Genesis Chapter 38 Verses 1 – 10

* That’s twice now that we have read, *“The Lord killed him,”* but we’re given **no details or explanation** as to what that means and as we read statements like that our imaginations can run wild, our confusion can stir up and certainly this is a target of controversy and condemnation for the skeptic. But in the end, **we have no idea what that statement means.** ***The Lord killed him.*** What we do know, what is explained, what is detailed for us cannot be thrown out or discarded when we are faced with a difficult scripture such as this that may cause *puzzlement…*
* Deuteronomy 32:4 says, *“He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.*” And so if reading a passage that includes this statement, *“The Lord killed him,”* causes you to trip up then two things I’d like to say. **You’re tripping, not God.** There is no unrighteousness in Him so reject that thought and the second thing is this…, the *wages of sin are death*, correct? Then ***why does it surprise us when we see that truth on display?***
* Psalm 7 says, *“God is a just Judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready…”* Psalm 7 continues, *“Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. He made a pit and dug it out, and has fallen into the ditch which he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.”*
* So, let’s go from one side of the spectrum to the other just for a moment. These men could have been killed by a Canaanite collecting a gambling debt…a *Canaanite Kingpin!* Perhaps Er had a Blackjack problem or something…**tossing sheep** or whatever they did then…owed someone money…the wrong someone…and they came to collect and he was killed. That ***could*** be recorded as, *“The Lord killed him,”* because his death would have been a result of iniquity and unrighteousness….I’m just making that circumstance up but you get the point….
* OR…it could be that Er and Onan were just wicked men full of sin and unrepentance and ***God just took them out***…either way, either happenstance, the killing is justified…and that is hard for us to take I know because we serve a God who is merciful and full of grace but do not forget, He is also a God of justice and righteousness…full of wrath against sin and **His Word shall stand**…we are so surprised and get so mad at God when things don’t go our way or things fall apart when all that has occurred has been brought about by folks no longering fearing God and believing His Word…***ya dig your own pit and then blame God for the mess…shouldn’t be so…***
* And so reading that might trip us up but whether or not you come at it from *this* side of the spectrum or *that* side of the spectrum, God is still completely just in the situation…***it’s us being unjust in facing our own sin that trips us up…***

Genesis Chapter 38 Verse 11

* This is actually a very *sad* verse. Tamar had married, had not produced any children (and in those days one reason to have children and lots of them was so that they could actually take care of you…they would work as soon as they could walk really) and then Tamar had been taken a second time as a wife and essentially been used and disregarded…now she returns home a widow, with no children and in that culture…**damaged goods.**
* And so it’s a sad scene really for Tamar…a lot of bad things have happened to her and none of it was her fault…but…I just want to say one thing here…***thank God for her father’s house.*** This life, your life, **is not fair**…you live in a fallen creation, around billions of fallen people with fallen natures chasing after *fallen infused* ambitions…so **everything** is tainted…**everything** is a mess…and fair is a fairy tale…people hurt you intentionally and not intentionally, days are sometimes good and sometimes terrible…***you should always be able to come to the Father’s house for refuge.***
* Jesus said, *“My Father’s house shall be called a house of prayer,”* and when He saw people being taken advantage of ***He went berserk*** and opened up a can of **creation beat down** on them!! Church should be a place where you can come to meet with God…to be loved on and prayed for and edified…encouraged by the fellowship, the worship and the Word of God…***I am very thankful***…so very thankful for the Father’s house.

Genesis Chapter 38 Verses 12 – 14

* Tamar is in a ***panic.*** Shelah was grown and yet Judah had not sent for her…she knew that she was forgotten and forsaken. Judah did not want Shelah to die like his brothers and so his intention was to leave Tamar a widow. Tamar knew that…and it wasn’t like she could go and find a husband for herself…*not in that culture.* Judah had to give her a husband…that was the only way she could remarry but he had no other sons to give and so Tamar acts out of desperation and concocts this plan…

Genesis Chapter 38 Verses 15 – 18a

* This is interesting…temptation calls and Judah falls and notice what the ***price*** is…**his signet and cord and his staff.** Extremely symbolic. The signet and cord would be symbolic of his ***identity***…and his staff symbolizes his ***authority and confidence.*** And that just about sums it up…remember this when sin calls your name, asks for your pledge, and you’re faced with ***flee or fall***…you’ll lose your identity man…you’ll be forced to redefine yourself, can’t escape it…and that redefinition will be **weak.** And you’ll have no strength in your walk…that’s what a staff gives…remember that…

Genesis Chapter 38 Verses 18 – 23

* You’re not getting it back…*without* **shame** that is. They could have found her but it would have taken an open investigation…

Genesis Chapter 38 Verses 24 – 26

* Ok this is interesting as well…I know it sounds horrible that he would say *burn her!* It is horrible! But that was what was done in those days according to the law…and check this out…here’s how sin grips you…when you have something hidden, especially when that secret involves someone else, you won’t stand out for what is right because there’s a risk there…a risk that your pledge to sin may become visible! And so you’re sidelined…!
* What’s the problem here…? A bunch! But one is that Judah is super fast, *no problem at all*, condemning sin and passing judgment on someone who did the same thing he did! ***What he should have done is passed judgment on himself***…at the end his chickens come home to roost and he has to admit that he has been lying…first he didn’t provide her with a husband and now he has created this *mess of messes…*

Genesis Chapter 38 Verses 27 – 30

* In the midst of a chapter and a story that is *typically and easily* swept under the rug and forgotten, even in the midst of this **crazy mess**, God is able to redeem. **Both Matthew and Luke list Perez in the lineage of Jesus, the Savior.** No matter what you’ve brought tonight, God is able to set you in-line with forgiveness, salvation, freedom and renewal…restart…through **faith** in His Son, Jesus Christ.