

An Anatomically Correct Translation of Genesis

Genesis 38:1

After implementing Yehudah's (Judah) plan to rid themselves of Yoseif (Joseph) by selling him into slavery, the sons of Yaakov (Jacob) a/k/a Yisrael (Israel)) do not foresee the horrific emotional toll their treachery will exact upon their father, <i>and it was</i> seeing Yaakov suffering that convinced them of the wrongfulness of their actions.	וַיְהִי
<i>In time</i> , the sons of Yaakov realized that no good had come from the implementation of their treacherous plan to rid themselves of Yoseif by selling him into slavery. Yehudah's brothers no longer acknowledged him as their leader because of	בְּעֵת
<i>the</i> unforeseen and undesirable outcome <i>that</i> came about after they (with the exception of Binyomin) implemented his plan of ridding themselves of their brother Yoseif by way of selling him into slavery. Yehudah was the de facto leader of the sons of Yaakov,	הַהוּא
<i>and</i> after <i>descending</i> from this exulted position, sought to distance himself from his brothers. After masterminding and implementing Yoseif's betrayal that spared him the deathly alternative his other brothers envisioned,	וַיֵּרֶד
<i>Yehudah</i> distanced himself	יְהוּדָה
<i>from</i>	מֵאֵת
<i>his brothers</i> . Yehudah left Chevron (Hebron), encountered a fellow herdsman,	אֶחָיו
<i>and</i> was <i>inclined</i>	וַיִּט
<i>toward</i> forming a business partnership with him. The	עַד
<i>man</i> whom Yehudah encountered identified himself as a member of the	אִישׁ
<i>Adullamite</i> clan. Envisioning a potential business alliance with this man, Yehudah asked the man his name,	עֲדֻלְמִי
<i>and</i> in his reply, stated that <i>his name</i> was	וַשְׁמוֹ
<i>Chirah</i> .	חִירָה

Genesis 38:2

During the course of his business relationship with Chirah, Yehudah (Judah) caught sight of an Adullamite woman to whom he was attracted, <i>and</i> when <i>he saw</i> her situated	וַיֵּרָא
<i>there</i> among the members of the Adullamite clan, took the initiative to make his presence known.	שָׁם
<i>Yehudah</i> encountered and was very attracted to the	יְהוּדָה
<i>daughter</i> of an Adullamite	בֵּת
<i>man</i> mistakenly referred to as a	אִישׁ
<i>Canaanite</i> . Yehudah made his marital intentions known to his future father-in-law,	כְּנָעִי
<i>and</i> during the course of their conversation, learned that <i>his name</i> was	וַשְׁמוֹ
<i>Shua</i> . Yehudah receives permission from Shua to marry his daughter,	שׁוּעַ
<i>takes</i> to marrying <i>her</i> . On his wedding night, Yehudah is poised to initiate intimate relations with his wife	וַיִּקְחָהּ
<i>and after coming</i>	וַיָּבֵא
<i>to her</i> bedchamber consummates their marriage,	אֵלֶיהָ

Genesis 38:3

<i>and she conceives</i>	וַתַּהַר
<i>and gives birth to</i> a	וַתֵּלֶד
<i>son</i> . The occasion marking the entry into this world of Yaakov's (Jacob) a/k/a Yisrael (Israel)) first grandchild occurred a year after Yoseif (Joseph) became a slave. Yehudah (Judah) has it in mind to name his firstborn,	בֶּן

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<i>and</i> contemplates <i>calling</i> him 'Eir'. Tasked with naming his firstborn, Yehudah settles upon and goes	וַיִּקְרָא
<i>with</i> the name 'Eir'.	אֵת
<i>His</i> (Yehudah's son's) given <i>name</i> is	שְׁמוֹ
<i>Eir</i> .	עֵיר

Genesis 38:4

Yehudah (Judah) and his wife continue having intimate relations, <i>and she conceives</i>	וַתִּהְיֶה
<i>again</i>	עוֹד
<i>and gives birth to</i> another	וַתֵּלֵד
<i>son</i> . In Yehudah's absence, his wife has it in mind to name their second-born,	בֵּן
<i>and</i> contemplates <i>calling</i> him 'Onan'. Tasked with providing their second-born	וַתִּקְרָא
<i>with</i> a name, Yehudah's wife decides that	אֵת
<i>his</i> given <i>name</i> should be	שְׁמוֹ
<i>Onan</i> .	אֹנָן

Genesis 38:5

Yehudah (Judah) and his wife continue having intimate relations, <i>and she conceives</i>	וַתִּהְיֶה
<i>again</i>	עוֹד
<i>and gives birth to</i> another	וַתֵּלֵד
<i>son</i> (their third). Yehudah's wife is intent upon naming her newborn,	בֵּן
<i>and</i> in her husband's absence, <i>calls</i> him 'Sheilah'. It is incumbent upon her (Yehudah's wife) to come up	וַתִּקְרָא
<i>with</i>	אֵת
<i>his name</i> and names him	שְׁמוֹ
" <i>Sheilah</i> ". Yehudah's wife has a name in mind for her third-born son,	שֵׁלָה
<i>and</i> while <i>he</i> (Yehudah) <i>is</i>	וְהִיָּה
<i>in Keziv</i> names him Sheilah. Yehudah was not present	בְּכִזִּיב
<i>when she gave birth</i>	בְּלִדְתָּהּ
<i>to him</i> (Sheilah), and in Yehudah's absence, his wife took the initiative and named him Sheilah.	אֹתוֹ

Genesis 38:6

Yehudah (Judah) realizes Eir is of marriageable age, <i>and takes</i> matters into his own hand by initiating a search to find him a wife.	וַיִּקַּח
<i>Yehudah</i> determines that it is the proper time for Eir to marry, and sets out to procure him a	יְהוּדָה
<i>wife</i> . Yehudah encounters a woman who is a descendant of Noach's (Noah) son Sheim (Shem). ³⁰⁴ Yehudah meets with and proposes an arranged marriage between his son and the man's daughter. Amenable toward the arranged marriage, the prospective bride's father allows Yehudah to escort his daughter	אִשָּׁה
<i>to</i> meet with and marry <i>Eir</i> ,	לְעֵיר
<i>his</i> (Yehudah's) <i>firstborn</i> . After situating Eir's prospective wife before him, Yehudah says, "This woman is to become your wife,	בְּכֹרוֹ
<i>and her name</i> is	וּשְׁמָהּ

³⁰⁴ Sheim (Shem) was one of the postdiluvian survivors who, like his blood relation Avraham (f/k/a Avram), became a monotheist.

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<i>Tamar</i> ".	תָּמָר
Genesis 38:7	
Eir fears his wife's childbearing aftermath will bring about a diminution of her external appearance. Eir perpetuates his wife's barrenness by intentionally ending their intimate act before the emission of his seed could attempt to fertilize the egg inside her womb. Taking notice of Eir's refusal to procreate, God (a/k/a AdoShem) (Ruler of the Universe) passes judgment, <i>and</i> Eir <i>is</i> adjudicated guilty for eschewing procreation. God condemns	וַיְהִי
<i>Eir</i> , the	עֵר
<i>firstborn</i> of	בְּכוֹר
<i>Yehudah</i> (Judah) for refusing to impregnate his wife for fear of the birth aftermath diminishing her outwardly appearance. God perceives Eir as a	יְהוּדָה
<i>wicked</i> man. Eir exercised his free will to forego procreating, and	רָע
<i>in</i> the <i>eyes</i> of	בְּעֵינֵי
<i>AdoShem</i> (Ruler of the Universe), is perceived as a wicked man. God judges, sentences	הַיְהוָה
<i>and kills him</i> .	וַיִּמָּתֶהוּ
<i>AdoShem</i> killed Eir because he refused to procreate. Eir foregoing procreation prevents his prospective progeny that comprise the preordained lineage leading to the birth of David, future King of Yisrael (Israel).	יְהוָה
Genesis 38:8	
When the shock of the death of Eir subsists, Yehudah (Judah) is intent upon marrying off his recently widowed daughter-in-law to Onan, <i>and</i> to achieve his objective, <i>says</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר
<i>Yehudah</i>	יְהוּדָה
<i>to Onan</i> , "The Levirate law requires you to marry,	לְאֹנָן
<i>come</i> unto Tamar in intimate fashion, and attempt	בֹּא
<i>to</i> impregnate the	אֵל
<i>wife</i> of	אִשְׁתּוֹ
<i>your</i> deceased <i>brother</i> . After fathering a son by way of Tamar, you are to name him 'Eir'. Eir will be part of the lineage leading to the birth of David, future King of Yisrael (Israel). Fulfill your Levirate obligation	אָחִיךָ
<i>and marry</i>	וַיִּבֶם
<i>her</i> (Tamar). God in His infinite wisdom took your brother's life because of his unwillingness to procreate. According to Levirate law, you must take your brother's place by marrying his widowed wife and fathering children he refused to father. Do not emulate your deceased brother's disinclination toward procreating with Tamar. Commit to uniting with Tamar	אִמָּה
<i>and rise</i> above your disinclination toward fulfilling your Levirate obligation by marrying and procreating with your brother's widow. Deliver your	וְהָקָם
<i>seed</i> into and produce offspring! You must keep in mind that according to the Levirate law, the offspring you father by way of Tamar will be attributed	זָרַע
<i>to</i> Eir, <i>your</i> deceased <i>brother</i> ."	לְאָחִיךָ
Genesis 38:9	
Onan marries <i>and</i> refuses to procreate with his deceased brother's widow, because <i>he knows</i> Levirate law will attribute fatherhood of any child produced to his late brother Eir.	וַיֵּדַע
<i>Onan</i> refuses to procreate with Tamar because he knows	אֹנָן

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<i>that</i> Levirate law will attribute fatherhood of any offspring he fathers to his dead brother and will	כִּי
<i>not</i> recognize and attribute fatherhood	לֹא
<i>to him</i> . Onan realizes that if he fathers a child by way of Tamar,	לוֹ
<i>it would be</i> as if	יְהִיָּה
<i>the offspring</i> resulted from an intimate union between his deceased brother Eir and Tamar. Rejecting the conditions imposed upon him to procreate, Onan takes measures to ensure that no offspring comes about from his intimate relations with Tamar,	הַזָּרַע
<i>and is</i> wont to spill his seed	וְהִיָּה
<i>when</i>	אִם
<i>he lay</i> in intimate fashion with her. Although Onan is amenable	כָּא
<i>toward</i> having intimate relations with Tamar, the former	אֶל
<i>wife</i> of his late brother Eir, he is not amenable toward fathering children by way of Tamar because Levirate law recognizes	אִשְׁתּוֹ
<i>his</i> deceased <i>brother</i> Eir as the father. Rather than allowing his seed to issue forth and impregnate Tamar, Onan withdraws	אָחִיו
<i>and spills</i> his seed	וְשָׁחַת
<i>on the ground</i>	אֶרֶצָה
<i>so</i> as <i>not</i>	לְבִלְתִּי
<i>to produce</i>	נֶמֶן
<i>offspring</i> , whose fatherhood, he knows, by Levirate law, will be attributed	זָרַע
<i>to</i> Eir, his deceased <i>brother</i> .	לְאָחִיו

Genesis 38:10

Despite knowing God (a/k/a AdoShem) (Ruler of the Universe) ended Eir's life for refusing to procreate with Tamar, Onan continues spilling his seed in lieu of procreating with Tamar whom he married after his brother died. God witnesses Onan's refusal to procreate with his late brother's wife <i>and</i> deems Onan <i>wicked</i>	וַיִּרַע
<i>in</i> the <i>eyes</i> of	בְּעֵינֵי
<i>AdoShem</i> . God sits in judgment of Onan for refusing to do	יְהוָה
<i>what</i> the law requires (to procreate with Tamar), and after determining what	אֲשֶׁר
<i>he did</i> was patently evil, passes judgment	עָשָׂה
<i>and kills</i> him. Just as Eir refused to procreate with Tamar, so	וַיָּמָת
<i>too</i> did Onan. Onan's refusal to procreate with his brother's widow incurred the wrath of God Who sentenced	גַּם
<i>him</i> to death and prematurely ended his life.	אֹתוֹ

Genesis 38:11

Convinced that God killed both Eir and Onan for refusing to, while married to Tamar at different times, father children with her, Yehudah (Judah) fears God might strike down his third son Sheilah, if, after marrying Tamar, he emulates his late brothers' intentional refusal to procreate. Knowing that Levirate law requires Sheilah to marry Tamar, Yehudah intends to delay the marriage until he matures, <i>and says</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר
<i>Yehudah</i>	יְהוּדָה
<i>to Tamar</i> ,	לְתָמָר
<i>his</i> twice-widowed <i>daughter-in-law</i> , "Rather than comporting with Levirate law that mandates my surviving son marry his brothers' widow, I will postpone the marriage until Sheilah matures. While Sheilah matures, you shall attire yourself in widow's garb	כְּלָתוֹ

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and	
<i>sit</i> in mourning. You should make it apparent to all that you are a	שָׁבִי
<i>widow</i> waiting out her mourning period while residing in the	אלמנה
<i>house</i> of	בית
<i>your father</i> . I implore you to continue as the mournful widow	אביך
<i>until</i> Sheilah	עד
<i>grows up</i> . Upon maturation,	יגדל
<i>Sheilah</i> ,	שלה
<i>my son</i> will marry you and fulfill his Levirate obligation to his brothers' widow." After ending his conversation with Tamar, Yehudah says to himself, "I know that God, rather than Tamar, brought about the demise of my sons. I would not allow her to marry my only surviving son if I thought she was responsible for their deaths. Unable to rule out the possibility that my only surviving son will avoid procreating with Tamar, I must send her away and, in the interim, admonish Sheilah not to emulate his brothers' transgressions that angered and incurred the fatal wrath of God. I must temporarily separate Tamar from Sheilah	בני
<i>because</i> he might refuse to procreate with Tamar and incur God's fatal wrath." After thinking a little more about Tamar and Sheilah, Yehudah	כי
<i>says</i> to himself, "I must delay the marital union between Sheilah and Tamar	אמר
<i>for fear that</i>	פן
<i>he</i> refuses to procreate with Tamar and God brings about his <i>death</i> . If Sheilah refuses to procreate with Tamar, he	ימות
<i>too</i> will incur the fatal wrath of God. This is not the time for Sheilah to marry Tamar because	גם
<i>he</i> might emulate their penchant for avoiding procreation and suffer the same fate	הוא
<i>as his brothers</i> who angered and incurred the fatal wrath of God." Tamar complies with Yehudah's request to live elsewhere	כאחיו
<i>and goes</i> to live in the house of her late father. At Yehudah's behest,	ומלך
<i>Tamar</i> journeys to	תמר
<i>and begins residing</i> in the	ותשב
<i>house</i> of	בית
<i>her late father</i> . ³⁰⁵	אביה

Genesis 38:12

Knowing that Levirate law requires his surviving son to marry Tamar, Yehudah (Judah) fears his immature son will emulate his late brothers' refusal to procreate and incur God's fatal wrath. Recognizing Sheilah as too immature to marry his twice-widowed daughter-in-law, Yehudah commands her to dwell in the house of her late father until he matures. Mindful of Tamar's sequestration <i>and</i> cognizant of the <i>increase</i> in the passing of	וירבו
<i>the days</i> spent living in the house of her father Yehudah refrains from uniting her with Sheilah. Twelve months after Tamar takes up residence in her father's house,	הימים

³⁰⁵ After taking up temporary residence in her late father's house, Tamar believes that it is only a matter of time before Yehudah (Judah) calls her back to marry Sheilah. After waiting a year without word from her father-in-law, Tamar concludes that Yehudah is never going to allow her to return and marry Sheilah.

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Yehudah's wife takes ill	
<i>and dies.</i> The	וּתָמָת
<i>daughter</i> of	בֵּת
<i>Shua,</i>	שׁוּעַ
<i>wife</i> of	אִשָּׁת
<i>Yehudah,</i> took ill and died. Seeking to unburden his mind overwhelmed and incapacitated by the loss of his wife, Yehudah contemplates occupying his time with his livestock	יְהוּדָה
<i>and takes comfort</i> from the prospect of overseeing the shearing of his flocks.	וַיִּנָּחֵם
<i>Yehudah</i> sets about distancing himself from the epicenter of his widowhood	יְהוּדָה
<i>and goes up to</i> reunite with	וַיַּעַל
<i>to</i> reunite with	עַל
<i>the ones shearing</i>	גִּזְזֵי
<i>his sheep.</i>	צֹאנוֹ
<i>He</i> (Yehudah)	הוא
<i>and Chirah,</i>	וְחִירָה
<i>his friend</i>	רֵעֵהוּ
<i>the Adullamite</i> journey	הַעֲדֹלָמִי
<i>to Timnah.</i>	תִּמְנָה

Genesis 38:13

While living in her late father's house, Tamar perpetuates the role of the dutiful widow-in-waiting. One day, an acquaintance of Yehudah (Judah) happens upon Tamar, <i>and tells</i> her that Yehudah, her recently widowed father-in-law is traveling to Timnah to oversee the shearing of his sheep. It becomes apparent	וַיֵּגֶד
<i>to Tamar,</i> who abhors the prospect of remaining barren for the remainder of her life, to dupe Yehudah into fathering her child and marrying her. Tamar had the good fortune of encountering someone who, upon recognizing her as Yehudah's daughter-in-law, knowingly and willingly divulged Yehudah's whereabouts by	לְתָמָר
<i>saying,</i> "The last time I	לְאָמַר
<i>beheld</i> Yehudah,	הִנֵּה
<i>your father-in-law,</i> he imparted news of the death of his wife, and cited his intent of	חֲמִיד
<i>going up</i>	עֲלֶה
<i>to Timnah</i>	תִּמְנָה
<i>to shear</i>	לְגַז
<i>his sheep."</i>	צֹאנוֹ

Genesis 38:14

After waiting a year for Sheilah to mature, Tamar realizes that Yehudah (Judah), fearing Sheilah will suffer the same fate as his two brothers, is never going to allow his only surviving son to marry her. With no prospect of marriage or procreation, Tamar intends to dupe the widowed Yehudah into having intimate relations with her. Tamar knows that Yehudah, by virtue of being a blood relative of her deceased husbands, can fulfill the Levirate obligation of marrying and procreating with her. Tamar is determined to seduce Yehudah by way of subterfuge <i>and</i> to achieve her objective, <i>takes off</i> and replaces the	וּתְסָר
<i>garments</i> of	בְּגָדֵי
<i>her widowhood</i>	אֶלְקִמְנוּתָהּ

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<i>from upon her</i> body with something more evocative. Tamar sets out to find Yehudah,	מֵעָלֶיהָ
<i>and covers herself</i>	וַתִּכְסֶּה
<i>with a veil</i> to ensure that he is unable to ascertain her identity. Tamar is ready to seek out and procreate with Yehudah,	בְּצִעִיר
<i>and</i> after <i>disguising herself</i> as a prostitute, journeys to a heavily trafficked area where he is most likely to pass by while en route to Timnah. Tamar finds a place where Yehudah is most likely pass by,	וַתִּתְעַלֶּה
<i>and sits</i>	וַתֵּשֶׁב
<i>in</i> a <i>doorway</i> in a heavily trafficked area where	בְּפֶתַח
<i>the eyes</i> of many a passersby will be compelled to gaze upon her. Tamar situates herself at this particular location because she believes	עֵינַיִם
<i>that</i> it is where Yehudah is most likely to pass by while	אֲשֶׁר
<i>on</i> the	עַל
<i>way</i>	דֶּרֶךְ
<i>to Timnah</i> . Determined to marry and bear children fathered by Yehudah, Tamar resorts to subterfuge	תַּמְנָה
<i>because</i> a year passed without Yehudah bringing her home to marry Sheilah. Tamar	כִּי
<i>sees</i> that Yehudah is not willing to risk the life of his surviving son by marrying him to the woman married to his other two sons whom God killed for refusing to procreate with her. Tamar believes	רָאָתָהּ
<i>that</i> Yehudah fears Sheilah might emulate his two late brothers' refusal to procreate and incur the fatal wrath of God, and is withholding him from marrying her. Tamar anticipates that enough time has passed that Sheilah	כִּי
<i>has grown</i> to manhood. Tamar realizes that Yehudah will never, by way of marriage, imperil the life of	גָּדַל
<i>Sheilah,</i>	שְׁלָה
<i>and she</i> is	וְהִוא
<i>not</i> willing to stand idly by when in lieu of marrying her father-in-law's surviving son, Levirate law allows Yehudah to step in for Sheilah and marry and procreate with her. Realizing that Yehudah	לֹא
<i>is</i> unwilling to <i>give</i> her an opportunity to be married	נִתְּנָה
<i>to him</i> (Sheilah), Tamar resorts	לוֹ
<i>to</i> subterfuge as a means of becoming Yehudah's <i>wife</i> . ³⁰⁶	לְאִשָּׁה

Genesis 38:15

Disguised as a prostitute, Tamar waits for the chance to encounter the recently widowed Yehudah (Judah) whom she is intent upon seducing, procreating and subsequently marrying. Yehudah enters the town where Tamar is lying in wait, <i>and</i> when <i>he sees</i> the veiled prostitute, fails to recognize <i>her</i> as his widowed daughter-in-law.	וַיִּרְאֶה
<i>Yehudah</i> sees a veiled woman standing in a doorway,	וַיִּהְיֶה
<i>and</i> speculating that her love is for sale, <i>thinks</i>	וַיִּחְשְׁבֶהָ
<i>to</i> proposition this <i>prostitute</i> . Aware of the custom of chaste women and prostitutes	לְזוֹנָה

³⁰⁶ Familiar with Levirate law, Tamar knows that the recently widowed Yehudah (Judah), by virtue of being a blood relative of her deceased husbands, could fulfill the Levirate obligation of procreating with and subsequently marrying her.

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covering their faces, Yehudah perceives Tamar as a prostitute	
<i>because</i>	כִּי
<i>she covers</i>	כִּסְתָהּ
<i>her face</i> and is intentionally situated in a heavily trafficked area.	פְּנֵיהָ

Genesis 38:16

While married to Tamar, Eir refused to procreate for fear of a postpartum diminution of her beauty. Eir's brother Onan marries his brother's widow. Knowing that Levirate law credits offspring fathered by the surviving brother to the late brother, Onan refuses to procreate with Tamar. God kills Onan for refusing to procreate with Tamar. Upon learning that Yehudah (Judah) refuses to allow his third son Sheilah to marry her, the twice-widowed Tamar is determined to attempt to surreptitiously procreate with and subsequently marry Yehudah, her recently widowed father-in-law. Tamar situates herself on a road she knows Yehudah will traverse while en route to Timnah. Yehudah sees Tamar, halts <i>and turns</i>	וַיֵּשֶׁב
<i>toward her</i> . Having come upon Tamar	אֵלֶיהָ
<i>by</i>	אֶל
<i>the way</i> of journeying from his home to Timnah, Yehudah happens upon a woman whom he believes is a prostitute	הַדֶּרֶךְ
<i>and</i> in a state of arousal, <i>says</i> , "Are you amenable toward allowing me to	וַיֹּאמֶר
<i>come</i> unto you and partake of your sexual favors?"	הָבָה
<i>Please</i> let me know if you will	נָא
<i>let me come</i> lie with and allow me to partake of your sexual favors. What is it you require I give	אָבוֹא
<i>to you</i> in exchange for your sexual favors?" Yehudah propositions Tamar for her sexual favors	אֵלֶיךָ
<i>because</i> he does	כִּי
<i>not</i>	לֹא
<i>know</i>	יָדַע
<i>that</i>	כִּי
<i>his daughter-in-law</i> is	כְּלֶתוֹ
<i>she</i> . Tamar contemplates Yehudah's proposition for sexual favors,	הוּא
<i>and says</i> to him,	וַתֹּאמֶר
" <i>What</i>	מָה
<i>will you give</i>	תִּתֶּנּוּ
<i>to me</i> in exchange for my sexual favors?"	לִי
<i>As</i> you are intent upon	כִּי
<i>coming</i>	תָּבוֹא
<i>unto me</i> in an intimate manner, what can I expect from you in exchange for my sexual favors?"	אֵלַי

Genesis 38:17

Yehudah (Judah) contemplates that which he is willing to give Tamar in exchange for her sexual favors, <i>and says</i> , "In exchange for your sexual favors,	וַיֹּאמֶר
<i>I</i> will give you a goat and lamb. Not having the goat and lamb in hand	אֶנְכִי
<i>I will send</i> you a	אֲשַׁלַּח
<i>kid</i> (young goat) of exceptional quality from my herd of	גְּדִי
<i>goats</i> . I will also send you a lamb of exceptional quality	עֲזִים

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<i>from</i> among	מִן
<i>the sheep</i> pasturing in Timnah." Tamar is intent upon responding to Yehudah's initial offer of livestock in exchange for sexual favors	הַצֹּאן
<i>and says</i> , "You do not have in hand that which you promise to exchange for my sexual favors. Not knowing if you are a man of your word, I will require something of yours to hold until you return with that which you promised in exchange for my sexual favors. I will return to you that which you leave behind as collateral when I receive that which you promised in exchange for my sexual favors.	וַתֹּאמֶר
<i>If</i>	אִם
<i>you</i> agree to <i>give</i> me some of your personal belongings to hold until your return, it will serve to	תִּתֵּן
<i>guarantee</i> that I receive payment for services rendered with what I have in hand or by what you, upon your return, tender unto me. I will hold onto your possessions	עֶרְבוֹן
<i>until</i>	עַד
<i>you send it</i> (the goat and lamb that we agreed would be sufficient remuneration for my sexual favors). Upon taking possession of the goat and lamb, I will return your personal items to you." ³⁰⁷	שְׁלָחָהּ

Genesis 38:18

Not in possession of that which he promised to pay for Tamar's sexual favors, the recently widowed Yehudah (Judah) is amenable toward providing whatever collateral she demands, <i>and says</i> to Tamar,	וַיֹּאמֶר
" <i>What</i> is	מָה
<i>the pledge</i>	הָעֶרְבוֹן
<i>that</i>	אֲשֶׁר
<i>I should give</i>	אֶתֵּן
<i>to you</i> until returning with the agreed-upon remuneration for your sexual favors?" Tamar contemplates the manner in which she will reply to Yehudah's question	לָהּ
<i>and says</i> , "Provide me with collateral in the form of the ring that bears	וַתֹּאמֶר
<i>your seal</i> ,	חַתְמוֹתְךָ
<i>and your cloak</i> ,	וּפְתִילְךָ
<i>and your staff</i>	וּמִטָּה
<i>that</i> is	אֲשֶׁר
<i>in your hand</i> . After we have intimate relations, you will retrieve the kid (goat) and lamb you promised to exchange for my sexual favors, and upon your return, I will accept them as payment for services rendered and return your possessions. Desiring to have intimate relations with Tamar, Yehudah agrees to honor her terms of remuneration,	בְּיָדְךָ
<i>and gives</i>	וַיִּתֵּן
<i>to her</i> the items she will hold as collateral until he returns and pays for her sexual favors. Yehudah accepts Tamar's demands for livestock in exchange for her sexual favors	לָהּ
<i>and comes</i>	וַיָּבֹא
<i>unto her</i> in intimate fashion. Tamar is fertile while engaging Yehudah in intimate fashion,	אֵלֶיהָ
<i>and becomes pregnant</i> by him. In an attempt	וַתַּהַר

³⁰⁷ It was imperative that Tamar acquire some of Yehudah's possessions to serve as evidence of their intimate encounter.

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<i>to</i> compel <i>him</i> (Yehudah) to comport with Levirate law, Tamar has intimate relations and becomes pregnant by Yehudah. ³⁰⁸	לו
Genesis 38:19	
After duping Yehudah (Judah) into fulfilling the Levirate obligation of impregnating her, rather than waiting for him to return with a kid (goat) and a lamb, Tamar is intent upon returning to her late father's house and staying there until the baby is born. Upon having her baby, Tamar intends to reunite with Yehudah, give him back his possessions she is holding as collateral for sexual favors rendered, and reveal to him that he had impregnated and fathered a child with his widowed daughter-in-law whom he mistook for a prostitute. Tamar discards the attire of a prostitute, <i>and</i> the next morning <i>when</i> she <i>gets up</i> , is intent upon attiring herself in widow's garb. After achieving her objective of posing as a prostitute to dupe Yehudah into impregnating her, Tamar casts off her prostitute's attire,	וּמָקָם
<i>and is intent upon leaving</i> her father's house garbed in widow's attire. The next morning Tamar awoke	וּמָלָךְ
<i>and took off</i>	וּמָסַר
<i>her veil</i>	צַעֲיָפָה
<i>from her face</i> and removed the other accoutrements customarily worn by a prostitute,	מֵעֲלֶיהָ
<i>and put on</i> the	וּמִלְבָּשׁ
<i>garments</i> of	בְּגָדֵי
<i>her widowhood.</i>	אֶלְמָנוּתָהּ
Genesis 38:20	
Yehudah (Judah) promised to give to Tamar livestock in exchange for her sexual favors <i>and</i> intends to make good on his promise by <i>sending</i> his Adullamite friend to deliver to livestock and collect his personal belongings left behind as collateral. Chirah appears before	וַיִּשְׁלַח
<i>Yehudah</i> and upon hearing his request, is all too willing to help his friend and business partner. While en route to where Tamar resides, Chirah brings	יְהוּדָה
<i>with</i> him a choice	אֶת
<i>kid</i> (goat) selected from among the	גְּדִי
<i>he goats</i> of their herd and a choice lamb. Chirah's objective is to settle Yehudah's debt to Tamar by delivering the goat and lamb Yehudah promised to give in exchange for her sexual favors. Upon tendering the livestock to Tamar, Chirah is to reclaim Yehudah's possessions held by Tamar as collateral and return them to him. Yehudah placed the kid (goat) and lamb	הָעִזִּים
<i>in</i> the <i>hand</i> of	בְּיַד
<i>his friend</i> , Chirah	רַעְיָהוּ
<i>the Adullamite</i> . Both men expect that remunerating the prostitute with a goat and lamb will entitle Yehudah	הָעִדְלָמִי
<i>to take</i> back	לְקַחַת
<i>the security</i> (Yehudah's signet ring, cloak and staff)	הָעֶרְבוֹן
<i>from</i> the <i>hand</i> of	מִיַּד
<i>the woman</i> (Tamar) with whom he had had intimate relations. After making a diligent	הָאִשָּׁה

³⁰⁸ Yehudah (Judah) will accept responsibility for fathering Tamar's child because he and Tamar were abstinent prior to their intimate encounter.

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effort to find the woman with whom Yehudah had had a sexual liaison, Chirah fails to find Tamar	
<i>and</i> does <i>not</i> look forward to returning to Yehudah with news that	ולא
<i>he</i> was unable to <i>find her</i> .	מצאה

Genesis 38:21

Failing to find the prostitute with whom Yehudah (Judah) had intimate relations, Chirah happens upon a group of men indigenous to the place where prostitutes frequent, <i>and</i> is intent upon <i>asking</i> those	וישאל
<i>with</i> whom the prostitute might have interacted, if they know her whereabouts. Chirah intends to ask the	את
<i>men</i> if they have knowledge of	אנשי
<i>her</i> frequenting the <i>place</i> where she purportedly plied her sex trade, and	מקמה
<i>says</i> ,	לאמר
" <i>Where</i> is the prostitute my friend encountered while plying her trade in close proximity to the temple? Where might I find	איה
<i>the temple harlot</i> ? My friend told me that	הקדשה
<i>she</i> entices men by looking	הוא
<i>into their eyes</i> while sitting	בעינים
<i>beside</i>	על
<i>the way</i> where many men pass while en route to worship." The men are eager to respond to Chirah's question	הדרך
<i>and say</i> , "The woman you described is	ויאמרו
<i>not</i> plying her trade in our midst. If such a temple harlot were in our midst,	לא
<i>she would be</i> plying her sex trade	היתה
<i>in this</i> part of town. We know not of a	כנה
<i>temple harlot</i> plying her trade in our midst."	קדשה

Genesis 38:22

Chirah failed to find the prostitute holding Yehudah's (Judah) possessions as collateral <i>and returned</i>	וישב
<i>to</i> Timnah. Chirah situated himself in the presence of	אל
<i>Yehudah</i>	יהודה
<i>and said</i> , "I did	ויאמר
<i>not</i> find the prostitute with whom you had had intimate relations.	לא
<i>I</i> failed to <i>find her</i> ,	מצאתיה
<i>and so too</i> the	וגם
<i>men</i> indigenous to	אנשי
<i>the place</i> where she plied her sex trade. When questioned about the prostitute's whereabouts, they	המקום
<i>said</i> , 'The temple harlot whom you described is	אמרו
<i>not</i> plying her trade in our midst. We would know if	לא
<i>she were</i> plying her trade	היתה
<i>in this</i> place. There is no	כנה
<i>temple harlot</i> plying her trade in our midst'."	קדשה

Genesis 38:23

Yehudah is intent upon responding to Chirah's admission of failure to find and remunerate the prostitute with whom he (Yehudah) had intimate relations, <i>and says</i>	ויאמר
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<i>Yehudah</i> to Chirah, "In lieu of a goat and lamb,	יְהוּדָה
<i>let her take</i> possession of my signet ring, cloak and staff in exchange	תִּקַּח
<i>for her</i> sexual favors. I must cease continuing to seek her out	לָהּ
<i>for fear of</i>	פֶּן
<i>becoming</i> the object of derision for paying too much for sexual favors. People may use my embarrassing encounter with the prostitute as the means by which	נִהְיָה
<i>to</i> heap <i>shame</i> upon me for pledging my signet ring cloak and staff for sexual favors. I do not want people saying,	לְבוֹז
' <i>Behold</i> Yehudah, a fool for having exchanged his signet ring, cloak and staff for sexual favors!'	הִנֵּה
<i>I sent</i> you to deliver	שְׁלַחְתִּי
<i>the kid</i> (goat) and the lamb to the prostitute, and hoped that upon finding her, reclaim	הַגִּדִי
<i>the</i> signet ring, cloak and staff she held as collateral. Now I realize that rather than accepting compensation for her sexual favors with livestock, she covets <i>these</i> , my personal possessions, and is unwilling to return them to me. I thank you for making an effort to retrieve my signet ring, cloak and staff left with the prostitute,	הָהָה
<i>and</i> do not hold it against <i>you</i> , my friend, for	וְאַתָּה
<i>not</i> being able to	לֹא
<i>find</i> and retrieve my collateral from <i>her</i> . Let us put this matter behind us and tend to the business at hand."	מִצְאָתָהּ

Genesis 38:24

Three months passed since the twice-widowed Tamar had had intimate relations with Yehudah (Judah), her widowed father-in-law. Mindful of the grieving widow in their midst, Tamar's neighbors are sympathetic toward her plight until they notice that she is with child, <i>and</i> since <i>it had been about</i>	וַיְהִי
<i>about three</i>	כְּמִשְׁלָשׁ
<i>months</i> since she had had intimate relations with Yehudah, their sympathy transitioned into derision upon realizing that the widow-in-waiting is having a child out of wedlock. Rather than minding their own business, Tamar's neighbors are intent upon informing Yehudah that his widowed daughter-in-law had conceived while comporting herself in the manner of a harlot,	חֲדָשִׁים
<i>and</i> imparted <i>it</i> (the news of Tamar's pregnancy) to him. Tamar's neighbors were intent upon informing Yehudah of Tamar's out-of-wedlock pregnancy, and while situated in his presence, <i>told</i>	וַיַּגִּד
<i>to Yehudah</i> who heard them	לְיְהוּדָה
<i>saying</i> , "Your twice-widowed daughter-in-law, rather than playing the role of a widow-in-waiting,	לְאִמֶּר
<i>played</i> the role of a <i>harlot</i> .	זִנְתָה
<i>Tamar</i> ,	תָּמָר
<i>your daughter-in-law</i> , comported herself in the manner of a harlot,	כְּלִטָּה
<i>and</i> made it all <i>too</i> easy to get herself pregnant. We	וְגַם
<i>beheld</i> and scrutinized Tamar, the widow-in-waiting, and determined that she became	הִנֵּה
<i>pregnant</i>	הָרָה
<i>by</i> way of <i>harlotry</i> ." Outraged by the disparaging claims regarding Tamar's reputation, Yehudah is determined to speak to her fiancé,	לְזִנוּנִים
<i>and says</i> to Sheilah, his only surviving son, that Tamar, his intended bride, had gotten	וַיֹּאמֶר

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pregnant out of wedlock. Sheilah responds to	
<i>Yehudah</i> by saying that Tamar should die for conceiving out of wedlock. Agreeing with Sheilah's condemnation of Tamar, Yehudah tells Tamar's informants to	יְהוּדָה
" <i>Take her out</i> to a public place	הוציאוּהָ
<i>and let her be burned!</i> "	וּתְשַׂרְרָהּ
Genesis 38:25	
Held at bay by her neighbors and informed that her pregnancy by way of harlotry is a capital offence, <i>she</i> (Tamar) is	הוּא
<i>brought out</i> against her will and prior to her demise, regains her composure and implores her captors to delay her execution until she can communicate, by way of a written message, with Yehudah (Judah). Tamar's captors permit her to write and send a message to Yehudah, her father-in-law/father of her child. Tamar puts pen to paper,	מוֹצֵאתָ
<i>and</i> after <i>she</i> writes a message to Yehudah,	וְהִיא
<i>sends</i> it, along with Yehudah's personal possessions (obtained while guised as a prostitute)	שְׁלָחָהּ
<i>to</i> Yehudah,	אֵל
<i>her father-in-law/father</i> of her child. Tamar hopes her message, accompanied by his personal possessions, will convince Yehudah to intercede on her behalf. Hoping that Yehudah, upon receipt of her written message and his signet ring, cloak and staff will spare her life, Tamar puts into words a message	הַמִּיָּה
<i>saying</i> , "The items accompanying this message belong	לְאִמִּר
<i>to the man</i>	לְאִישׁ
<i>who</i> mistook his daughter-in-law for a prostitute and engaged her in intimate fashion.	אֲשֶׁר
<i>These</i> items belong	אֵלָה
<i>to him</i> with whom	לוֹ
<i>I</i> had intimate relations and became	אֲנֹכִי
<i>pregnant</i> ." Yehudah continues reading Tamar's letter	הִרָה
<i>and</i> is astonished when <i>she says</i> , "I pray that upon reading this message and seeing the items accompanying this message, you will	וַתֵּאֲמָר
<i>recognize</i> them as your personal possessions tendered as collateral pending payment for my sexual favors.	הִכָּר
<i>Please</i> intercede on my behalf by revealing to those wishing to put me to death, the man	נָא
<i>to whom</i>	לְמִי
<i>the seal</i>	הַחֲתָמָה
<i>and the cloak</i>	וְהַפְּתִילִים
<i>and the staff</i> belong. Upon receiving my message, I hope you admit that	וְהַמִּטָּה
<i>the</i> items accompanying this message are the ones you provided as collateral until your return with payment for my sexual favors. Exonerate me from the charges of harlotry by publicly admitting that <i>these</i> items are your personal possessions. Becoming pregnant by you fulfills the Levirate obligation you chose to ignore by barring your surviving son Sheilah from marrying me."	הָאֵלָה
Genesis 38:26	
Yehudah (Judah) reads Tamar's message <i>and recognizes</i> the accompanying items as his.	וַיִּכָּר
<i>Yehudah</i> realizes that he must intercede on Tamar's behalf by convincing the neighbors	יְהוּדָה

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he incited to refrain from killing her. Contrite about inciting his neighbors to kill Tamar, Yehudah commiserates	
<i>and says</i> to himself, "Tamar realized that my withholding Sheilah from marrying her constituted failure to comport with Levirate law and sought to remedy the situation by taking it upon herself to seduce and become pregnant by me.	וַיֹּאמֶר
<i>She is righteous</i> for taking matters into her own hand and compelling me to comply with Levirate law. I will be responsible for the death of a righteous person if I fail to confess publicly to having impregnated Tamar. Tamar resolved to wrest the seed	צָדִיקָהּ
<i>from me</i> as a means of ensuring that I comported with Levirate law. I circumvented Levirate law when I prevented her from marrying and procreating with my son. I admit that I prevented my only surviving son from fulfilling his Levirate obligation of procreating with Tamar because two of my sons, married to Tamar at different times, died by God's hand for refusing to procreate with her. Knowing I would never allow my only surviving son to marry her, Tamar took matters into her own hands, seduced and became pregnant by me. God interceded on Tamar's behalf	מִמֶּנִּי
<i>because</i> I forbade my only surviving son from marrying and procreating with her. God compelled me to impregnate my twice-widowed daughter-in-law disguised as a prostitute. I understand the reason	כִּי
<i>for</i> God intervening on Tamar's behalf. God intervened to ensure	עַל
<i>that</i> Tamar became pregnant through me because I did	כֵּן
<i>not</i>	לֹא
<i>give her</i> an opportunity to marry and procreate with my son Sheilah. Had I enabled Tamar	נָתַתִּיהָ
<i>to</i> marry and procreate with <i>Sheilah</i> ,	לְשִׁלָּה
<i>my son</i> , God would not have had to intervene on Tamar's behalf and compel me to have intimate relations with and impregnate her." Realizing his intimate and procreative interaction with Tamar came about through divine intervention, Yehudah publically confesses that he is the father of Tamar's child and prevents her execution. Yehudah fulfills his Levirate obligation by marrying Tamar, the widow of his blood relatives (sons),	בְּנִי
<i>and</i> because Yehudah and Tamar are married, there is <i>no</i> longer an immoral impediment barring them from having intimate relations with one another.	וְלֹא
<i>He</i> (Yehudah) <i>continues</i> having intimate relations with Tamar. From their initial encounter and	זָסַף
<i>again</i> during the course of their marriage Yehudah continues	עוֹד
<i>to know her</i> without fearing society implementing a death penalty upon women becoming pregnant by way of out-of-wedlock relations.	לְדַעְתָּהּ

Genesis 38:27

Seven months pass since Yehudah (Judah) impregnated Tamar, <i>and it is</i>	וַיְהִי
<i>at</i> this point in <i>time</i> when she is about	בְּעֵת
<i>to give birth</i> to Yehudah's offspring, that Tamar calls upon the midwife to aid in the delivery of her child. The midwife begins monitoring Tamar's progress toward delivering her offspring,	לְדָתָהּ
<i>and</i> while <i>observing</i> her during the varying stages of labor, determines she is carrying	וַהֲנִיָּהּ
<i>twins</i>	תְּאוֹמִים
<i>in her womb</i> .	בְּבֶטְנָהּ

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Genesis 38:28

While tending to Tamar's needs during labor, the midwife is unaware of what is about to occur, <i>and it is</i> while Tamar is	וַיְהִי
<i>in</i> the throes of <i>giving birth</i> that one of the twins in her womb is determined to thrust forth his hand through her birth canal. While monitoring Tamar's progress during labor, the midwife is about to witness an unusual occurrence,	בְּלִדְתָּהּ
<i>and</i> watches in astonishment as one of the twins <i>puts out</i> his	וַיִּמְחַן
<i>hand</i> far enough through Tamar's birth canal to become visible. Mindful of the hierarchal importance of the firstborn, the midwife is intent upon memorializing that which she believes is the firstborn,	יָד
<i>and</i> to achieve her objective, <i>takes</i> hold of his hand ties a string around it.	וַתִּקַּח
<i>The midwife</i> took hold of the child's hand,	הַמִּלְדָּה
<i>and</i> as a means of differentiating the firstborn twin from the other, <i>ties</i>	וַתִּקְשֹׁר
<i>on</i> the wrist of	עַל
<i>his hand</i> a	יָדוֹ
<i>scarlet thread</i> . Aware of the controversy involving the birth of twins Yaakov (Jacob) a/k/a Yisrael (Israel) and Eisov (Esau), the midwife takes measures to ensure that there will not be any dispute as to which twin fathered by Yehudah (Judah) by way of Tamar is truly the firstborn. After giving thought to the matter at hand, the midwife commences an inner dialog in which she hears herself	לְשׁוֹנִי
<i>saying</i> , "If	לֵאמֹר
<i>this</i> one whom I witnessed thrusting his hand through her birth canal does not	זֶה
<i>come out</i>	יֵצֵא
<i>first</i> , the string I tied around his wrist will document, with surety, that he is their firstborn".	רִאשׁוֹנָה

Genesis 38:29

The midwife is unaware that God is intent upon designating Yehudah's (Judah) firstborn twin as the one whose hand had <u>not</u> prematurely emerged from his mother's womb. The premature emergence of one of the twin's hand incentivized the midwife to document him as the firstborn, <i>and</i> upon seeing <i>it</i> (a hand emerging from Tamar's birth canal) <i>is</i> inclined toward proving he is the firstborn by tying a colored string around his wrist. The midwife reasoned that if she ties a colored string around his wrist before	וַיְהִי
<i>he retracts</i> and	כְּמִשִּׁיב
<i>his hand</i> back inside his mother's birth canal, his reemergence from the womb with ribbon on wrist will establish him as Yehudah's firstborn. To ensure the twin with the colored string on his wrist will not be the first emerge from his mother's womb, God forces the other twin's hand back inside the birth canal and situates him further away from his mother's birth canal than his twin brother. The time is at hand for the emergence of Tamar's twins from her womb. Tamar's closest relations gather around	יָדוֹ
<i>and</i> expect the twin with the colored string tied around its wrist to emerge first. They <i>behold</i> the firstborn as	וַיִּהְיֶה
<i>he comes out</i> of his mother's womb, and to everyone's surprise, it is the twin brother <u>without</u> the string tied to his wrist emerging from his mother's womb before	יֵצֵא

An Anatomically Correct Translation of Genesis

<i>his brother</i> whose midwife tied a piece of colored string around his wrist. Expecting the child with the string tied to his wrist to be the first emerge from the womb, the midwife is surprised when the child without the string tied to his wrist emerges ahead of his brother. The midwife is inspired to praise the firstborn for his tenaciousness	אָחיו
<i>and says</i> , "Having pushed your way past and coming out ahead of your equally tenacious twin brother who, prior to being born, thrust his hand through your mother's birth canal evidences your superior tenacity.	וַתֹּאמֶר
<i>What</i> possessed	מָה
<i>you to break out</i> of your mother's birth canal before your twin brother? I cannot fathom what power came	פֶּרֶצְתָּ
<i>upon you</i> that resulted in your emergence from your mother's birth canal before your brother.	עָלֶיךָ
<i>You were strong</i> enough to push past your twin brother and emerge from your mother's birth canal before him." After being informed by the midwife of his firstborn twin's tenacity to push past his twin brother and become the first to emerge from his mother's birth canal, Yehudah (Judah) is inspired by the subject matter of her words and decides to name his firstborn 'Peretz', a variation of the Hebrew word for 'pushing past'. Yehudah has to choose a name for his firstborn by way of Tamar,	פֶּרֶץ
<i>and calls</i> him 'Peretz'. Peretz is	וַיִּקְרָא
<i>his</i> given <i>name</i> .	שְׁמוֹ
<i>Peretz's</i> tenaciousness and desire to be the first to emerge from his mother's womb enabled him to push past his twin brother and become the firstborn Yehudah fathered by way of Tamar.	פֶּרֶץ

Genesis 38:30

After giving birth to Peretz, Tamar endeavors to enable the remaining twin to issue forth from her womb, <i>and</i> soon <i>afterwards</i> ,	וַאֲחֵר
<i>he</i> (Peretz's twin brother) <i>emerges</i> .	לָצֵא
<i>His</i> (Peretz's) twin <i>brother</i> was the one	אָחיו
<i>who</i> , when he thrust his hand through his mother's birth canal, had a crimson colored thread placed	אֲשֶׁר
<i>on</i> the wrist of	עַל
<i>his hand</i> by the midwife. When contemplating what to name his second-born twin son, Yehudah (Judah) takes into consideration	יָדוֹ
<i>the crimson colored thread</i> that the midwife had tied around the wrist of the first twin who stuck his hand outside his mother's birth canal	הַשָּׁנִי
<i>and</i> decides to <i>call</i> him 'Zorach'. Zorach is	וַיִּקְרָא
<i>his</i> given <i>name</i> . Inspired by the midwife tying a brightly colored piece of thread around the wrist of the twin who pushed forth his hand through Tamar's birth canal, Yehudah utilizes a variation of the Hebrew word for brightness and names his second-born son	שְׁמוֹ
' <i>Zorach</i> '. Following the birth of his twin sons, by way of Tamar, his second wife, Yehudah believes that God compensated him for the loss of his two sons fathered by way of his first wife.	זָרַח