

TREK & TREASURE

A Biblical Exploration Series- Volume 1



REDEEMED & REDEFINED

JOANNA FRUHAUF

8 SESSIONS!
GREAT FOR
INDIVIDUAL OR
GROUP STUDY

TREK & TREASURE

Redeemed and Redefined

A Biblical Exploration Series - Volume 1

Joanna Fruhauf

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Intro

This book will look at several women of the Old and New Testaments. These women in scripture are full of the same hopes and dreams, flaws, and missteps we deal with today. Our sinful nature is the same. These women had bad reputations, were gossiped about, blamed, neglected, and became problems for others around them. They were ostracized, criticized, marginalized, and some were scandalized.

We may not want to think we are like them, but we are. As we read about them and consider some of their backstories, we see so many similar struggles. Watch for the transformation possible as they press into God. Be encouraged by God's ability to redeem them through their situations.

Like us, these women were once filled with hope and dreams. Then, living in this fallen world and having conformed to its pattern, they were damaged by sin. We'll dive in to understand those moments and perhaps see a reflection of our hearts.

As we look together at these women, we might find our story in theirs, both our helplessness and our hope.

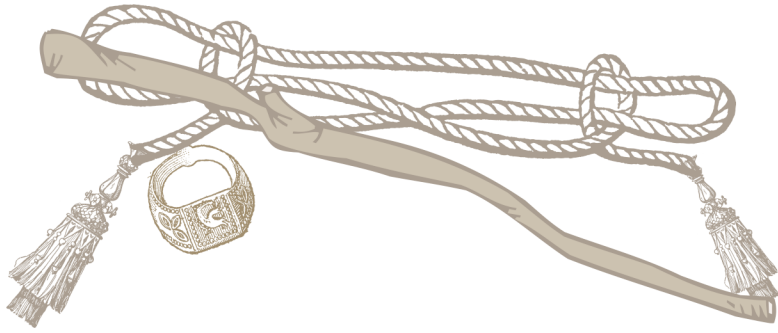




1

Tamar

Seen as:
Widowed
Rejected
Abandoned
Marginalized



1 Tamar

Genesis 38:6-30

6 Now Judah took a wife for Er, his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. 7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD took his life. 8 Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother." 9 Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so when he went in to his brother's wife, he wasted his seed on the ground in order not to give offspring to his brother. 10 But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD; so He took his life also. 11 Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up"; for he thought, "I am afraid that he too may die like his brothers." So Tamar went and lived in her father's house.

12 Now after a considerable time Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died; and when the time of mourning was ended, Judah went up to his sheep shearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13 It was told to Tamar, "Behold, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." 14 So she removed her widow's garments and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in the gateway of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife. 15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, for she had covered her face.

16 So he turned aside to her by the road, and said, "Here now, let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" 17 He said, therefore, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." She said, moreover, "Will you give a pledge until you send it?"

18 He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" And she said, "Your seal and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her and went into her, and she conceived by him. 19 Then she arose and departed, and removed her veil and put on her widow's garments.

20 When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her. 21 He asked the men of her place, saying, "Where is the temple prostitute who was by the road at Enaim?" But they said, "There has been no temple prostitute here."

22 So he returned to Judah, and said, "I did not find her; and furthermore, the men of the place said, 'There has been no temple prostitute here.'" 23 Then Judah said, "Let her keep them, otherwise we will become a laughingstock. After all, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her."

24 Now it was about three months later that Judah was informed, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and behold, she is also with child by harlotry." Then Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" 25 It was while she was being brought out that she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "I am with child by the man to whom these things belong." And she said, "Please examine and see, whose signet ring and cords and staff are these?" 26 Judah recognized them, and said, "She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not have relations with her again.

27 It came about at the time she was giving birth, that behold, there were twins in her womb. 28 Moreover, it took place while she was giving birth, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." 29 But it came about as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out. Then she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" So he was named Perez.

30 Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand; and he was named Zerah.

Tamar lived before the written law was given under Moses, but the people were not without laws. There were practices and laws within the cultures at the time. Hammurabi's Code (currently at the Louvre in France) was the first Mesopotamian law collection to be discovered in 1901, but it was not the first written; several earlier collections have been found.

- **The Code of Ur-Nammu of Ur (this is the city Abraham was originally from)**
- **The Code of Lipit-Ishtar of Isin.**
- **The Laws of Eshnunna (written by Bilalama or by Dadusha).**

Thousands of stele discuss and display the practice of laws and cultural norms from this period and with similar directives for preserving family structure.



Deuteronomy 25:5-10 "When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. 6 "It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

7 "But if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' 8 "Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And if he persists and says, 'I do not desire to take her,' 9 then his brother's wife shall come to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' 10 "In Israel his name shall be called, 'The house of him whose sandal is removed.'

consider

Tamar, a lovely young bride, married one of the 12 ruling clan heads' firstborn sons. What an inheritance her children would eventually have. The prominence of her children's future would be secured. We don't know her family background, but we know her name, which means palm tree. It was one of the most valuable trees in the region. It was a fruitful tree that generated products for everyday living, from building materials to medicinal elixirs. Every part of the tree was valued and useful. It was considered a staple and necessary for life itself. So, being named Tamar by her parents meant they saw her as a tremendous blessing to whomever she would marry and their family. What a great bride for a future ruler.

Unfortunately, her husband, Er, was considered evil in the sight of the Lord, and God killed him. Imagine the grief this young bride would have experienced. We know that the Ruler of all Israel would come from the line of Judah, and that would be then from his firstborn son. Er is now dead, and she has no child yet.

IMPORTANT

These were practices long before the law of Moses. It continued through to the times of Jesus and is still practiced in some areas of the world today.

In fulfilling the cultural laws of the time, Mosaic law, Judah is responsible for her needs now. He must arrange a new marriage with his next son so that she can have an heir, which will not only memorialize the memory of the dead son but also provide her with an inheritance so she doesn't go homeless. During this time, the family a woman married into was responsible for providing for the rest of her life. Her family receives a dowry to purchase her from them, creating an alliance and releasing them of any future need to help her. It was the groom's family's responsibility for her from this time forward.

These were the customs and laws of the culture. This was before the Mosaic law. Laws were given to Moses on Mount Sinai but were written by Hammurabi, ruler of Babylon and a contemporary of Abraham and others. This was a provisional custom and law that helped to shape society. It was to prevent a young woman from becoming a homeless woman. Though Tamar lived before Moses, this was widely practiced. It was compassionate, both honoring the memory of the lost son and providing an inheritance for his widow with a child of the father's bloodline.

If a family didn't do this, the elders would shame them, and they were considered shoeless (poor or morally bankrupt) and despised by leaders. It was unethical to leave a widow impoverished, and the shame was put on the family if they did not care for their own.

The arrangements were made, but the second son, also being evil, refused to finish the task. God was pretty upset, and this son also died. She is once again a childless widow. What a devastating situation. Imagine the gossip.

She was strategically wise; she didn't receive payment. If she did, that would have made her a prostitute. Legally, she could have been stoned to death.

Instead, she took his signet ring and staff as a promise of his obligation to her. Now pregnant, Judah's responsibility to the child would be that of a father. This is a greater responsibility than had she birthed a child to one of his sons.

Her actions seem to indicate that she was expecting these cultural practices to justify and defend her. In trusting God's word, she was provided for and HONORED with the tribe's authority going to her children. She relied on the righteousness of the laws to protect and provide for her.

Now, let's flip the tables. Imagine Judah. What was going on in his heart? Traumatized by the death of his two sons. There was one more, but he was too young to marry. What would Judah do? Turn him over to this woman who seems to be killing off his heirs? It was expected to be a cultural norm/law...

What could he do?



God honors her because she is seen as more righteous than Judah, the ruling family in Israel through whom the Messiah would eventually come forth. Just a few generations later, in Ruth 4:11-12, the leaders bless Naomi, "May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman."

Tamar is the first woman mentioned in the Lineage of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1, linking her forever to the Messiah and redefining her by the association.

strategic

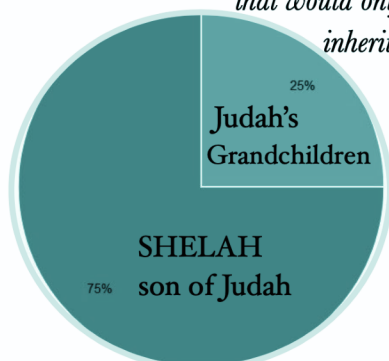
The drama that plays out in this story is worthy of a Hollywood script. Tamar's identity went from being the hopeful wife in the ruling tribe of Israel to being a burden to her father's house and the dread of her in-laws. She was abandoned, lied to, neglected, and probably wrongfully blamed for the death of two men. What a desperate situation and bleak future.

Judah tried desperately to rid himself of his responsibility. He may have indirectly blamed her for both his son's deaths. It seems he turned a blind eye to the evil of his sons. She patiently waited for what was rightfully hers—always holding her tongue. She didn't advocate for herself to Judah or pressure the elders to make him accountable to keep the custom. Her strategic actions created a crisis for Judah. This would require him to be accountable before the city elders and force his hand.

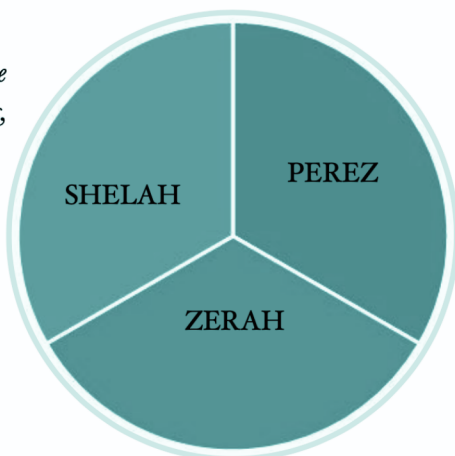
She set actions in motion and then waited to present all the proof until she was before the elders at the city gate. His neglect of the customary laws was on full display before the elders of the city rulers. He finds himself publicly shamed and now responsible for her life and that of their children. It was now required of him to take her as his wife.

She utilized the laws and practices of the culture to provide her an inheritance in the line of Judah. It shifted the birthright and inheritance to her son giving them a larger portion of the whole.

If she had a son through Shelah that would only be a grandchild, inheriting at most 25%.



But as sons of Judah, each would likely see the inheritance split 3 ways, giving her 2 sons the greater portion with 66% of the whole.



q & a

What do you think was going through her head when she first married a prominent ruler's son?

How would Judah's mistreatment of her impact her future?

What do you think Judah's reaction to the accusation of adultery revealed about his own intentions toward her?

When the signet ring and staff were brought forward, why do you think Judah reacted the way he did?

She was relying on the laws to protect her and provide for her. How might that be seeking righteousness?

God blessed her with twins. How did having twins benefit her over Judah's son Shelah?

What dilemma did her actions create for Judah among the leaders?

What would now be required of Judah, and how did that benefit her future?

q & a

Have you ever felt marginalized overlooked, or neglected as Tamar was?

How have you reacted to being mistreated, mislabeled, or misunderstood?

Do we look for revenge or righteousness in bad situations?

personal reflections

2

Rahab

Seen as:
Prostitute
Prominent
Enemy
Pagan

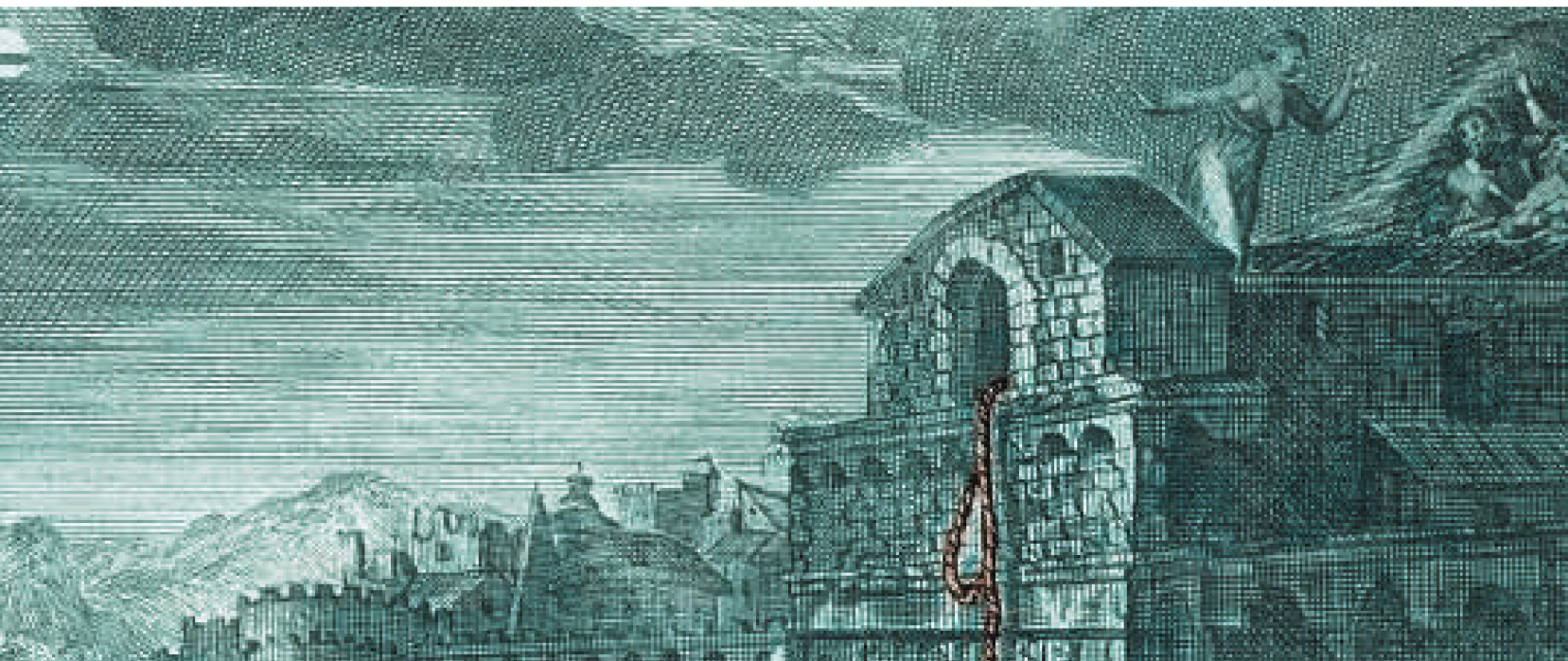


2 Rahab

Joshua 2:1-21

1 Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. 2 It was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." 3 And the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land." 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. 5 "It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." 6 But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. 7 So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.

8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, 9 and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. 10 "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 "When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. 12 "Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, 13 and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." 14 So the men said to her, "Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."



The Promise to Rahab

15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. 16 She said to them, "Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way." 17 The men said to her, "We shall be free from this oath to you which you have made us swear, 18 unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's household. 19 "It shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. 20 "But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear." 21 She said, "According to your words, so be it." So she sent them away, and they departed; and she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

22 They departed and came to the hill country, and remained there for three days until the pursuers returned. Now the pursuers had sought them all along the road, but had not found them. 23 Then the two men returned and came down from the hill country and crossed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they related to him all that had happened to them.

24 They said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover, all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us."

Joshua 6:22-25

22 Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the harlot's house and bring the woman and all she has out of there, as you have sworn to her." 23 So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside the camp of Israel. 24 They burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. 25 However, Rahab the harlot and her father's household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.



Enemy - Canaanites

Deuteronomy 7:1-6

Utterly destroy all enemies

Don't marry them

Don't serve their gods

God warned Joshua and the people as they entered the land not to preserve their enemies or intermarry with them. Their pagan practices were evil and vile, threatening the purity of this new nation God was establishing.

consider

Rahab was probably a woman of influence in certain circles. The King of Jericho sent messengers to her directly, suggesting she had some pull and clout within the political sphere if only because of the secret liaisons she may have kept or was privy to. She had a home installed in the city wall near the gate. From her window, she could see the movement of military and mercantile. She had a large enough home to accommodate her parents, siblings, their families, and guests. It was positioned close to the ramparts with a roof large enough to dry large piles of flax and seasonal crops.

She sat, secure in her lifestyle, protected within the strongest walls of any known city. What fear did she have of rag-tag wanderers from a distant land?

She did fear them. She had heard their stories for decades. It had been 40 years since these nomads had left Egypt. She probably heard the stories of how the Red Sea dried up for them to cross over and knew of how other neighboring cities and kings were struck. Her own King was in a panic, reaching out to her for help. It was very real. War was imminent and could be devastating. Her main concern was for the safety of her family. All of them. She must have been seen as the leader of her family. She was at the forefront of their safety and defense.

Jewish tradition and Rabbis contend that Rahab was also an innkeeper. The spies entering her location would not have been unfaithful in their duty and would have been normal business for her and noticed by the city's military.

It is interesting that her name means to act stormily. It is also used in the books of Job, Isaiah, and Jeremiah when speaking of a sea monster that terrifies. She was a force to be reckoned with. Yet, here she is, the one in terror. Her gods could not save her from what the God of Israel was capable of. The God that created the heavens and the earth is at her doorstep, about to bring vengeance on His enemies.

This God she comes to believe in is very real, and her belief in what He can accomplish causes her to seek mercy and forgiveness as she helps His people. It was an act, a work, based on her faith.

After she lets them down through her window, she ties a red ribbon to the sill and waits for the coming destruction. She certainly had faith that God would do to Jericho what He had done before to others. She begged for mercy from the scouts, and they pledged safety to her if she was genuine.



Matthew 1 references Rahab. She is married to Salmon (some believe it is Joshua, others are unsure), but she is a leader/prince in the tribe of Judah, as mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2: 11,51,54, 55. Rechab is spelled slightly differently than Rahab in Hebrew and Greek, but it sounds the same. Her actions, based on her faith, won her acclaim for generations.

Seeing the devastation of the fallen walls and the bodies of all those she had known killed by the Israelites within the city, she must have wondered if the leader of the Israelites would honor her pact with those spies. Joshua's soldiers escort Rahab to Joshua.

In front of everyone, he publicly spares her life.

She eventually was accepted by the people as she lived among them and married a prominent leader in Israel since the days of Moses. Eventually, they had a son and called him Boaz. He plays a prominent role in the next story.

Salmon was the son of Nahshon, married "Rachab" of Matthew 1:5 (Rahab, of Jericho), and Boaz was their son. According to the biblical genealogies, Salmon is the patrilineal great-great-grandfather of David.

Salmon is mentioned in 1 Chronicles (1 Chronicles 2:10–11), the Book of Ruth (Ruth 4:20, 21), Matthew 1:4-5, and Luke 3:32.



Rahab became a woman of prestige and position within the nation of Israel, not because of what she could perform for men or her hold of secrets against them, but because of her faith in the God of Israel. Regardless of her past and her nationality, she was welcomed in. She was eventually embraced and loved because of her faith.

Ultimately, she became the great-great-grandmother of King David.

strategic

Rahab was being strategic. She had heard the stories of How the God of Israel had obliterated Egypt's agriculture, military, and economic strength four decades earlier, not to mention destroyed all the gods of Egypt in plagues that swept over the countryside.

She undoubtedly heard of the battles between the Israelites, Amalekites Ammonites, and many others during their wanderings in the desert. This wandering band of military nomads was now at her doorstep.

She was concerned for her life, her family, and her household. She placed all her strength, risked it all, and sought the mercy and protection of the God of Israel.

Recognizing the track record of this god in comparison to all the surrounding gods of the lands, every action forward was to help them in their endeavors.

Rahab was spared because she recognized the God of Israel as real and supreme. She believed, and it was accounted to her as righteousness.

James 2:25 speaks of how Rahab's faith was displayed through her actions. "was not even Rahab the prostitute justified by her actions when she welcomed the spies and sent them off on another route"?



q & a

What kind of fear do you think she had as the walls began to shake and fall?

What and who was she concerned for?

Why might her king come to her seeking assistance, How might he have considered her for him to turn to her?

What words would you have used to define her before she believed in God?

Do you think she feared for her safety as the Israelites conquered her home town?

What does Hebrews 11:31 say about her?

What might be some of the challenges she'd face as an outsider?

How was she seen after becoming an Israelite by faith?

q & a

Have you ever been an outsider coming into a new culture or group of people or family structure? What challenges were you met with?

The benefits Rahab received included her family. What does Acts 16:30-31 say? How does it encourage you?

Rahab's reputation was changed when she came to a saving knowledge of the God of Israel. She was one thing and became another. Do you need that kind of exchange in your life?

Are there other elements of Rahab's life that impact you?



personal reflections



3

Ruth

Seen as:
Incestuous
Outsider
Pagan
Enemy



3 Ruth

Ruth 1-4

Naomi Widowed

1 Now it came about in the days when the judges governed, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the land of Moab with his wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife, Naomi; and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. Now they entered the land of Moab and remained there. 3 Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. 4 They took for themselves Moabite women as wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. And they lived there about ten years.

5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died, and the woman was bereft of her two children and her husband.

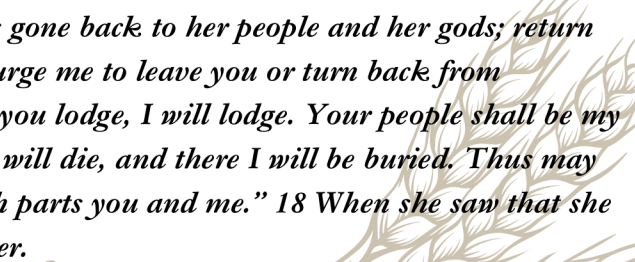
6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the land of Moab, for she had heard in the land of Moab that the LORD had visited His people in giving them food. 7 So she departed from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. 8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 "May the LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

10 And they said to her, "No, but we will surely return with you to your people." 11 But Naomi said, "Return, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12 "Return, my daughters! Go, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said I have hope, if I should even have a husband tonight and also bear sons, 13 would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters; for it is harder for me than for you, for the hand of the LORD has gone forth against me."

Ruth's Loyalty

14 And they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

15 Then she said, "Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods; return after your sister-in-law." 16 But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. 17 "Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me." 18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.



consider

In reading Genesis 19:30-37, we learn of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

After its destruction and hiding in the hills of Soar, the oldest daughter of Lot gets her father drunk to take advantage of him sexually and is impregnated. She gave birth to a son called Moab. As the tribe grew, they were continually contentious against the descendants of Isaac. It was forbidden for Jews to marry Moabites because they were born of an incestuous distant cousin. Moabites were polytheistic and worshipped idols with forbidden pagan rituals.

Ruth, a young and hopeful Moabite, married an Israeli who came to her village, fleeing the famine in his homeland. She fell in love and became part of a family with different traditions and beliefs. 10 years after being together, her husband dies. Before that, her father-in-law had died, but they stayed in Moabite territories because it was where the food was. Now that her husband was gone, what could she do? She had no inheritance because she had no children. So, no land from Israel could be passed down to her.

Culturally, at the time, once a woman married, she became the responsibility of her husband's family for the rest of her life as long as she had heirs. She understood this Israeli family was to be where all her allegiance was. But being widowed and without an heir, she had no inheritance in Israel and would forever be a stranger.

Her mother-in-law decided it was best for her to return and go back to her land and hopefully receive the compassion of her town as a widow. She tried to send her daughters-in-law back to their own families in hopes they would start a new life. She was too old to have another son and help them continue the family's bloodline, and certainly couldn't feed them if they came with her.

Naomi sought to release her and let her start over again. It seemed like a merciful act, a generous act.

To Ruth's credit, her desire to suffer with her mother-in-law was chosen over any benefit she might gain by returning to her people. Ruth would not leave Naomi. Her name,



**Ruth means compassionate
friendship.**



Hard times just got a lot harder. A lot of loneliness and poverty follow. If Ruth goes with Naomi, she, as a Moabite, will probably be ostracized and rejected by the townspeople, making it even more difficult for Naomi. But Ruth's tender and genuine love for Naomi won the day. Together, they journeyed back to Israel.

Once back in the land of Judah, Naomi sought a Kinsmen redeemer. A family member could take Ruth in as a wife and have a child with her, giving her an inheritance that would help support her and Naomi instead of becoming destitute.

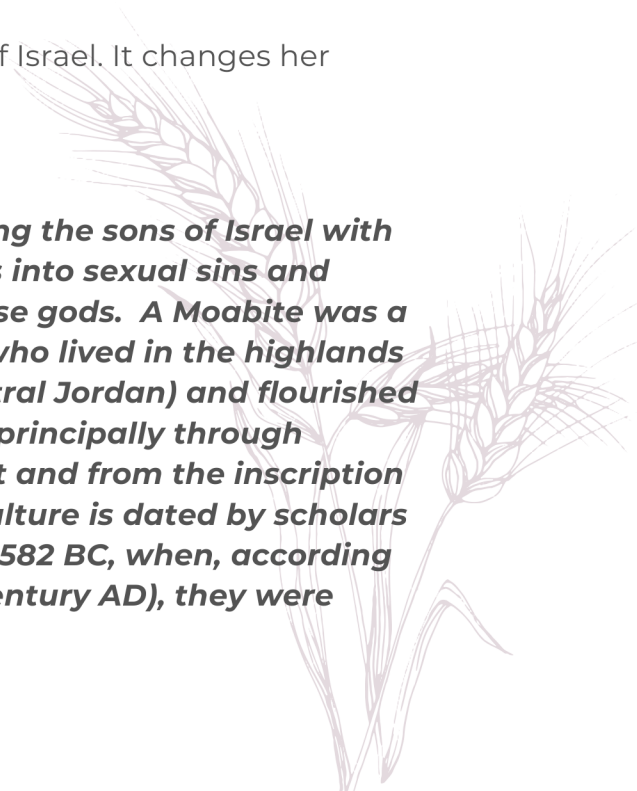
While gleaning through the fields, gathering harvest scraps to help feed her and Naomi, Ruth caught the eye of the owner, Boaz. Boaz was raised by Rahab, a woman from another people group, an outsider herself, with the reputation of being a harlot. He must have understood what God could do and how He gives salvation to all who trust Him and can transform their lives. He became intrigued and eventually fell in love with Ruth. Ultimately, this wealthy landowner took Ruth and Naomi in and gave them a future, a child, and hope.

Boaz, the son of Rahab, would empathize with Ruth and Naomi's plight. His mother was a stranger, a foreigner, a woman with a reputation. Due to cultural aversion, she could use kindness and special compassion to bring her and Naomi into the fold.

Her blessings abound because she pursued the God of Israel. It changes her destiny.

HISTORICALLY

Moabites had a long history of ensnaring the sons of Israel with their daughters, seducing the Israelites into sexual sins and cause them to turn to worship their false gods. A Moabite was a member of a Western-Semitic people who lived in the highlands east of the Dead Sea (now in west-central Jordan) and flourished in the 9th century BC. They are known principally through information given in the Old Testament and from the inscription on the Moabite Stone. The Moabites' culture is dated by scholars from about the late 14th century BC to 582 BC, when, according to the Jewish historian Josephus (1st century AD), they were conquered by the Babylonians.



strategic

Ruth was giving up all she knew to follow Naomi regardless of the consequences. Despite the hardships, she believed in the God of Israel.

Throughout this story, both women deal with painful judgments from others and incredible hardships in their lives. Naomi goes so far as to say her name is Marah, which means bitter. She had so much pain that she couldn't see past it and was at the point of despair. Ruth was more of a blessing than Naomi could ever have imagined.

Ruth would scavenge behind the field workers daily, so she and Naomi had enough to eat. She was not concerned about her reputation. She knew she was a beggar, a foreigner, an outsider. She sought the mercy and compassion to continue gleaning the fields to care for her mother-in-law.

Ruth had to deal with a certain level of ostracism. The history of her people and the contentious relationships between the Israelites and Moabites probably kept her on the outside.

Boaz was a man raised by Rahab, a woman from another people group, an outsider herself, with a previous reputation as a harlot.

Certainly, he understood the dilemma Ruth was in, but also, because of his upbringing and mother's history, he may have been more compassionate to her plight.

Ruth was faithful to her mother-in-law.

She spent her days gleaning behind the harvesters in the fields of wealthy farmers. She may have been mocked, spoken down to, demeaned, or marginalized, which led her to another field.

Yet, she continued. Boaz, the land owner, had favor on her, allowing her not just to glean through his fields but instructing others to leave more than enough for her.

His compassion and care for her personally grew into much more. They eventually married and had a son called Obed, the grandfather of King David.



q & a

How much of Ruth's actions display the meaning of her name.

If Ruth had not gone with Naomi, what would be the future of Naomi?

How did Boaz help change the situation?

How did Ruth become a blessing to Naomi?

When God redefined Ruth, the overflow impacted those closest to her. How can or has God's redefinition in your life impact others?

What did Ruth say to convince Naomi she was willing to sacrifice everything for her mother-in-law.

Ruth 4:12

And may your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring the LORD will give you by this young woman."

In this blessing from the leaders, a tie-back to the story of Tamar is recorded. The faith in God and trusting him for provision serves generations. How can we start such a chain of faith?

q & a

Have you ever felt like an outsider? Did you stay in that situation, and why?

Have you ever been in a situation where your care for another person jeopardized your benefit?

We can all become bitter at times, but often if we look closely enough, a compassionate friend or family member has been there as a blessing to us. Do we recognize them, are we grateful, How can gratitude change our heart?

personal reflections

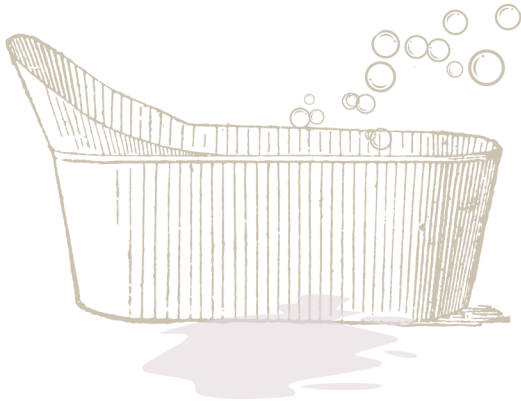
personal reflections

4

Bathsheba

Seen as:
Seductress
Widowed
Demoralized
Victimized





4 Bathsheba

2 Samuel 11 & 12

David and Bathsheba

1 In the spring, at the time when kings march out to war, David sent out Joab and his servants with the whole army of Israel. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah, but David remained in Jerusalem.

2 One evening David got up from his bed and strolled around on the roof of the palace. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing—a very beautiful woman.

3 So David sent and inquired about the woman, and he was told, “This is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.”

4 Then David sent messengers to get her, and when she came to him, he slept with her. (Now she had just purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned home. 5 And the woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, “I am pregnant.”

6 At this, David sent orders to Joab: “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” So Joab sent him to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the troops were doing with the war. 8 Then he said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.”

So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king followed him. 9 But Uriah slept at the door of the palace with all his master’s servants; he did not go down to his house.

10 And David was told, “Uriah did not go home.”

“Haven’t you just arrived from a journey?” David asked Uriah. “Why didn’t you go home?”

11 Uriah answered, “The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my master Joab and his soldiers are camped in the open field.

How can I go to my house to eat and drink and sleep with my wife? As surely as you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing!”

12 “Stay here one more day,” David said to Uriah, “and tomorrow I will send you back.” So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next.

13 Then David invited Uriah to eat and drink with him, and he got Uriah drunk. And in the evening Uriah went out to lie down on his cot with his master’s servants, but he did not go home.

David Arranges Uriah’s Death

14 The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. 15 In the letter he wrote: “Put Uriah at the front of the fiercest battle; then withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and killed.”

16 So as Joab besieged the city, he assigned Uriah to a place where he saw the strongest enemy soldiers. 17 And when the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of David’s servants fell, and Uriah the Hittite also died.

18 Joab sent to David a full account of the battle

19 and instructed the messenger, “When you have finished giving the king all the details of the battle, 20 if the king’s anger flares, he may ask you, ‘Why did you get so close to the city to fight? Did you not realize they would shoot from atop the wall?’

21 *Who was the one to strike Abimelech son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman who dropped an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall?*

If so, then you are to say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead as well.'

22 *So the messenger set out and reported to David all that Joab had sent him to say.* 23

The messenger said to David, "The men overpowered us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. 24 Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall, and some of the king's servants were killed. And your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead as well."

25 *Then David told the messenger, "Say this to Joab: 'Do not let this matter upset you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city and demolish it.' Encourage him with these words."*

David Marries Bathsheba

26 *When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. 27 And when the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son.*

But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.

Nathan, a prophet of God, rebuked the king for his unrighteous and heinous acts. Eventually, David marries Bathsheba, and she becomes the sitting queen over his previous wives. They have a second child who is named Solomon, meaning peace. He becomes the next ruling king in succession. They have another son and name him Nathan. These two sons are mentioned in Jesus' lineage in Matthew 1 and Luke 3. Luke traces Jesus' lineage back to King David through the line of Nathan, while Matthew traces it through Solomon, the line of Joseph, his legal father.

"Then the LORD sent Nathan to David, and when he arrived, he said, "There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a great number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one small ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food and drank from his cup; it slept in his arms and was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man, who refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for his guest." David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan: "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! Because he has done this thing

and has shown no pity, he must pay for the lamb four times over."

Then Nathan said to David, " You are that man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: "i anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah, and if that was not enough I would have given you even more."

Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD,"

"The Lord has taken away your sin," Nathan replied. "You will not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have shown utter contempt for the word of the LORD, the son born to you will surely die."

2 Samuel 12

consider

Bathsheba, the beautiful bride of Uriah, lives near the King's palace because of her husband's long and loyal service as a military commander. Bathsheba probably had an incredible amount of admiration for King David when she was small. After all, her father and grandfather were in his army for decades. They were with him before he became king in the days when King Saul hunted David. They were hiding in caves, pillaging Philistine cities, and part of David's traveling band of warriors for many years.

Her husband Uriah was a mighty warrior and away at another battle. She went into the bath, or Mikva, a huge cistern of water gathered from rain on rooftops, to cleanse herself after her menstrual cycle.

This was the regular custom for Jewish women.

The city was dense; the streets were narrow, and there was a building on top of the building. When you live that close to others, you become blind to the activities of others that surround you. You go about your business unaware of those watching, lurking, prying. David's prying eyes stirred the lust in his heart, and he acted on it.

Often, it has been preached that David committed adultery with her, that she had seduced him, and they were both consenting. From the context of Nathan's rebuke and, years later, her grandfather's counsel in a coup, David seems to have abused her. In his lust, he summoned for her. Could she deny him? Perhaps he was calling her to tell news about her husband from the battle. Was he wounded? Was he dead?

What could have been in her head? Wouldn't you go? Her nerves could have been on high alert, expecting horrible news only to have the king she served, respected, and admired all these years take advantage of her in the most dishonorable way.

She was whisked away secretly and hushed. She found out weeks later that she was pregnant. Devastated and ashamed, she was in a terrible dilemma. Her husband was gone for a considerable time; if she was found pregnant, she would be considered guilty of adultery and stoned at the gates of the city.

What does she do now?

To outsiders, it may have looked as if the King was amazingly kind to the young widow of one of his high-ranking officials. Nathan knew he was trying to mask his sins. God saw it all and exposed it. He also saw Bathsheba's situation and blessed her while in it.



**Bathsheba's grandfather, Ahithophel, seems to have known and became embittered by David's treatment of Uriah and Bathsheba. He turned on his old friend encouraging David's son Absalom during an attempt at a violent coup against him. It was on Ahithophel's advice that Absalom violated the king's concubines on the roof of the palace in the sight of all Israel -
2 Samuel 16:21-22
What David thought was still secret was obvious to some.**



Unfortunately, when she gave the word to the King, David decided to have her husband, Uriah, come home to have sex with his wife and then make it look like the child would be his. When that didn't work because of the honor of Uriah, King David designed a plan to have him killed in battle, to take Bathsheba as his wife, and to cover up his evil.

When David married Bathsheba, she could have easily been put away, neglected, relegated to his harem, and never seen again. He already had half a dozen wives, concubines, and children.

But David loved Bathsheba; she eventually had been comforted by King David and became his queen. Her next son, Solomon, became David's successor, and eventually, she had three other sons, Nathan, Shammua, and Shobab. Nathan and Solomon are important in the future.

Bathsheba was David's only wife to be considered a ruling queen sitting alongside him. It was her son, Solomon, whom David named to become King after him, and she would sit alongside him as well as Queen and influence him as he ruled.

In the book of Proverbs by King Solomon, it is said that chapter 31 was written about and honoring her.



Truth between the Testaments

All these stories show God's incredible care and concern for these women as He provides for them in marvelous ways. God rescripts their lives, giving them purpose and provision. He became their Advocate, the lifter of their heads, provider, protector, and future.

Jeremiah 29:11 says, 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope.'

What kind of hope does that mean for us in desperate situations and scenarios?

In the previous section, we looked into the lives of four named women. They alone were named in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Their faith and hope in the promises of God brought them into the fold of righteous women, a redefinition by God. Their faith in God pointed them to a savior, a redeemer.

The Biblical heroines like Sarah, Rachel, and Rebecca, among many others, were NOT mentioned. Their faith in God pointed them to a savior, a redeemer.

Those four women were forever changed and redefined by Jesus Christ. Even though they

lived before Christ, their hope and faith in God as their salvation assured the redefinition of their lives. They are forever linked to the King of Kings and Prince of Peace lineage.

What of those women who are 'unnamed,' women lost to obscurity? From now on, the next four women were unnamed, not unimportant. Their direct encounters with Jesus lead them to better understanding and faith in God.

These are the encounters God seeks in the crowds, not to justify sinners in their sinfulness but to call them to repentance so they might have life and have it more abundantly.

“

Jesus Christ redefines all those who come to Him, named and unnamed.

”

These two genealogies publicly declare the redemption and the redefinition of these four women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. They personally experienced the power of God in their lives, as confirmed in these lineages. They are the only women mentioned in this lineage aside from Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Matthew 1 -

The Genealogy of Jesus through Joseph

The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

*Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah was the father of Perez and Zerab by **Tamar**, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon. Salmon was the father of Boaz by **Rahab**, Boaz was the father of Obed by **Ruth**, and Obed the father of Jesse. Jesse was the father of David the king.*

***David was the father of Solomon** by **Bathsheba** who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa. Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziyah. Uzziyah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Abaz, and Abaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah. Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.*

After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel was the father of Abibud, Abibud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

Luke 3 -

Genealogy of Jesus through Mary

*When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, (Mary's line) the son [in-law] of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Hesli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of **Nathan, the son of David**, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nabor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselab, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*

“These women are forever linked to the lineage of the Messiah - It completely redefines them.”

Bathsheba's two sons, Solomon and Nathan, are where the bloodlines of Mary and Joseph converge. She received a double portion.

q & a

If she was found with the child after her husband got back from battle, what would likely be her outcome?

How do you think Bathsheba felt regarding the circumstances?

What would the other wives think of her and any children she might have in the future?

How would this affect the birth order of David's other children and their claim to the throne?

What kind of restitution did God supply to Bathsheba?

How did God move on David?

How did David's repentant heart impact the outcome of Bathsheba's life?

What did God bless Bathsheba with?

q & a

Have you ever been taken advantage of that altered your world as you knew it?

Are you willing to trust that like Bathsheba God sees the circumstance and has the ability to redeem the scenario, and redefine you blessing you beyond measure?

What about Bathsheba's story resonates with you?

personal reflections

5

Woman with an issue of blood

Seen as:
Defiled
Untouchable
Unclean
Impure





5 Woman with an issue of Blood

Matthew 9:20-22

And a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak; for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch His garment, I will get well." But Jesus turning and seeing her said, "Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well." At once the woman was made well.

Mark 5:25-34

A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse— after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. For she thought, "If I just touch His garments, I will get well." Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?" And His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."

Luke 8:43-48

And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You." But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me." When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."



When a woman had a discharge of blood, she was unclean and separated from others. Anyone who merely touched her or sat where she had been seated, needed to bathe and then change their clothes and was still considered unclean till evening. If a man, was intimate with a woman during that time, He also needed to bathe and change and was unclean for 7 days.

consider



19 "If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening.

25 "If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her customary impurity, or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her customary impurity. She shall be unclean."

27 "Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening." Leviticus 15

Imagine the implications of the law. She is isolated from every possible relationship she has: family, loved ones, friends, neighbors. She must live alone because she can't even clean. After all, no one can touch what she touches. For her, it's been 12 lonely years of isolation.

But she hears that Jesus is coming to town. This rabbi who has healed even lepers (which has NEVER been done in Israel) must be the Messiah. In Matthew 9:21, she says, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."

Why the hem"?

What is it about the hem? The word hem also means fringe or tassel in Hebrew. It references the prayer shawl worn by the men, which daily reminds them they are a 'kingdom of priests' and to be holy, observing the law of God. There is a powerful prophecy in Malachi 4:2 that says, "But to you who fear My name, The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings'..." The word "wings" used here is the same as " borders " in Numbers 15:38.



strategic

So the woman knew that if this was the Messiah, then surely if she could get close enough to touch the hem or the borders of His garment, she could receive healing. She was embracing the promise that the Messiah had healing in His wings. She looked upon Jesus and believed He was who He claimed to be.

Why would she think Jesus, this wandering rabbi, maybe the Messiah? In the previous chapter of Matthew 8, Jesus did amazing miracles. There was one miracle no other prophet before him did. He healed an Israeli leper. Leviticus 18-19 instructed the priest on the requirements for a person healed of Leprosy, but it had never been needed before. The word of this healing was filling the streets. Luke 4:27 tells us That there were many lepers in Israel at the time of Elisha the prophet. Yet not one of them was cleansed— only Naaman the Syrian.”

This had to be the Messiah!

This unnamed woman decides, after 12 years of complete isolation and the complete failure of all the medical doctors' attempts to help her, that she is going to risk touching and defiling others to get close to Jesus.

Why would she take such a risk? Or, a better question, why would she think that of all the rabbis in town or her country, this itinerant rabbi with his followers?

When the woman with the issue of blood touched the hem of His garment, she would have touched one of the tassels of his prayer shawl, the wings, or borders of His tallit.

This woman embraced the promise of Malachi 4:2, looking for healing in His “wings.” She looked to Jesus and believed He was who He claimed to be. When she touched the hem of His garment, She was reaching for His healing transferred through His Holiness.



flow of transference

In traditional Judaism, it had long been held that the power to transfer good or evil was so strong and that the profane would defile holy that separation was mandated by an area called 'common.' God warned us to keep things separate. Laws were set up, and the tabernacle and sacrifices displayed the principle.

Priests were not to touch dead bodies, and women were separated during menstruation. Lepers cried out in the streets 'unclean' to avoid contaminating people. Sinners were not to mix with priests, and Israelites didn't mix with surrounding cultures.

Items and people could never be completely holy because only God is truly holy, untouchable, and unobtainable.

If something or someone were cleansed, at least having been purified, they could be usable as 'holy unto God.' But God, being separated from the depravity of man, kept man safe from His wrath until Messiah could come and reconcile mankind.

If something were considered set apart for holy use, it would become defiled and unusable by God once something unclean touched it. The traditions of men went so far as to believe God stayed separated from mankind because the depravity of man would defile him. The power of transference flowed from bad to good, meaning evil had more power than good.

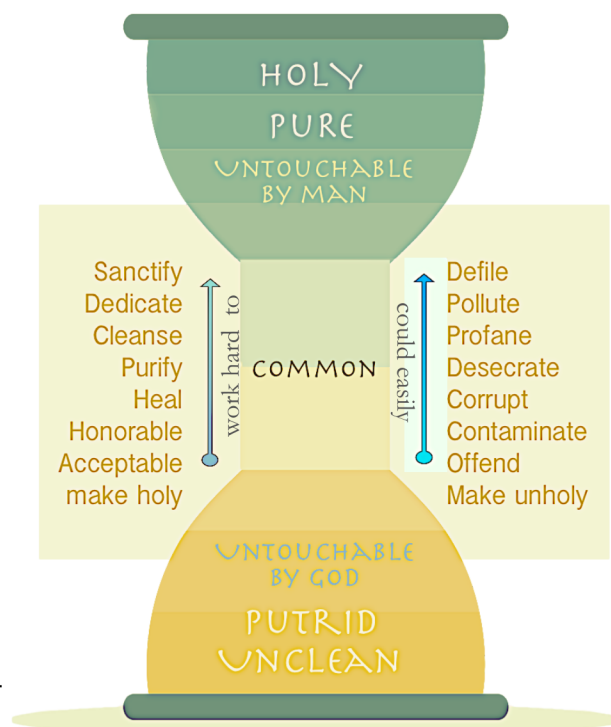
Ezekiel 22:26

Her priests do violence to My law and profane My holy things. They make no distinction between the holy and the common, and they fail to distinguish between the clean and the unclean. They disregard My Sabbaths so that I am profaned among them.

The Common/Clean area was a middle ground between God and Man, a buffer that would protect both parties. It would protect man from God's intense and deserving wrath and protect God from being defiled by man and evil.

They misunderstood God's mercy as man's ability or responsibility to protect God. Yet, God would destroy this idea through Jesus. He could reach out and touch the defiled and evil without being defiled himself.

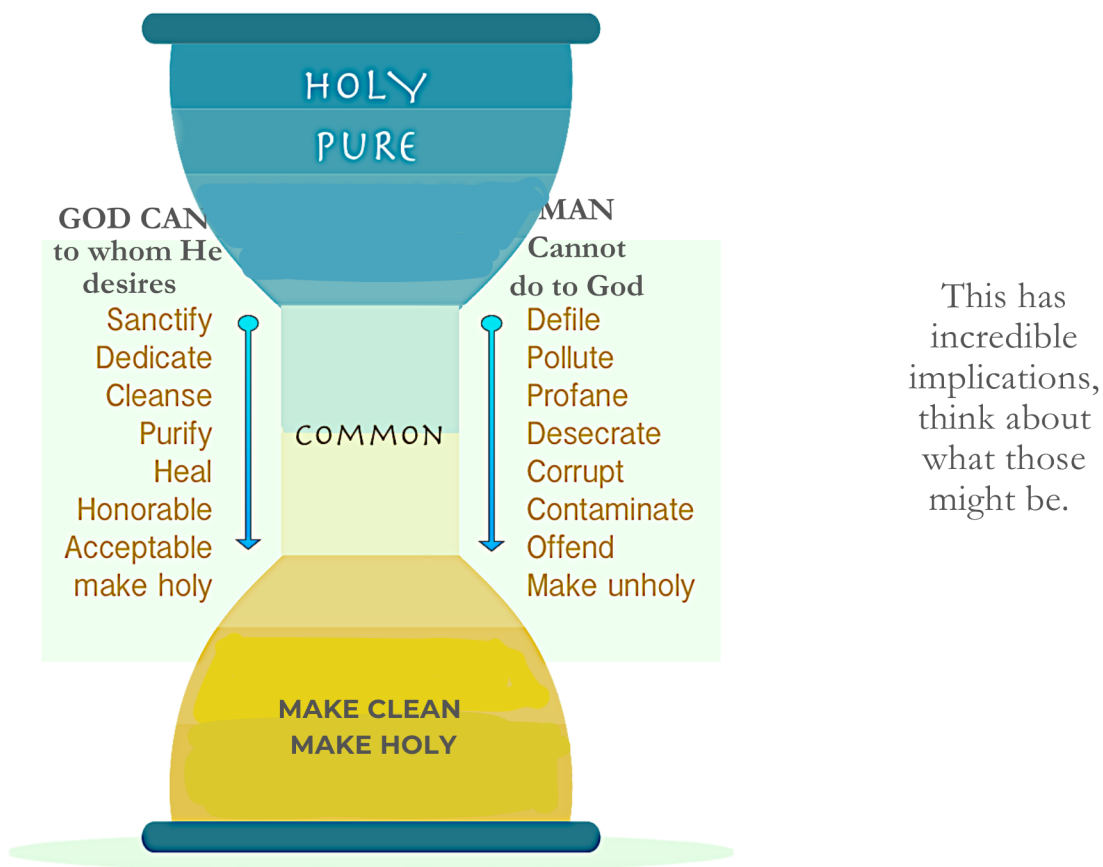
This implied that the defiled could overcome holiness, and man was responsible for keeping it separate. That enormous effort from man was needed to keep a separation of God.



Jesus flipped the flow

Jesus flipped the paradigm. This was radical; this was shocking. He touched the defiled and was NOT defiled by them. This was the promise of Messiah. He flipped these tables around, changing the belief order and the power of things.

Jesus also removed the separation, buffer, and common areas. The divine touched the unclean directly. He was not defiled by those He touched or reached out to touch Him. He impacted them with His holiness and reversed their condition! He forgave sin, healed, and made holy that which was putrid!



Jesus displayed He was God in that as He touched the leper, the sick, the dead, the demon-possessed, His power overtook them, not the other way around as previously believed!

None of it could defile him!

Instead, HIS HOLINESS, HIS power, and glory impacted and radically changed the lives of those HE reached out to and touched.

This displayed God's power and upset their religious paradigms.

q & a

What was this woman's life like?

How did it affect her relationship with others?

What was the Mosaic requirement?

What steps had she taken on her own for a remedy?

How would the people have defined her before her encounter with Jesus?

How would intentionally touching Jesus if he wasn't the Messiah and didn't heal her impact him?

How might the healing of lepers and all those who came to Jesus have impacted her?

Her stealth was strategic so as not to be noticed, but how was she?

q & a

How might understanding that Jesus can flip the tables on our situation change something in your life?

Do we see Jesus as more powerful than what we think define and defile us?

How would understanding that God can purify and set us apart as holy impact our lives?

Is there something in your heart and life where you have needed the healing of Jesus?

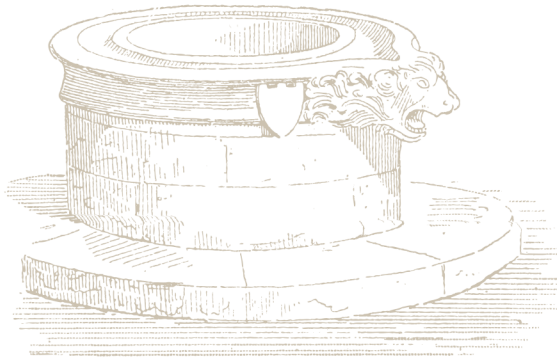
personal reflections



6

Woman at the well

Seen as:
Isolated
Alone
Despised
Ashamed



6 Woman at the Well

John 4:4-30

And He had to pass through Samaria. 5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; 6 and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

The Woman of Samaria

7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." 11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?"

12 "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw." 16 He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20 "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

27 At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?" 28 So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?" 30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

consider

39 From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." 40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 Many more believed because of His word; 42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world."

After the time of King Solomon, the nation of Israel was divided into two kingdoms. His son, King Rehoboam, had two tribes in the south (Kingdom of Judah), while his servant took ten tribes to the north (Kingdom of Israel). The animosity between the Jews (inhabitants of Judah, the southern kingdom) and Israelites began immediately after the division. Samaria was made the capital city of the northern kingdom (with Jeroboam as her first king).

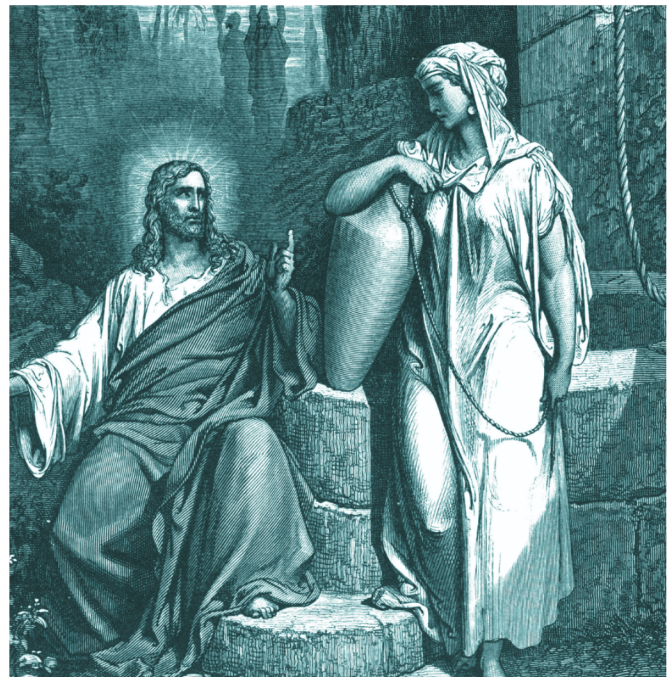
Immediately after the division, Jeroboam changed the worship of the Israelites. The inhabitants of the north no longer traveled to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice and worship. Instead, Jeroboam set up a golden calf in Dan and Bethel and compelled them to worship there.

Years later, this kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians and began to intermarry with the Assyrians, contrary to Deuteronomy 7:3-5. This is why the Jews hated the Samaritans as "dogs" and "half-breeds." Jews despised them

The Samaritans were a continuous source of difficulty to the Jews of the southern kingdom of Judah. When the Jews returned from Babylonian captivity and rebuilt Jerusalem, the Samaritans did all they could to interfere with the work.

Eventually, the Samaritans' religion proclaimed that they had the original copy of the Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy). They rejected all the books of poetry and prophecy.

Here and now, this woman comes during the heat of the day, unlike other women who come in the cool morning hours. She picked the hottest time of day (the sixth hour - noon) when no one else would be present. Why? She didn't want to become a topic of discussion. She preferred staying unnoticed, hidden from view. There was a lot to gossip about her, and she didn't want to give them the opportunity.



strategic

She tried not to engage with this stranger. She immediately recognized he was a Jew. She would do her best to avoid him. It wouldn't be proper for her to talk with him anyway, as men, especially religious Jewish men, wouldn't dare converse with women other than their wives or family members.

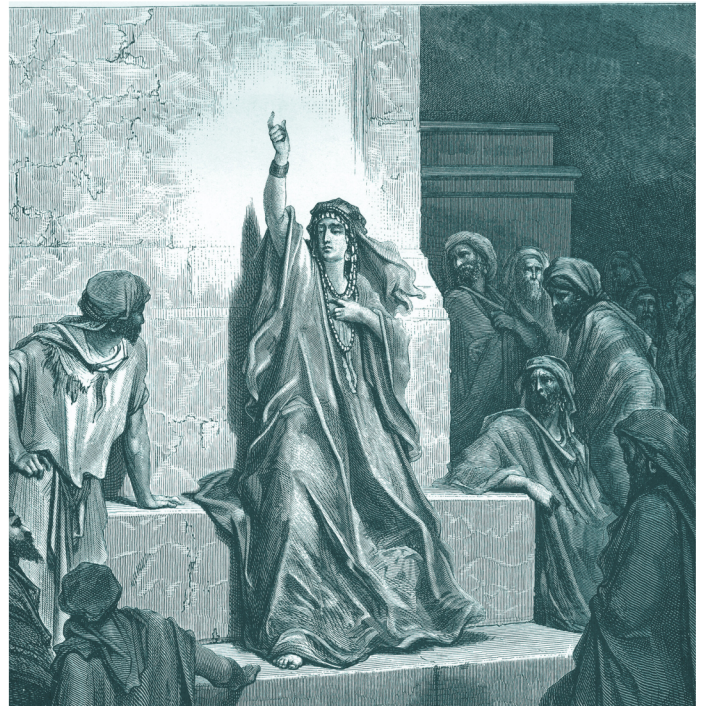
Jesus initiated the conversation.

He asks her for a drink of water. She shoots back with a question, 'Why ask me?' as I'm a woman and a Samaritan. She was shocked by Him or trying to remind him to keep his distance. Jesus then makes a strange statement, implying she should have asked Him for water. She realizes that would be impractical as he cannot draw from the well.

She asks him if he thinks he is greater than Jacob, who dug this well. Jesus makes a statement that she doesn't quite catch the meaning of, 'Whoever drinks from this well will thirst again, but whoever drinks from the water I give them will never thirst again.' Whether her answer was sarcastic or genuine, she thinks of the daily chore and would love to be alleviated of it, and asks for some relief.

Jesus asks her to call for her husband, and she says she doesn't have one. This was true; she didn't have one; she had five and is now living with a man as an unmarried fornicator. Wow. Jesus just exposed her, yet her response is not to recoil but to lean deeper into the conversation beyond her self-preserving practices and menial tasks.

Now that Jesus has her full attention, He shares more intently, and she comes to see He is the Messiah both Jews and Samaritans have been waiting for. She heads back into town, right to the very people she has avoided for years, to share God's salvation with others.



**“Another woman,
redefined by her association
and faith in Jesus”**

q & a

Why did this woman do chores in the heat of the day?

How did her lifestyle adversely impact her?

What kind of reputation may her history with men have created among others in her town?

She didn't immediately grasp Jesus' message - What did it take to clear things up for her?

What was her first reaction to Jesus knowing everything about her?

She was hindered by the religiosity of the cultures, but what did Jesus say to open up a way for her to God?

He engaged her personally, and talked through her life, and beliefs, showing Himself to be the Truth, the Way, the Life. What was her final response to it all?

How were others impacted by what she now believed and acted on?

q & a

Have you ever felt the need to hide from others because they could expose you or belittle you?

Her self-imposed Isolation seemed to keep her safe from exposure, yet Jesus interjected himself into her routine to radically change that. Have you had an encounter with Jesus that seemed to expose the truth of your life to you and give you an opportunity to drink from living waters only He can supply?

Jesus's impact on her life made her like a new person - doing the opposite of what she strategically did daily. Has Jesus' forgiveness done the same for you? How have you changed? How may that have impacted others?

personal reflections

7

Woman caught in adultery

Seen as:
Adulteress
Betrayed
Abandoned
Exposed



7 Woman caught in adultery

John 8:1-11

1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and began to teach them. 3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" 6 They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. 7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." 8 Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. 10 Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."



Mosaic Law

Leviticus 20:10

If a man commits adultery with another man's wife--with the wife of his neighbor--both th

Deuteronomy 22: 23,24

"If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor's wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you.



consider

The day started with the anticipation of a rendezvous with her lover. She most certainly was excited for the moment when they would be together. That thrill was suddenly shattered when men she may have known, perhaps her lover's friends, broke in and pulled her away from him.

Scantly clad, these brutish men dragged her through the city streets. With their disgust and insults, they gathered a crowd and presented her before Jesus as He was sitting down teaching the people gathered around Him. The Scribes and the Pharisees were seeking to find a way to trip Jesus up yet again, and this time, their victim was a woman they caught in the very act.

They presented this woman to Jesus with their accusations of her despicable sin and the law of Moses. They intended to destroy the credibility of Jesus in the eyes of men.

How did they know about the rendezvous? Where was her lover? Why wasn't he there, too? Was this a setup?

The law of Moses was pretty simple. They should both be stoned to death. But where was he? Had he let the elders and leaders know what was going on? If so, was he using her as a pawn and guilty of malice and lying in addition to adultery?

Regardless, There she stood. Her lover abandoned her but not the lover of her soul.

What was Jesus writing in the dirt with His finger? Was He writing her sins, her name, their sins, their names?

The finger of Jesus [God] is significant because it was the finger of God that wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone given to Moses for the people of Israel to live by. This was done two times. The first set was broken by Moses when he saw the leaders and elders having a massive orgy and worshipping the golden calf.

Perhaps Jesus was writing the 10 Commandments, the names of those who had broken the same law they accused this woman of or the individual sins of those picking up stones. Whatever it was, along with what he said, convicted them.

According to Jewish tradition, if your name was written in the earth, it was not in the Book of Life. That would be damning and eternal.



strategic

It was a strategic play by the religious men. Perhaps they knew the man involved; maybe they used him to coerce the woman into a compromised scenario. Perhaps they knew of the indiscretion of this man and used it against him to trip up Jesus. Regardless of how this played out, the man was spared the indignity and death penalty for some unknown reason. In contrast, the woman was not considered valuable enough to be protected from the public humiliation and consequence of death.

They used this to incite a crowd's fury against Jesus. Jesus quickly thwarted their plans and pierced their hearts with His simple words. His basic prodding was simply this: Which one among you is sinless and, thereby, has the authority to kill her righteously in God's holy justice? No one could throw the first stone. It smacked them all back down from their self-elevated and self-righteous positions. Jesus alone, sinless, fully God, and fully man, had the authority to exercise the justice proclaimed within the law of Moses.

He was not breaking the law by not doing what it commanded; He was overcoming it, swallowing it up. He saw their injustice, their partiality against her, which was as evil as a murderous heart. They were far more guilty than her. Her sin was against society, culture, and families; theirs was a malicious sin against a life made in the image of God.

He did not excuse her sin in His mercy for her, but in showing her mercy, he commanded her to 'go and sin no more.' He was giving her a second chance to live in His righteousness.



q & a

What could she have been imagining
as they dragged her to stand before
Jesus?

what was the crowd asking?

what was Jesus' response to the crowd?

What was Jesus response to her?

Who was Jesus saying was worthy of
executing this wrath?

Were the Men looking for true justice or
using it to hide their injustice?

What was Jesus' proclamation to her? How might that have redefined her?

q & a

Has anyone ever exposed you to a jeering crowd, or have you played a part in arousing a crowd to call for blood?

As sinful men, we often seek to have others called out for their errors and hypocrisy while neglecting our own. How would Jesus' statements have changed whether or not the stones in your hands would be put down?

Sin is not tolerated in the presence of God; it will not be excused; it all needs to be atoned for, and blood is the only atonement. But Jesus willingly offered Himself in our place that we might become the righteousness of God in faith. Sin is to be exposed, but what steps does Jesus say we should take first? Could you look at Matthew 18:15-20 and see if they followed it?

personal reflections



8



Woman at Jesus' feet

Seen as:
Sinful
Indecent
Unforgivable

8 Woman at Jesus' Feet

Matthew 26:6-13

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon, the leper, 7 a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. 8 But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste? 9 "For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." 10 But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. 11 "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me. 12 "For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. 13 "Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

Luke 7:36-50

36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. 37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, 38 and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."

Parable of Two Debtors

40 And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher." 41 "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

42 "When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly." 44 Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 "You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet. 46 "You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume. 47 "For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven." 49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?" 50 And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."



In John 12, we see another similar story and it is believed to have taken place in Lazarus home in Bethany. He is present at the table, his sister Martha is serving and it is believed to be their sister Mary who is named anointing Jesus with the heavily scented oil.

consider

Jesus was in town again, here in Bethany, in the hometown of his dear friend, Lazarus. He was in Simon's home.

Interestingly, in one account, Simon is mentioned as a Pharisee and, in the other, a leper. Jesus had healed many lepers; perhaps Simon was one of them - We know he didn't have the disease any longer because the law forbids anyone with leprosy from being in public, and as a Pharisee, he would be compelled to follow that law. Certainly, had he not been healed, he would be living outside the city alone or in the leper colony, not here. Regardless of any previous healing, the reputation stuck. The self-righteous religious pride seems to expose itself in this story. His hypocrisy is manifest and denounced by Jesus.

Interestingly, his reputation as a leper never left him. Jesus will not redefine what is not surrendered to him. An unforgiving heart has its leprosy. This man, who is religiously and physically clean, is a Pharisee. His piety was shallow. He had received the mercy of God but was unwilling to see someone else accept it.

“Like Ruth, who laid at the feet of Boaz seeking redemption, this woman displayed her need for a redeemer and a deliverer.”

This unnamed woman was overcome with her desire for Jesus to redeem her. She recognized she had received the forgiveness of her many sins, which was overwhelming. Despite her reputation around town, she could not hold back her intense love, respect, and surrender to him.

Simon didn't consider the desperation he may have felt when he was an outcast to hers now. Yet Jesus compared both of their situations to those of borrowers, someone with debt to others. She has the greater debt and, thus, the greater gratitude.

One who is forgiven much will love much. What Jesus did for her was greater because it was more than skin deep. It set her free spiritually.



strategic

When we trust God with our lives, regardless of how desperate we have become, we will see God validate, vindicate, and take vengeance on our behalf.

These are jaw-dropping stories of redemption, reconciliation, renewal, and hope. Each woman trusted God, and He refashioned their lives.

Transformation of our lives can be complete. We become altogether different when we surrender to God. We exchange our past for His future. In Christ, we are transformed from Infamous to Forgiven, Rancid to Redeemed, Broken to Beautiful, Desperate to Delivered.

We go from Victim to Victor, Trials to Triumphs, Sorrow to Joy, A Mess to A Message, Empty to Fulfilled!

Look up and read how these scriptures relate:

[2 Corinthians 5:17-20](#)

[Romans 12:2](#)



q & a

Can you imagine the apprehension she may have felt walking into the room full of men, disciples, and religious leaders?

How did Jesus respond to the disciple's chastisement of her?

How did Jesus respond to Simon's rebuke of her?

In the scenario poised to Simon, which borrower was he?

Which one was she?

What did the wealthy moneylender do?

How did he redefine her in the presence of those who marginalized her?

What does that mean for this woman?

q & a

How has your past defined you?

How might you be redefined by the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ?

Have you laid your life before Jesus regardless of what others have thought about you?

personal reflections

LOOK FOR MORE OF THESE RESOURCES FROM JOANNA FRUHAUF:



about me

For 30 years, I have ministered to thousands with the transformative power of Jesus' love and forgiveness. When speaking or writing books I challenge each person to dig into God's Word as if mining in a cavern for the precious vein of gold.

When the ore is struck and the Holy Spirit ignites our hearts, If we continue to pursue its course we will acquire invaluable applicable truths. These are riches no-one can take from us, riches we rarely acquire second hand..

It is my hope to see women refreshed in their faith, empowered for the journey ahead and secured by the knowledge of God's Truth.

As such, I write and speak to ignite, inspire, and impact others with the transformational messages of Christ.

Dive head first into the scriptures and secure for yourself the pearls of great price from the depths of its pages!

Joanna Fruhauf

“For in Him you have been enriched in every way, in all speech and all knowledge”,

1 Corinthians 1:5



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