

# My Daughter-in-Law Is a Tramp

By Jack Hall

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## CHARACTERS

Jeremiah Springer- Talk show host

Judah

Tamar

Bubba & Bertha- Audience members

Audience members

*Crowd cheers, chanting "Jerry! Jerry!" as lights come up on a talk show set. Jeremiah Springer is in the audience with a microphone. Judah is on stage.*

JEREMIAH- If you're just joining us today, our topic is "My Daughter-in-Law is a dirty tramp, and needs to be stoned." Please say hello to our next guest, Judah!

*Audience claps.*

JEREMIAH- Now, Judah, you're a successful shepherd. You're a good husband and a father. Tell us about your daughter-in-law.

JUDAH- Well, I had me three sons by my beautiful wife Shirley: Er, Onan, and my little buddy Shelah. Er grew up, and I commence to find him hottie of a wife, Tamar, who is a dirty, dirty tramp.

*Audience "ooohs" disapprovingly of Tamar.*

JEREMIAH- So how did we learn Tamar was a tramp?

JUDAH- Well, Er and Tamar weren't married too long afore Er died under mysterious circumstances, know what I'm sayin'? So I hook her up with Onan, so's his brother's line would not end. Then Onan kicks the bucket under mysterious circumstances.

JEREMIAH- Wow, tough stuff. So what did you do them?

JUDAH- Well, law says I should give her my buddy Shelah, but I ain't havin' none of that. I told that woman she best dress in black and live out her days as a widow.

JEREMIAH- I see. And did she?

JUDAH- Heck no! That little hussy turned up six months after Onan did, pregnant!

*Audience "ooohs" again.*

JEREMIAH- How do you suppose that happened?

JUDAH- How else? She done been prostitutin' herself all over Canaan!

*Audience "ooohs" again.*

JEREMIAH- Wow, she does sound like a tramp.

JUDAH- Darn right, a dirty, dirty tramp!

JEREMIAH- Let's bring that dirty tramp out here. Tamar? Come on out!

*Tamar enters. The audience boos. Tamar yells back.*

TAMAR- You don't know me! You can't judge me!

JEREMIAH- Tamar, Judah, your father-in-law has leveled some harsh accusations. Now we can all see you're pregnant.

TAMAR- That's right. I'm havin' a baby!

*Audience boos again.*

JEREMIAH- Is it true you're a prostitute?

TAMAR- Yes, but I only did it once.

JUDAH- What I tell ya? She's a dirty tramp! We need to stone her!

*Audience cheers. Jeremiah takes a question from Bubba.*

BUBBA- I just gotta say, you're a dirty, dirty tramp to do that to a nice man like Judah there.

*Audience cheers. Jeremiah takes another question from Bertha.*

BERTHA- Yeah, uh, to the daddy? You got every right not to give your baby to that tramp! And to you, I wish I had a rock, I'd stone you myself.

*Audience cheers again.*

JEREMIAH- Well, Tamar, this sounds bad for you. Anything to say in your defense?

TAMAR- Yes, I do! I married his son Er. But I didn't kill him! What Judah didn't tell ya is that Er made the Lord angry, and when the Lord got angry, he smite Er graveyard dead!

JEREMIAH- Judah, is this true?

JUDAH- Well, uh, there are other folks who said it happened that way.

*Audience ohhhhs in surprise.*

JEREMIAH- I see. I see. And Tamar, what about Onan?

TAMAR- Oh he done somethin' bad too. He... Shucks, I can't say it. Not on TV, not on this stage. But y'all can read about it in Genesis 38:9.

*Audience members pull out Bibles. They flip to the passage. In unison they all groan in horror.*

TAMAR- Yeah, so it was the Lord stuck him dead too!

JUDAH- Just a minute! Just 'cause the good Lord stuck my boys dead don't give you the right to be a prostitute.

JEREMIAH- He does have a point there, Tamar.

TAMAR- Well all right then. It's true, I went out and whored myself once. But I had good reason. This man would not give me a son to have a family by, as the Lord would want. So I had to do somethin' to keep my husband Er's line goin'!

JUDAH- By sleeping with some dirty old man?

TAMAR- Oh he weren't just some dirty old man!

JUDAH- Then who was he?

TAMAR- You wanna know? It's the man who owns these things. Steve?

*Steve walks out, carrying a staff and a seal on a cord.*

JUDAH- Hey, where did you get them?

TAMAR- From the man I slept with!

JUDAH- But that ain't possible! That's my staff, and my--

*Judah stops in horror. The audience starts yelling and booing him. Jeremiah goes to Bubba.*

BUBBA- You know somethin'? I'm rethinkin' this whole thing! I think the scumbag ain't the dirty tramp. It's you.

*Audience cheers. Bertha gets up to comment.*

BERTHA- And if I had a stone, I'd be throwing it at you.

JUDAH- Now hold on! She's got my stuff, but... but that don't prove nothin'! I demand a paternity test.

JEREMIAH- We thought you'd say that. So we had someone give you a paternity test backstage.

JUDAH- You did? He tole me it was for tetanus!

JEREMIAH- And Judah, you are the father!

*The audience yells and boos some more.*

TAMAR- I tole you I weren't no tramp!

JEREMIAH- Well, Judah. You refused her another husband. She did what she felt was right and necessary to carry on YOUR family name. What do you have to say?

JUDAH- Well... aw shucks. Who am I kiddin'? This woman ain't no tramp. She is more righteous than I.

*The audience cheers. Jeremiah sits on a stool.*

JEREMIAH- You know, sometimes there's more to a story than first appears. We need to look past the surface before we judge others. That's not to say sin didn't happen here, but even out of the worst situations - the death of two sons, adultery - God can bring

something beautiful. Like the birth of a baby. And who knows? That baby could give rise to a king. Or a Savior!

TAMAR- It ain't no baby! It's twins!

JEREMIAH- Whatever. That's my final thought. Join us tomorrow, when our topic will be, "My brothers sold me into slavery, and now I'm the vice president of Egypt."