

TORAH TEACHINGS



Understanding YAH's Likes and dislikes

#9 Vayeshev (וַיֵּשֶׁב)
— Hebrew for “and he lived
or he dwelt”

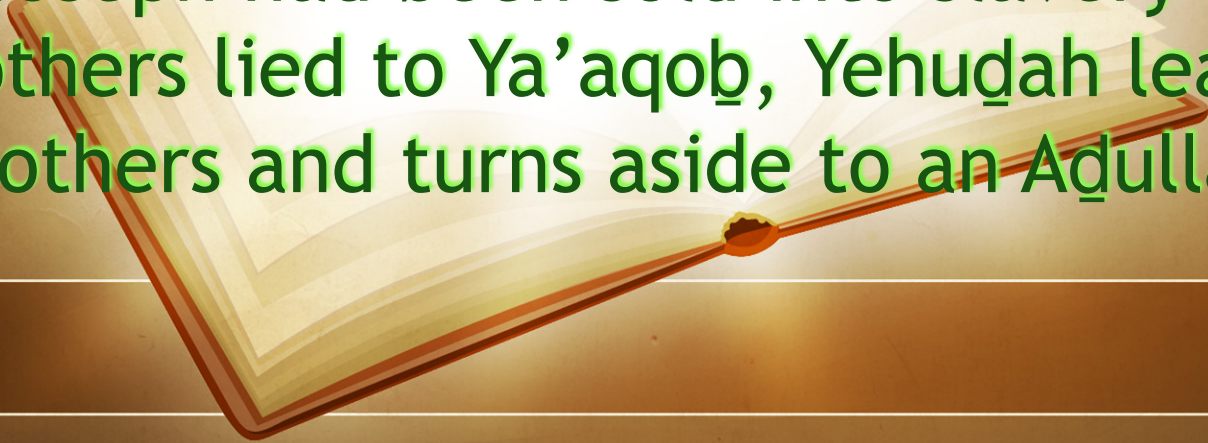
Torah: Genesis 37:1-40:23

Haftarah: Amos 2:6-3:8

CHAPTER 38

Verse 1-2: Yehudāh leaves his brothers

After Yosēph had been sold into slavery and all the brothers lied to Ya'aqob, Yehudāh leaves his brothers and turns aside to an Adullamite.

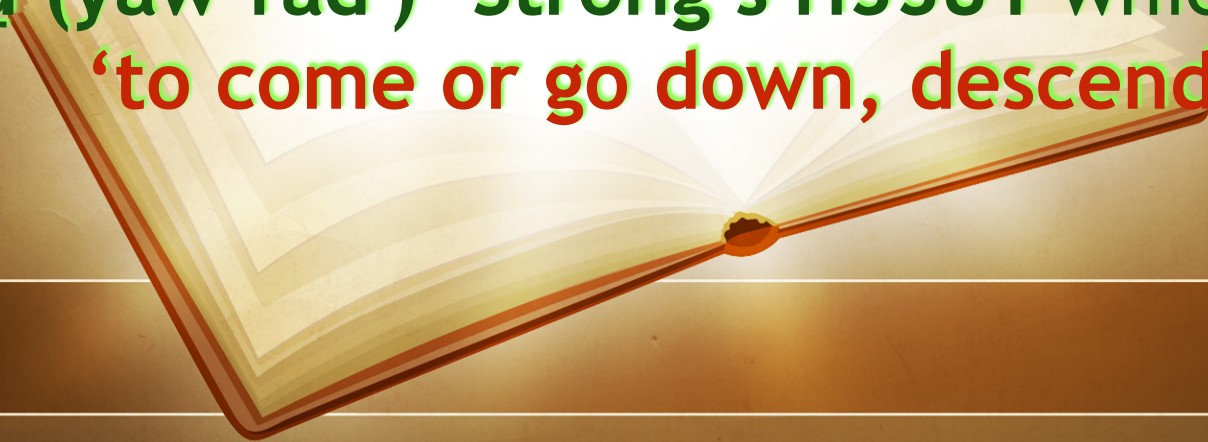


Judah and Tamar

Gen 38:1 And at that time it came to be that Yehudah left his brothers, and turned aside to a man, an Adullamite whose name was Hirah.

Gen 38:2 And Yehudah saw there a daughter of a certain Kena'anite whose name was Shuwa. And he took her and went in to her.

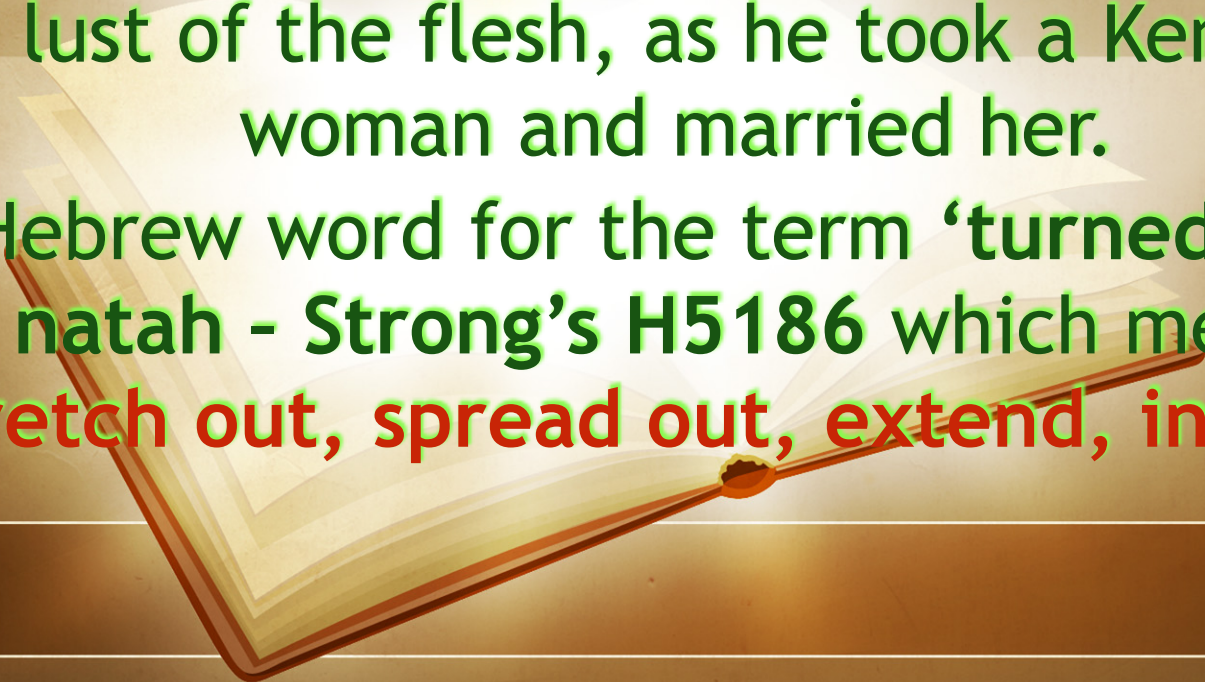
The Hebrew word that is translated as 'left' or, in other translations 'went down', is יָרַד
yarad (yaw-rad')- Strong's H3381 which means,
'to come or go down, descend'.



A common pattern, or thread, that we see in Scripture, is that whenever the reference is made of going to Mitsrayim, it is seen as going 'down', whereas whenever the reference of going to Yerushalayim is made, it is referred to as going up; and what we can clearly see from this, is that to run after the pattern of the world and the flesh, with its many lusts, is a downward path that leads to destruction, whereas to walk in the true commands of Elohim and trust in יהוה, is a picture of being able to 'ascend' or go up and draw near to Him, in Messiah - the very path of obedience in Messiah that leads to abundant life!

Here Yehudah was, in a sense, going 'down' after the lust of the flesh, as he took a Kena'anite woman and married her.

The Hebrew word for the term 'turned aside' is נָטָה natah - Strong's H5186 which means, 'to stretch out, spread out, extend, incline'.



This word נָטָה natah - Strong's H5186 can be also understood, in Scripture, as being a reference to the tribes of Yisra'el, who 'spread out' their branches, as a derivative of this root verb is מַטֵּה mattah - Strong's H4294 which means, 'a staff, rod, branch, a tribe, a branch of a vine', and is translated as 'tribes' in Bemidbar/Numbers 30:1. When we understand this clear picture of being a 'branch' we are quickly reminded of the word of our Master in:

Yoḥanan/John 15: 5 “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who stays in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit. Because without Me you are able to do naught!”



Yehuḁah here, as a metaphoric picture, is a lesson of those who have denied/rejected Messiah (sold Yosēph into slavery) and have not remained in the Truth, but rather have run after the flesh and doctrines of man!

Yehuḁah had spread out his branch, but in the wrong way!!!

He had, in a manner of speaking, not 'stayed in the Truth', and the fruit of his actions reveals this, as he becomes unevenly yoked with a Kena'anite woman!

This word - נָטָה natah - Strong's H5186 - can also be understood as turning aside from true right-ruling and justice, as we see the connection of this word used twice in the following verse:

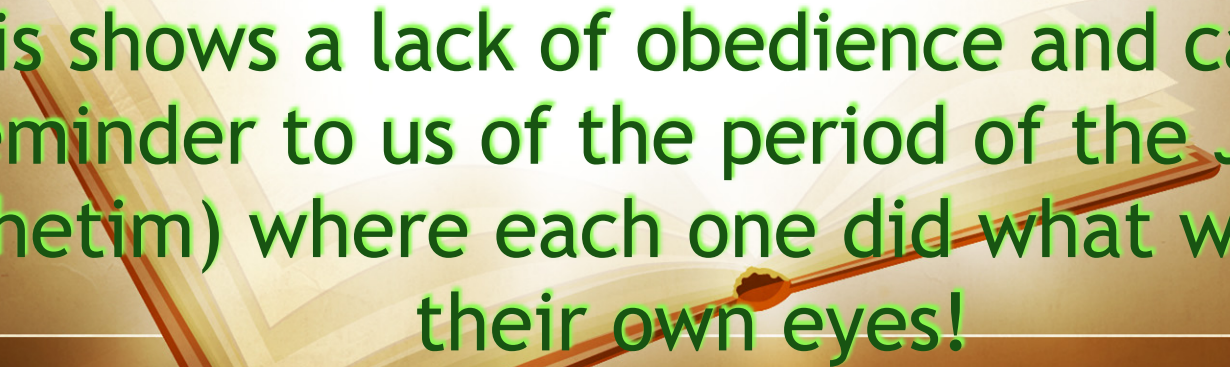
Shemoth/Exodus 23:2 “Do not follow a crowd to do evil, nor bear witness in a strife so as to turn aside after many, to turn aside what is right.”

By Yehudah ‘turning aside’ to an Adullamite, expresses this clear picture of turning aside from יהוה’s ‘justice’ to man’s corrupted form of justice!

The word for ‘Adullamite’ is אֲדֻלָּמִי Adullami - Strong’s H5726 and means, ‘justice for the people’, and Adullam was a Kena’anite city.

Yehudah's action is a picture of what so many have done, and still do today, as they turn aside to man's system of justice rather than obey יהוה's Torah!

This shows a lack of obedience and can be a reminder to us of the period of the Judges (Shophetim) where each one did what was right in their own eyes!



Shophetim/Judges 21:25 “In those days there was no sovereign in Yisra’ěl - everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Yisra’ěl was clearly warned not to do this, before they entered into the Promised Land:

Deḅarim/Deuteronomy 12:8 “Do not do as we are doing here today - each one doing whatever is right in his own eyes.”

When people reject the Torah, they will resort to doing what is right in their own eyes, and here in these accounts is a clear shadow picture that we can learn from, as we see how this chapter's events flow in teaching us what happens when we cast aside the Torah!

Yosēph had been **'cast aside'** and Yehudāh turned toward a counterfeit system, for satisfaction and growth!

Those who turn aside to their own crooked ways will face the consequences of rejecting the Torah:

Tehillah/Psalm 125:5 “But those who turn aside to their crooked ways, יהוה shall lead them away with the workers of wickedness. Peace be upon Yisra’ĕl!”

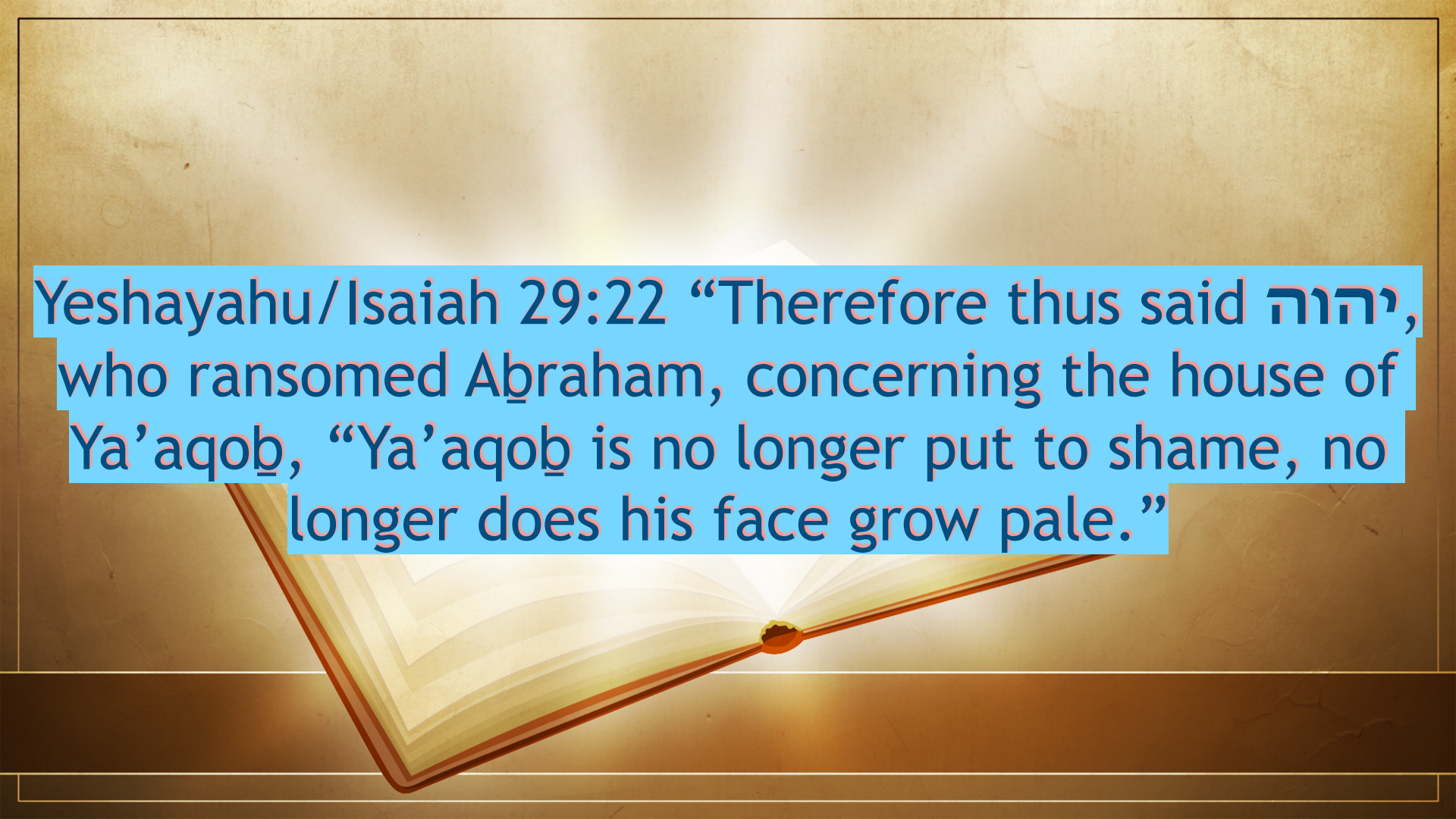


The name of the Adullamite man, to whom Yehudah had turned aside to, was **הִירָה** Hīrah - Strong's H2437 which means, 'a noble race', and comes from the primitive root verb **הָוָה** ḥavar - Strong's H2357 which means, 'to be or grow white or pale'.

To grow pale, can be as a result of having a loss of blood to the face as a basal response to some strong emotional feeling such as humiliation.

Yehudah may have realised the wickedness of their actions against Yosēph and in his guilt he turned aside to seeking an alternative in the flesh, according to man's ways, to appease himself in his humiliation.

This root verb **חָוַר** ḥavar (khaw-var')- Strong's H2357 is only used once in Scripture:



Yeshayahu/Isaiah 29:22 “Therefore thus said יהוה, who ransomed Abraham, concerning the house of Ya’aqob, “Ya’aqob is no longer put to shame, no longer does his face grow pale.”

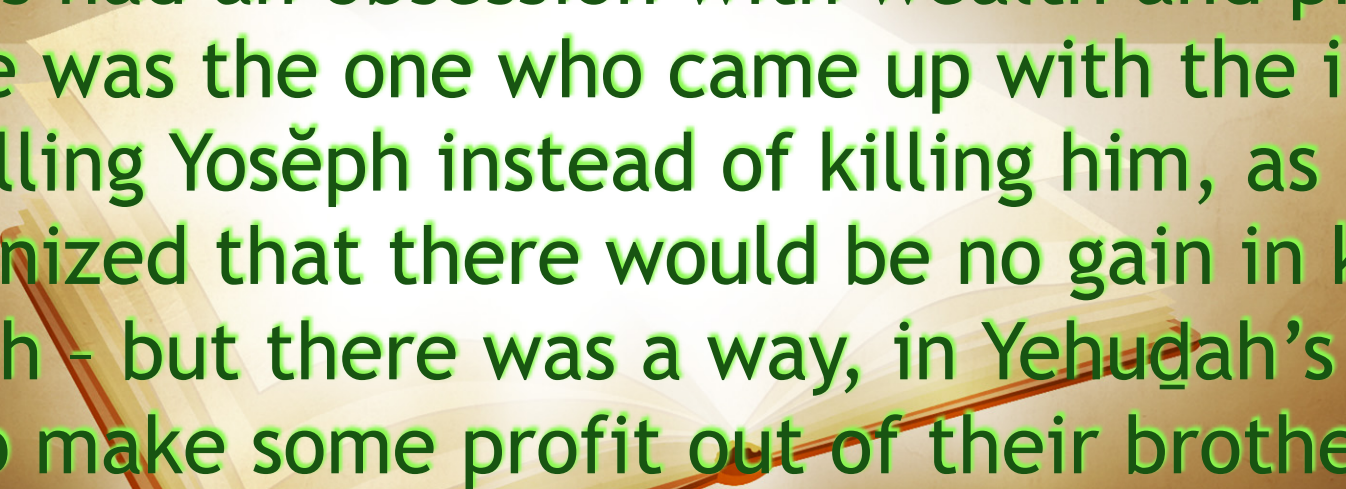
Yehudah had now joined himself to that which he should not have, and we are warned in Scripture to not be unevenly yoked with unbelievers, as the consequences of doing this can be harmful and very detrimental to our lives.

Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 6:14 “Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness? And what fellowship has light with darkness?”

Yehudah saw a daughter of another Kena'anite and he took her for himself; and she was the daughter of the Kena'anite man whose name was שׁוּעַ Shua (shoo'-ah)- Strong's H7770 which means, **'wealth'**.

This, once again, is a clear picture of turning to the wealth of the nations rather than walking in the Torah of יהוה.

Yehudah married into money!



In history, we are able to see how Yehuḏah has always had an obsession with wealth and profits, and he was the one who came up with the idea of selling Yosēph instead of killing him, as he recognized that there would be no gain in killing Yosēph – but there was a way, in Yehuḏah’s eyes, to make some profit out of their brother.

The desire for riches and wealth has a way of causing many to turn aside from walking in the right-rulings of יהוה.

The deceit of riches chokes out the Word and the seed of truth become fruitless (Mattithyahu/ Matthew 13:22).



Mat 13:22 “And that sown among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the worry of this age and the deceit of riches choke the word, and it becomes fruitless.”



Verse 3-5 - Yehudah's sons

The sons that were born to Yehudah from his 'marriage' with the daughter of Shuwa were:

- 1) Ĕr - אֵר (ayr)- Strong's H6147 which means, 'awake, arouse, awaken, expose';
- 2) Onan (o-nawn')- אֹנָן- Strong's H209 which means, 'strong, vigorous', and
- 3) Shělah (shay-law')- שְׁלָה- Strong's H7956 meaning, 'a petition, at ease, prosperity'.

Chasing 'wealth' will birth the 'arousal' of a 'strong' desire to be 'at ease' and chase 'prosperity' in the process.

When the daughter of Shuwa bore Shelah, Yehudah was in כְּזִיב Kezib (kez-eeb')- Strong's H3580 which means, **'false'**, and this word comes from the primitive root verb כָּזַב kazab (kaw-zab')- Strong's H3576 which means, **'to lie, be a liar, fail, told lies, deceive, disappoint'**; and we are clearly able to see, from the actions of Yehudah, that he reached a definite place of **'falsehood and deception'** in his life - all starting with the rejection of Yosēph and selling his brother for gain!

Yehudah, as we know, means, 'praised', and by these accounts, along with the clear meanings of the names of his sons and the places he settled in, we can recognize how so many today have been given over to falsehood, deception and lies, in their vain attempts at praising Elohim, while they are chasing the alluring and tickling ear messages of a prosperity 'gospel', that is leading many people astray, as they so easily cast the True identity of Messiah and the need to walk in the Torah of Elohim aside, while believing that they have a right to physical and material blessings, here and now!

This is a classic picture of **'false worship'** - which is no worship of Elohim at all!!!

The so called **'prosperity gospel'**, which is widely promoted by westernized charismatic Christianity, is a false message and many are sadly worshipping in vain, as they follow such falsehood!

What we must also take note of here, is that the name of the daughter of Shuwa is not mentioned, and so we see a clear message of how this union with a Kena'anite women had resulted in nothing but trouble!

Verse 6-7

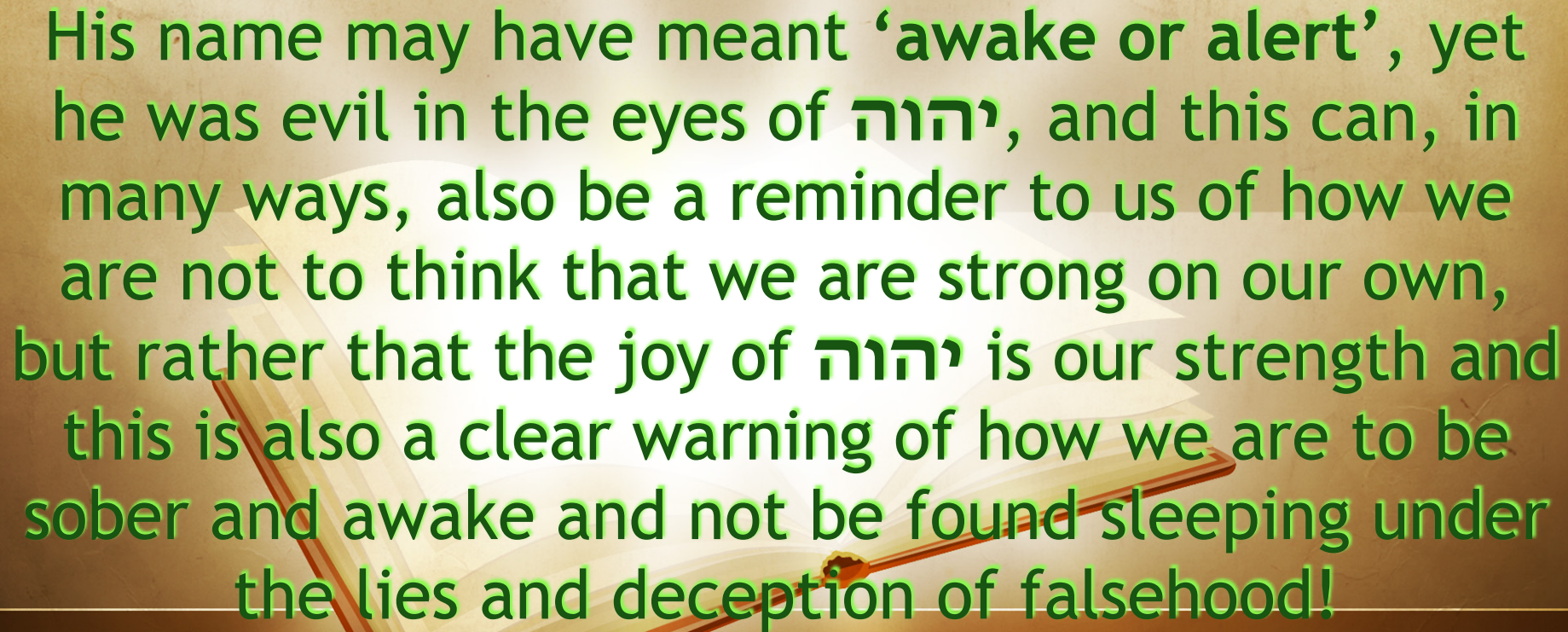
Yehudāh took a wife for his firstborn son - Ėr - עֵר,
and her name was תָּמָר Tamar - Strong's H8559
which means, 'palm-tree'.

Ėr was evil in the eyes of יהוה and his life was
taken by יהוה before he had any offspring with his
wife Tamar.

We are not told why he was evil but we see here a play on the reversal of his name:

The Hebrew word used here for 'evil' is רַע ra - Strong's H7451 meaning, **'bad, evil, wicked, harmful'**.

Notice how the name of Ĕr - עֵר- is spelt with an 'ayin - ע' and a 'resh - ר', while evil - רַע ra - is spelt the opposite way around with the 'resh - ר' being first and then the 'ayin - ע'.



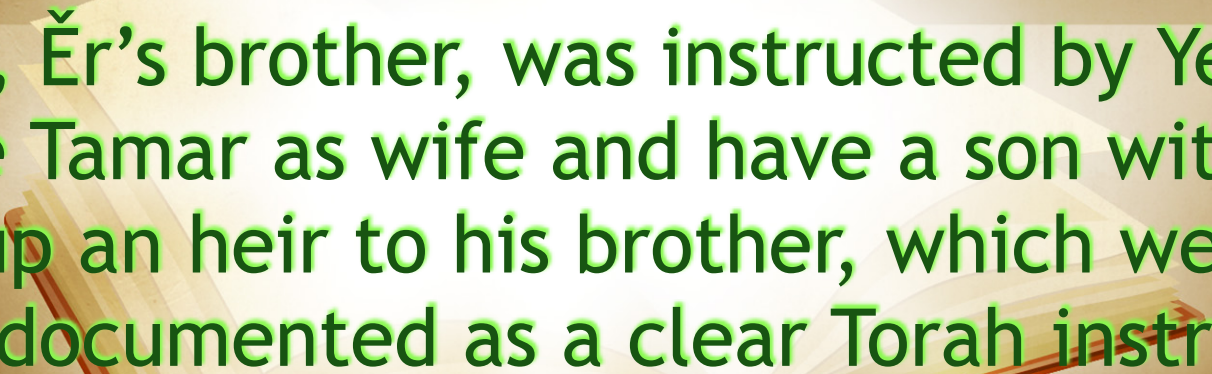
His name may have meant ‘awake or alert’, yet he was evil in the eyes of יהוה, and this can, in many ways, also be a reminder to us of how we are not to think that we are strong on our own, but rather that the joy of יהוה is our strength and this is also a clear warning of how we are to be sober and awake and not be found sleeping under the lies and deception of falsehood!

What we can see here, is how this man who by name was called one who is awake and strong, had simply abandoned his character!


We must remember that יהוה certainly was watchful over the firstborn of the son of the ancestor of Messiah, and while Tamar was given to this firstborn in marriage and had no offspring, יהוה still made sure that Tamar would carry the line of the seed of the promise, as she was the wife of the 'firstborn' and destined to be in the royal line of Messiah!

Verse 8-10

Onan, Ěr's brother, was instructed by Yehudāh to take Tamar as wife and have a son with her to raise up an heir to his brother, which we see being later documented as a clear Torah instruction in:



Debarim/Deuteronomy 25:5-6 “When brothers dwell together, and one of them has died, and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not become a stranger’s outside. Her husband’s brother does go in to her, and shall take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her. 6 “And it shall be that the first-born son which she bears does rise up for the name of his dead brother, so that his name is not blotted out of Yisra’ěl.”



While we recognize that this command had not yet been given to Yisra'ēl, as a nation, we need to understand that this was the clear instruction/ command given to Onan from his father, Yehudāh; and he refused to listen to his father's command, which is a picture of refusing to heed the Torah!



Onan knew that the offspring would not be his and would affect the inheritance of his own offspring, so he refused - but not in the right way!

He did not tell his father that he could not take her, but rather abused the position of being offered his brother's wife for sex only, and made sure that he did not impregnate her, as he spilled his seed (semen) on the ground.

This displeased יהוה and so Onan's life was taken too.

When you neglect to walk in the clear Torah of our Father our life too will be demanded of us.


In the story of Ruth, we see how the nearest kinsman refused to redeem Ruth and so the redemption right could fall to Bo'az.

Ruth 4:6 “And the redeemer said, “I am not able to redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. Redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I am not able to redeem it.”

Debarim carries on and tells us what was to be done to the man who refused to redeem the wife of his brother who had died and had no offspring:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 25:7-10 “But if the man does not desire to take his brother’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Yisra’ěl, he does not agree to perform the duty of my husband’s brother.’”

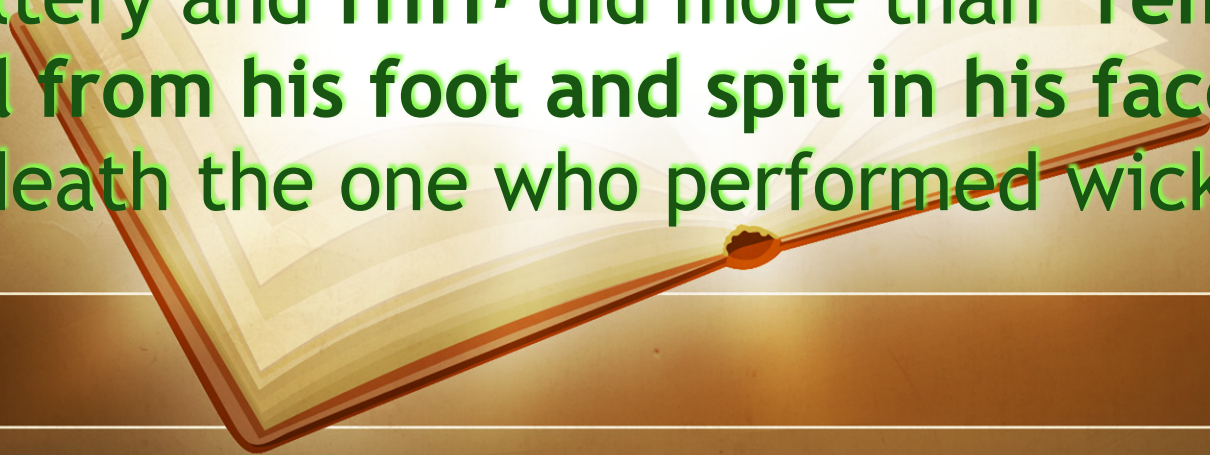
8 “The elders of his city shall then call him and speak to him, and he shall stand and say, ‘I have no desire to take her,’ 9 then his brother’s wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, and remove his sandal from his foot, and shall spit in his face, and answer and say, ‘Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother’s house.’ 10 “And in Yisra’ēl his name shall be called, ‘The house of him who had his sandal removed.’”



In the story of Ruth, we see how this happened according to Torah:

Ruth 4:7-8 “And this was formerly done in Yisra’ěl concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm every word: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a witness in Yisra’ěl. 8 So the redeemer said to Bo’az, “Buy it for yourself.” Then he took off his sandal.”

Onan acted wickedly and deceived his father while satisfying his fleshly lust for his deceased brother's wife - this was nothing more than a wicked act of adultery and **יהוה** did more than 'remove his sandal from his foot and spit in his face' - he put to death the one who performed wickedness!



Verse 11-23

Yehudah then told Tamar to live as a widow and wait until Shelah was old enough to become her husband and he would then raise up offspring.

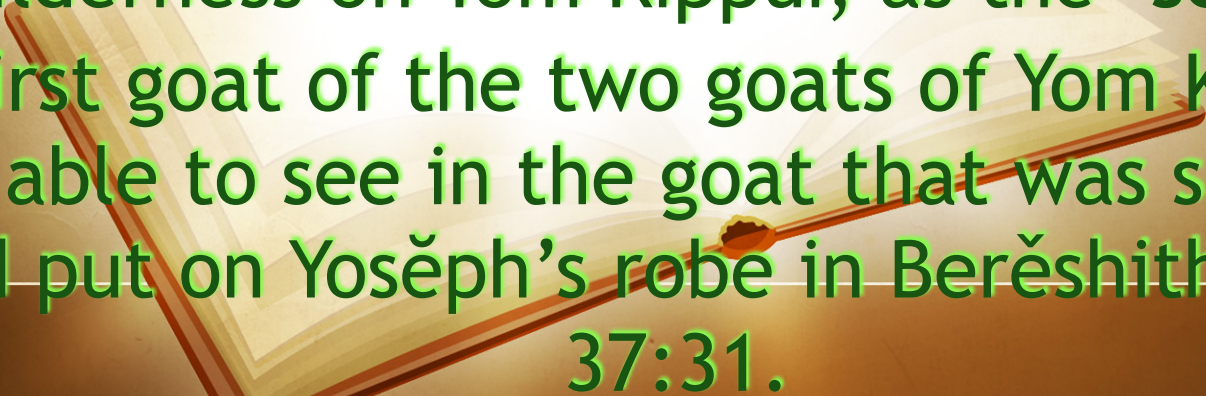
Tamar then went to live in her father's house; and after some time Yehudah's wife died, and being comforted by his friends he went up to Timnah to the sheep shearers.

תִּמְנָה Timnah - Strong's H8553 means, 'portion, territory', and comes from the root verb מָנָה manah - Strong's H4487 which means, 'to count, number, reckon, appoint'.

Tamar was told that her father in law had gone to Timnah, and by this time Shelah had not been given to her as wife, as promised, and so, after realizing that the promise had not been kept, she took off her widows garments and disguised herself, and she went and put a veil over her face and sat at the entrance of עֵינַיִם Ēnayim - Strong's H5879 which means, 'two springs' and can also be understood as the 'opening of the eyes', as this word can be constructed from being the dual of the root word עַיִן ayin - Strong's H5869 which means, 'eye', and from this we can see how she 'covered her eyes' in order to 'open' Yehudah's!

Yehudāh took her for a prostitute and he lay with her, as he turned aside to her by the way!

Once again, we see Yehudāh ‘turning aside’, which is the word נָטָה natah, which we have already discussed, and here is another picture of him turning from the straight path and resorting to whoring!




She asked him what he would give her for her “services” and he said that he would send her a young goat from the flock - which at first glance, may seem insignificant, however we can be drawn to seeing the picture of the goat which is sent into the Wilderness on Yom Kippur, as the ‘scapegoat’. The first goat of the two goats of Yom Kippur, we are able to see in the goat that was slain and blood put on Yosēph’s robe in Berēshith/Genesis 37:31.

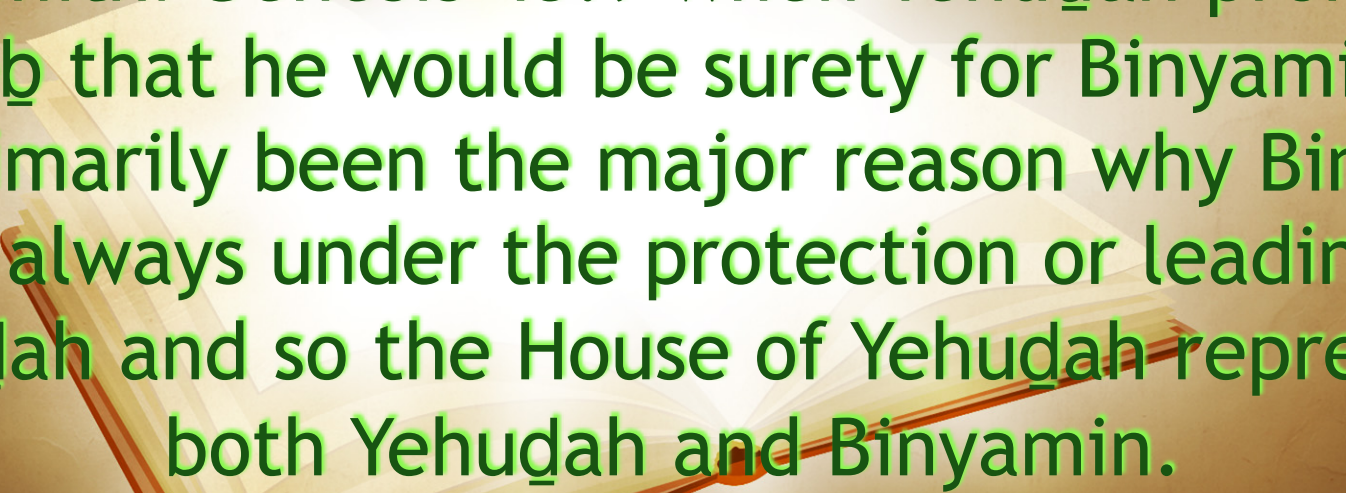
Tamar then asked whether he would give her a pledge until he sent the goat, and he asked her what pledge she wanted.

The Hebrew word used here for ‘pledge’ is עֶרְבוֹן **erabon** - Strong’s H6162 which means, ‘**a pledge, security**’, and comes from the root verb אָרַב **arab** - Strong’s H6148 meaning, ‘**to take on pledge, give in pledge, exchange, become surety**’.

She was asking for some surety from him so that he would not just leave and never send what he had promised.

As a noun, the word עֶרְבוֹן **erabon** is only used 3 times in Scripture and all in this account between Yehudah and Tamar; however, the verb, or action of giving a pledge, אָרַב **arab** is used 22 times in Scripture.





The first time we see this verb being used in in Berěshith/Genesis 43:9 when Yehuḁah promised Ya'aqob that he would be surety for Binyamin, and has primarily been the major reason why Binyamin was always under the protection or leading of Yehuḁah and so the House of Yehuḁah represents both Yehuḁah and Binyamin.