

THE TORAH OF LEADERSHIP

Uncomfortable Truths | Dr. Erica Brown | January 6, 2022



Jan Victors, "Judah Giving His Ring to Tamar," (123 by 132cm), oil on canvas

Genesis 38:24-30

וַיְהִי אִם כְּמִשְׁלֵשׁ חֳדָשִׁים וַיֵּגֵד לַיהוָה לְאֹמֶר אֲנִי הָיִיתִי כְּלֵמָה וְגַם הִגַּה הָרָה לְנוֹנִים וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הֲוֹצִיאוּהָ וְתִשְׁרַף:

הוא מוצאת והיא שלחה אל-חמלה לאמר לאיש אשר-אלה לו אנכי הרה ותאמר הכר-נא למי החתמת והפתילים והמטה האלה:

ויפר יהודה ויאמר צדקה ממני פי-על-כן לא-נמתיה לשלה בגי ולא-יסר עוד לדעתה:

ויהי בעת לדתה והגה תאומים בבטנה:

ויהי בלדתה ויתורגד ותקח המילדת ותקשר על-ידו שני לאמר זה יצא ראשונה:

ויהי א כְּמִשִׁיב יָדוֹ וַהֲנִיחָה יָצָא אָחִיו וַתֹּאמֶר מִה-פִּרְצָתָ עָלַי פֶּרִץ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פֶּרִץ:

ואסר יצא אחיו אשר על-ידו השגי ויקרא שמו זרח

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About three months later, Judah was told, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot; in fact, she is with child by harlotry.” “Bring her out,” said Judah, “and let her be burned.” As she was being brought out, she sent this message to her father-in-law, “I am with child by the man to whom these belong.” And she added, “Examine these: whose seal and cord and staff are these?”

Judah recognized them, and said, “She is more in the right than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah.” And he was not intimate with her again. When the time came for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb! While she was in labor, one of them put out his hand, and the midwife tied a crimson thread on that hand, to signify: This one came out first. But just then he drew back his hand, and out came his brother; and she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself!” So he was named Perez. Afterward his brother came out, on whose hand was the crimson thread; he was named Zerah.

Reflective Question

Think of the last uncomfortable leadership situation you were in. Describe it and evaluate how you handled it.

Leadership Challenge

What’s an uncomfortable truth you need to confront? What’s holding you back? What do you need to do to lean into it?