

Bereisheit 38.

Living The Life of a Harlot?

By Dr. Akiva Gamliel

This Devri Torah Parshats in the loving memory of Joyce Duff bat Na'amah, Carrie bat Brachah Rivkah, Martha bat Sarah, Sharon bat Vivian, Sarah bat Chavah, Jeanne C. W. Pierre, Joseph Adam Pierre, Louella P. Bienvenu, Barbara Pierre and Terrill B. Thomas may they rest in peace.

Dear Ones Ha Torah Says,

Yehudah Saw her, he thought her to be a harlot since she had covered her face. So he detoured to her by the road and said, "Come if you please, let me consort with you," For he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law, Bereisheit 38.15,16

He thought she was a Harlot because she exhibited what many call modesty...

What is a Harlot?

What does Ha Tenach Teach about Harlotry?

Harlot.... A prostitute, a whore, fille de joie, a call girl; promiscuous an informal hooker, a hustler, a tramp; a streetwalker, a hussy, a lady of the evening, a pro, a member of the oldest profession, a scarlet woman, a loose woman, a fallen woman, a cocotte, a wanton; a archaic a strumpet, a courtesan, a trollop, a doxy, a trull.

What is it to be Promiscuous?

Promiscuous - a promiscuous teenager licentious, sexually indiscriminate, wanton, immoral, fast; informal easy, swinging, sluttish, whorish, bed-hopping; dated loose, fallen. antonym chaste, virtuous. promiscuous reading indiscriminate, indiscriminating, unselective, random, haphazard, irresponsible, unthinking, unconsidered. antonym selective.

The question arises, Did Yehudah do wrong? What do you think?

Our Sages Teach us to view Yehudah's actions in the correct historical perspective. Yehudah's actions happened around 2212 FC. At this time harlotry was permitted according to Rambam. See Stone p211

The halachic perspective of Judah's action.

Judah's action must be viewed in the perspective of the time in which he lived. As *Rambam (Hit. Ishus 1:4)* writes, harlotry was permitted in those times — just as non-kosher foods were not forbidden — before the Torah was given. Even though the Patriarchs — and presumably their families — observed the Torah before it was given, they did so *voluntarily*, so that it was conceivable that where necessary they would act according to the laws that were obligatory at the time. Consequently, if the Divine plan required Judah to cohabit with a "harlot," he would be permitted to do so. [Cf. the case of Jacob marrying two sisters which later Torah law

would absolutely forbid.]

14. — *And she had not been given to him as 'a wife.* This explains why Tamar did such an undignified thing. She was determined to have children from Judah (*Rashi*). Since it could not be through Shelah, she had no alternative but that it be from Judah himself (*Gur Aryeh*). This was part of God's plan, for he wanted the Messianic dynasty to come from Tamar through Judah, who was more righteous and pure than his son Shelah (*Sforno*).

16-18.— *What will you give me?* Tamar did not want money and would have refused it if it had been offered— She wanted something that she could use later to prove -her consort was Judah, so that her pregnancy would be acknowledged as the result of a levirate union. So great was the passion burning within him [as a result of a Providential intervention (*Abarbane!*)] that Judah gave her three valuable items as a pledge for a single goat and items that would so conclusively identify him.

Look at:<http://www.blueletterbible.org/search/translationResults.cfm?Criteria=harlot&t=KJV>

How do we live? How do we want to be thought of? It is important for us to be careful... Do we live as a Harlot to our Creator?

Blessings and peace,

Dr. Akiva Gamliel & Rebbetzin Revi Belk