

## Timeless Transformations

### *The Genealogy of Jesus: Incest, Prostitution, Seduction, and Adultery*

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Today I am fascinated to be writing about the genealogy of Jesus. I will be taking you through four interesting stories of Jesus' ancestral mothers. It is my gift to you on this Sunday as it is one week before Christmas Day.

First the background. To remind yourself of the context, go back and reread these two writings. On December 4, 2016, I wrote about Christmas as the celebration of light and birthing a new state of being and then on October 2, 2016, I focused on peeling back the Christian belief system to understand its own message. The Bible's New Testament Gospel story, Mark, was the first gospel to be written in 65-70 after Jesus died (AD). Matthew, wrote his gospel about 80-85 AD. He copied about 90% of Mark's gospel. Those two gospels are very similar. It's important to note that both gospels were products of the Jewish synagogue. Gentiles (non-Jewish) did not separate from the Jewish tradition until about 88 AD. So when we interpret Mark and Matthew, we have to read them from a Jewish perspective. Also at that time, no one understood genealogy, biology or science. They didn't know anything about how humans were produced. They didn't know anything about an egg cell or the actual creation of life. Women were thought of as incubators to hold the life that the male planted.

To analyze the genealogy of Jesus is difficult. If we look at the Gospel of Mark, he presents Jesus as a fully developed adult male who comes to be baptized. There is no miraculous birth story in Mark. It is at Jesus' baptism that the heavens open and the spirit of God becomes infused in human life. So Jesus' genealogy starts with Matthew. Take a close look at Matthew. Look at the first chapter and read the first 17 verses. Look at the text highlight in red. I've done all of this hard work for you. These are my links that I've summarized and prepared. Matthew's first 17 verses are the stories about the women in Jesus' genealogy. Jesus' ancestral mothers are captivating. There are four of them. We have to cross reference their stories back to the Bible's Old Testament. Each of their stories are described in the following. You will be shocked at what you read.

Jesus' first ancestral mother is Tamar. Her story is in chapter 38 in the book of Genesis. She is the daughter in law of Judah who is one of the 12 sons of Jacob. She is married to Judah's oldest son. He dies early. He's then given to his 2nd son, Onan. He also dies early. The next child in the family is 5 years old. It is now his duty to marry Tamar but he is too young. She moves back to her father's house. She's now a tainted woman without a child. Judah promises to send for her when his young son reaches the age of maturity. Over time, Judah forgets about that. Then Judah's wife dies so he becomes a widower. One day he decides to go out into the field several miles from his home and word gets to Tamar living in the shame of a put away woman that her father in law is going to come by her village gate. She makes a plan. She takes off the clothes of a widow and puts on the clothes of a prostitute and she sits at the gate and waits for him to come. When Judah comes by he sees this woman with this veil on and he decides to ask her for her services. He doesn't know who this woman is. They agree on a price and she demands that he give her some sort of bond until he can pay his debt. The price was he was going to pay was to send a lamb from his flock to her the next day. She keeps his rope and signature ring. These things would be redeemed when he returned with the lamb. The next day, Judah has one of his servants bring her a lamb. When he gets to the town he doesn't find the prostitute. He asks around and everyone says there is no prostitute in their city. She had disappeared. So he returns Judah and they go on their way. A couple of months later it comes to Judah that his former daughter in law is pregnant. Judah assumes she must have become a harlot. He's furious and he decides to put her to death. He goes to the city and they bring her out. She shows his rope and ring. She said I am pregnant with the baby of the man that owns these things. Judah recognizes them and he repents. He takes Tamar into his harem and she produces a child and names him Perez. In the 1st century, this type of behavior would have been called *incest*.

The second ancestral mother of Jesus is Rahab. Her story is written in Joshua chapter 2 and 6. She ran a brothel in Jericho. She entertained Joshua's spies. She protected them and helped them escape. They promised to take care of her and her family when they conquered the city of Jericho. They did. Rahab then married one of Joshua's soldiers, a man named Salmond. She had a baby. Rehab was a *prostitute*.

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The third mother referenced in Matthew is Ruth. Her story is in the book of Old Testament Book of Ruth. She is a Moabite girl. She and her mother-in-law (Noami) have gone from out of Moab where all of their husbands have died. They were two single women in a non-Jewish society where every woman had to have a male protector. The nearest of kin was supposed to take care of them. These two women struggled to stay alive. They worked in the fields of a person named Boaz. Noami knows that Boaz is kin to her deceased husband. Noami plots a scheme. She knew there was going to be a harvest festival when the harvest was over. She knew there would be a lot of wine. Noami told Ruth to put on her best dress and bathe in the river and put on her best perfume and go to this festival. Ruth was told to be ready when the moment was right. About midnight, Boaz has had so much wine he became sleepy and he lies down on the floor. She puts a pillow under his head and a blanket over his body. She then crawls under the blanket with him. He wakes the next morning and looks at her and says who are you? She says marry me. He tried to get out of it but he finally gives in and agrees to marry her. They become the parents of a boy whose name was Obed. Ruth was a *seductress*.

The last ancestral mother of Jesus that Matthew writes about is the wife of Uriah. Her name is Bathsheba. Her story is found in the book of Samuel in the 11th chapter. A short version of her story is this. King David is the richest man in town. He goes out on the rooftop. He stares down at all of the other rooftops. On one nearby roof is a beautiful woman name Bathsheba. She was taking a bath and he wanted her. He sent a message to her and asked her to come to him. In those times she probably didn't have a choice. So she went and she had an affair. She left and David probably didn't think much about it. A couple of months later he got a note from Bathsheba. The note said she was pregnant with your child. David said I thought you were married. She said I am but my husband has been off at battle fighting for your army for over six months. David decides to call for her husband out of battle. He decides to give Uriah a furlough and sends for him. King David thought Uriah would come home, spend time with his wife, and they would just say the baby came early. David didn't count on Uriah saying that it wouldn't be fair for him to enjoy his home and wife while his comrades were fighting in the battle so he decided to sleep in a tent in the street. King David had to come up with another plan so he wrote a note to his commander and said to put Uriah at the front of the Army and Uriah was killed. King David's problem was over and he invited Bathsheba to be a member of his harem. Out of their relationship, Solomon was born. Bathsheba was an *adulterer*.

All of that is in the first 17 verses of Matthew's gospel if we take the time to cross reference back to the Bible's Old Testament. It is amazing to me that many Christians will spend hours getting ready and going to church each week but they won't do the hard work and study the Bible for what it says and interpret it themselves! I find that amazing. What Matthew says is that Jesus' bloodline flowed through the incest of Tamar, the prostitution of Rahab, the seduction of Ruth, and the adultery of Bathsheba. **The genealogy of Jesus is incest, prostitution, seduction, and adultery.** I don't know that we hear those stories at Christmas! Most of what we hear about is the Christmas pageant. There is only one other reference of Jesus' genealogy and that is in Luke but there are contradictions in the genealogy between Matthew and Luke. Luke makes it complicated because he works the bloodline backwards starting from Jesus. Plus, there aren't any mothers identified in Luke's gospel so all we have is Matthew's gospel for a mother's genealogical perspective.

So, what is the conclusion and how does that relate to Christmas? I believe the miraculous birth is knowing we all can birth a new state of being no matter where we are, what our bloodline is, or whatever situation we are in. Our genealogy doesn't limit us from anything. We can have a miraculous birth every morning when we open our eyes to a new day. That is what the miraculous birth is all about! I believe what is different at Christmas is that our awareness of love, peace, and harmony is renewed! We celebrate the light of life at Christmas. Let's make this year of Christmas the birth of a new generation. This is our genealogy, our family, our Christmas. Let's fill it with the very best we have to give.

I love you more than all of the miraculous births that have ever been and all that are yet to come - Love Mom!