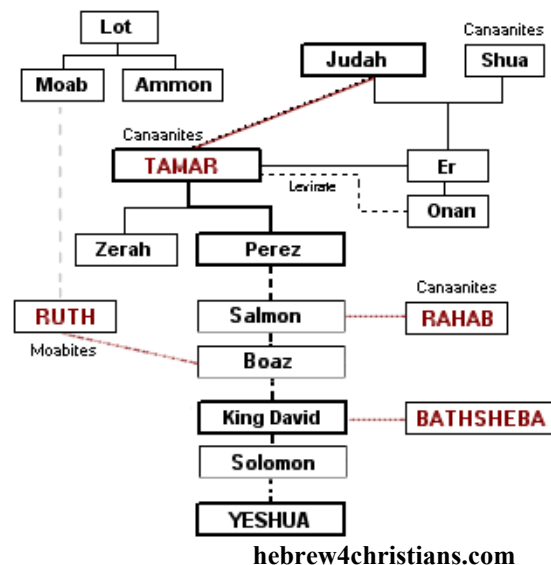
**JUDAH'S SIN REVEALED v 24-26** – after the initial three months of her pregnancy had passed, Tamar revealed that she was expecting a child and let be known that this was through prostitution. She knew this news would soon reach her father-in-law. It did, and predictably, Judah quickly saw the chance to judge, punish and get rid of Tamar once and for all. He pronounced that her immoral sin should be exposed, and she should be burned to death in accordance with the law that was later endorsed by God (Ex.20:14, Deut. 22:20-21). However, Tamar replied to her accusing father-in-law, that the father of the child could be identified by his signet, cord and staff. These items were duly presented to him, revealing his hypocritical behaviour not only to himself, but everyone else too. He had no choice but to declare that the woman he was about to sentence to death, was more righteous than he was.

**TWIN BOYS v 27-30** – the pregnancy came to fulfilment and God honoured Tamar with a double blessing. Twins were born to her and Judah. It must have been a difficult birth because a hand came out had a scarlet thread bound around it, and disappeared again. However, surprisingly, the child born first was not that child. He was therefore called Perez meaning 'Breakthrough' or 'breach' because he unexpectedly came first. After him was born Zerah wearing his scarlet cord.

**A PLACE IN HISTORY** - it was from the line of Perez that eventually Joseph was born, who would be the earthly father to which the Lord's genealogy was linked (Matt.1:1-16). Four notable women are in that genealogy. Tamar, Rahab and Ruth were all Gentile women married to Jewish men. Bathsheba was a Jewish woman married to a Gentile man. All four women had experiences in their lives that might have been seen as excluding them from being in the genealogy of Christ. However, their fear of God enabled them to overcome their situation, and led to their salvation. When the Lord Jesus came, He elevated women to a position of equality, dignity and respect. It was to women that He first appeared after the resurrection and charged with the responsibility to spread the news that Jesus is alive.

*Judah's friendship with Hirah the Adullamite (v 1) led to Judah eventually settling in Canaan and living a life that dishonoured God. What has been your experience of friendships that have brought you down or led you away from God?*

*In what way are we all inclined to be hypocritical? How can we guard against it? (Matt.7:3-5)*



*Consider what you know about the lives of the four women mentioned in the genealogy of Christ. In what way did their fear of God lead to their salvation and emancipate them from crushing situations?*

*'There is neither Jew nor Greek,  
there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female;  
for you are all one in Christ Jesus'.  
Galatians 3:28*