

# Flawed

*“Now she had on a robe of many colors, for the king’s virgin daughters wore such apparel. And his servant put her out and bolted the door behind her. And Absalom her brother said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this thing to heart.” So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.” 2 Samuel 13: 1-20(NKJV)*

**H**ave you ever gone into a situation trusting, innocent, naïve...and come out violated, tricked, and deceived? When I read the story of how Tamar, raped by Amnon, became a “ruin” in Absalom’s house — I could relate. Some things have happened to me that I had absolutely no control over, yet I was left to live with them and eventually deal with them. What bothers me most about this story is that Tamar lived the remainder of her life in desolation – alone and miserable.

Like Tamar, some of us have physical, emotional, and spiritual scars that have caused us to hide. She went from a life of prosperity to poverty due to one life-changing experience. Maybe you’ve gone through a divorce, you’re a single mom, or your husband died much sooner than you ever dreamed he would. Maybe you were molested by a loved one or rejected by someone who was once the love of your life. Everyone has a story. Life has dealt most of us some hard blows. All too often our past experiences can overtake us, if we allow it. Those experiences can destroy our future, just like Tamar, and we will never live out the purpose that God preordained for our lives here on earth.

I can’t tell you how many times I’ve heard the saying, “Your pain is someone else’s gain.” I never quite understood the significance in those words. My first inclination is to hide the shame and bury the pain. Why couldn’t Tamar just hold her head up high, put on her royal robe, and walk shamelessly out of her brother’s house? The great king David, a man after God’s own heart, surely would have taught his children to seek Yahweh., Surely they knew to call on Him in the time of trouble and He would answer. Why couldn’t Tamar just snap out of it? After all **this...was...not...her...fault!**

Isn’t there someone that Tamar, you, and I can relate to? Yes—Jesus, on the cross, despised and rejected for our sakes. Dr. Larry Lea preached a message about a publicized scandal involving him and some financial matters. He said people were asking him how he was able to keep going, showing his face in public. His reply was simple but profound, “Shame is not on me. It’s on Him,” – pointing the way to the cross. “For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, disregarding its shame” (Hebrews 12: 2). I read once just how humiliating the cross was. So much so that *cross* was a vulgar word not to be used in polite society. Crucifixions were purposely carried out in public, generally at some prominent place like a crossroads, an outdoor theater, or hill. Ancient authors often described them as spectacle events. Executioners heightened the shame and disgrace by turning the gruesome personal ordeal into grisly public entertainment. In most paintings, films, and artistic depictions, the crucified figure of Jesus is partially covered with a loin-cloth. But in the ancient world, the victim was crucified naked. The shameful exposure often continued even after death since it was common for the victim to be denied burial.

When misfortune strikes most of us, we hide. It's okay to go into seclusion for a while. After all, there is a season for everything. But, as a result of what Jesus suffered for our sakes – DON'T STAY THERE. *Come out!!* Don't hide behind the walls of abuse, disappointment, rejection, or perfectionism. Allow your experience to bring health and healing to someone else. After all, no matter how many flaws, a diamond is still a diamond. **Sparkle.**

### **Grab It!**

1. Do you believe God allows terrible things to happen to people?
2. Read 2 Samuel 13: 1-20. Why do you think Tamar remained desolate in her brother's house?
3. Think about your response to a traumatic experience in your life. Did you turn to God? Why or why not?