

Jesus' Mothers

Jesus' Mother Mary

The best-known and most-celebrated woman in the Bible is Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was a very brave woman of great faith. It was through her that Jesus had the right to the throne of Israel.

(Mary and Joseph were both descended from David. Remember, Joseph was descended from Solomon, and Mary from Nathan.)

The Law allowed women to inherit (if there were no male heirs) from their fathers if they married into the same tribe as themselves. We know this was the case for Mary because Mary's father was named Heli. Jesus' genealogy in Luke listed Mary's husband as Heli's son. This means that Mary did not have any brothers to inherit from her father, Heli, so Joseph inherited from Mary's father.

It also means she was the eldest, but probably not the only, daughter. Mary's sister was listed as one of the women at Jesus' (her nephew) cross.

John 19:25

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, **and his mother's sister**, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

We don't know how old Mary was when she was told that she would become the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer and King of Israel, and Savior of the entire world. She was a Jew, so she knew that God had promised a Redeemer to Israel.

Isaiah 59:20

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

Luke 1:28-33

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. **And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and**

bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Mary had only one question.

Luke 1:34-37

Then said Mary unto the angel, **How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?** And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Mary had great faith!

Luke 1:38

And Mary said, **Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.** And the angel departed from her.

Mary didn't even pause, like most of us would, to ask, "Do you know what will happen to me when people find out I'm pregnant?" The penalties for fornication, especially for a betrothed woman, even if she is forced into it, were very severe. Mary could lose her life, or at the very least, her betrothed husband, Joseph.

Matthew 1:19-20

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

So Joseph went ahead with the marriage.

There are a few very important points about Mary that everyone ought to know.

The first point is that Mary was a woman of great faith, but she was still a mortal, sinful woman, as much in need of a redeemer as every other Jew

in Israel. Mary's response to her cousin Elizabeth when they met tells us that Jesus is Mary's Lord and Savior, too. She knows her "lowly estate" and she sees the great blessings that God has bestowed on her.

Luke 1:46-49

And Mary said, **My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.** For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from **henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.** For he that is **mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.**

The second thing that we need to understand is that Jesus was the natural son of Mary. In Galatians, Paul tells us that Jesus was "made of a woman."

Galatians 4:4-5

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, **made of a woman**, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus (he that sanctifieth) and the Jews (they who are sanctified) are all “of one,” they are brethren.

Hebrews 2:11

For both **he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one:** for which cause **he is not ashamed to call them brethren,**

The Bible’s focus on genealogies and bloodlines, especially the royal bloodline of David, means that Jesus shared Mary’s DNA, he was actually a Jew of the tribe of Judah, in the line of (seed of) David. He was Mary’s natural son.

John 7:42

Hath not the scripture said, That **Christ cometh of the seed of David,** and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

Acts 2:29-31

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and **knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the**

fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Romans 1:3

Concerning his Son **Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;**

2 Timothy 2:8

Remember that **Jesus Christ of the seed of David** was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

He had a human mother so He had a corruptible body like ours, but without the sin nature that we have. He felt our infirmities and was tested as we are but He was without sin. This is why He is able to help us when we are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but

was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

The Bible shows us that Mary is his natural mother in other ways. We know that Joseph was Jesus' legal father but not natural father. The Bible makes it clear that people supposed that Joseph was his natural father.

Luke 3:23

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (**as was supposed**) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

The Bible also uses Joseph's name (His stepfather) but not Mary's name. She is referred to as "His mother."

Luke 2:33

And **Joseph and his mother** marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

Luke 2:42-43

And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in

Jerusalem; **and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.**

The Bible refers to Mary quite differently. There is never a “supposed” next to Mary’s name. Mary is consistently identified as Jesus’ mother.

Matthew 1:18

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: **When as his mother Mary** was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 2:11

And when they were come into the house, **they saw the young child with Mary his mother**, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

The second chapter of Matthew uses the phrase, “the young child and his mother,” four times in nine verses. Repetition in the Bible is a sign of an important fact. God wants us to know that Mary is truly the mother of Jesus, not a surrogate.

Matthew 2:13

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take **the young child and his mother**, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

Matthew 2:14

When he arose, he took **the young child and his mother** by night, and departed into Egypt:

Matthew 2:20

Saying, Arise, and take **the young child and his mother**, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

Matthew 2:21

And he arose, and took **the young child and his mother**, and came into the land of Israel.

Jesus' 4 Famous Grandmothers

The women listed in Christ's genealogy in Matthew each have their own incredible story. They were each rewarded by God for their faith and bravery.

Tamar

The first one listed is Thamar (Tamar.) She was married to the firstborn son of Judah, Er. Remember, the kings of Israel (after Saul) all came from the tribe of Judah and Er, being firstborn, would have been in the line of kings.

I Chronicles 5:2

For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:

Judah married a Canaanite, against the command of God.

Deuteronomy 7:3

Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

Judah's oldest son, Er, by Shua the Canaanitess, married Tamar, a Jew. But Er was wicked and God killed him before they had any children.

1 Chronicles 2:3

The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah: which three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD; and he slew him.

The Law said that if a man died childless, his brother would take his widow and the firstborn would be the heir for his dead brother's name.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6

If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, **the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.**

Judah told his second son Onan to take on this responsibility for his dead brother Er. Onan did not follow The Law. God killed him as he did his brother Er. Judah was down to one son, and Shelah was a young boy. When you read the following verse, you can see that Judah was also worried that Shelah would suffer the same fate as his brothers.

Genesis 38:11

Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, **Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did.** And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Judah did not follow God's command and did not give Tamar to his surviving son, Shelah, even after he was grown, so Tamar decided to take matters into her own hands. She disguised herself as a harlot and ended up pregnant by her father-in-law, Judah. (The entire story is in Genesis 38.) When Judah discovered Tamar was pregnant by him, he acknowledged that he had given her cause to deceive him. He had not done what was right by her.

Genesis 38:26-27

And **Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son.** And he knew her again no more. And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

1 Chronicles 2:4

And Tamar his daughter in law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five.

Pharez and Zarah were twins. Pharez was born first and appears in the genealogy of Jesus.

Tamar's actions allowed Judah to raise up an heir to his firstborn, Er. Tamar's deception allowed Judah to unknowingly perform the act of the kinsman redeemer that his son Onan, and then Shelah were supposed to do.

Because of Tamar, the bloodline of the kings of Israel would go through Pharez, a Jew, the firstborn of Tamar and Judah, and not through Shelah, the son of a Canaanite woman (Judah's wife, Shua.)

Rahab

The next woman to appear in the genealogy of Jesus is Rahab. She was a Canaanite and referred to as Rahab, the harlot!

She knew what God had done for Israel at the Red Sea and the victories over the Amorites. She had faith that God was the God of heaven and earth. She helped Israel by hiding the spies that Joshua sent into Jericho.

Joshua 2:10-11

For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: **for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.**

Rahab wanted to help Israel's spies, but she also wanted to make sure she and her family was safe. She had a proposal.

Joshua 2:13

And that **ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.**

The men accepted her proposal.

This was the plan. Rahab would use the same red cord that she used to let them down over the town wall, and put it in her window so she could be identified when the soldiers came to conquer Jericho. She would need to get all of her family into her house and keep them there because they could not be protected if they were in the streets when Joshua and his men came.

Rahab's faith and her brave actions helped Israel conquer Jericho, and Israel saved her family.

Joshua 6:24-25

And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. **And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had;** and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

Because of Rahab's faith, only Rahab and her family (who were all Canaanites) were saved from the destruction in the city of Jericho. God rewarded Rehab by putting her in the lineage of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ruth

The next woman in Jesus' lineage is Ruth, a Moabitess.

Ruth was married to a Jewish man, Mahlon, after his parents, Elimelech and Naomi—because of a famine in Israel--took him and his brother Chilion, into the land of Moab to find a better life.

Elimelech died after they got there and, 10 years later, her two sons, both married, died. Naomi decided to go back to her people in Israel. Ruth, her daughter-in-law, in a well-known statement of faith, told Naomi she would go with her.

Ruth 1:16-17

And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

In Israel, Naomi had a kinsman, related to her husband, who could perform the duties of the kinsman redeemer.

Ruth 2:1

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

So Boaz stepped up to redeem Naomi's land, and marry Ruth to raise up an heir to his kinsman Mahlon's name. This is the same law we looked at when Judah's sons were required to raise up a son to their dead brother. The nearest male relative is required to be the kinsman redeemer.

Ruth 4:9-10

And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, **Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren,** and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

So Boaz married Ruth and had a son to carry on her dead husband's name. Because Boaz was in the line of David (Boaz's mother was Rahab) Ruth's and his son was also in the line of David. As you see in verse 17 below, Boaz's and Ruth's son was Obed whose son was Jesse whose son was King David whose son (many generations

down the line,) the Lord Jesus Christ will sit on the throne of Israel in an everlasting Kingdom.

Ruth 4:13, 17

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

¹⁷ And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, **There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.**

Bathsheba

The last woman mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus is Bathsheba. She was first the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and then of King David. She is not mentioned in the genealogy by her name, but by her first husband's name.

Matthew 1:6

And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon **of her that had been the wife of Urias;**

Remember, David had an affair with Bathsheba when her husband was at war.

2 Samuel 12:9

Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? **thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.**

David confessed his sin and God forgave him.

2 Samuel 12:13

And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

God allowed David to have nine children with Bathsheba.

1 Chronicles 3:5

And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shimea, and Shobab, **and Nathan, and Solomon,** four, **of Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel:**

God allowed Bathsheba to become the mother of the wisest of all men, Solomon, who would sit on the throne of his father David. Another of her sons, Nathan, is the direct ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ through His mother, Mary. God blessed Bathsheba indeed!

Jehosheba

There are two women who were not in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ but are responsible for saving people who were in the genealogy. You will see how.

The first of these women is Jehosheba. When her brother King Ahaziah died, his mother, Athaliah, seized power by killing all of the other members of the royal family! Jehosheba hid her nephew, Joash, her brother's son and heir, in the temple for six years while his grandmother ruled Judah.

2 Kings 11:20-21

And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet: and **they slew Athaliah with the**

sword beside the king's house. Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.

Don't look for Jehoash in either Matthew's or Luke's genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is not there. There are people left out of the genealogies for reasons known only to God. Jehoash is known as one of the good kings, so you might expect his name to appear, but it doesn't. Jehoash is, however, a link in the genealogical chain.

So you see that Jehosheba saved Jehoash, who would become a link in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ! She saved the royal line of David!

Esther

The second woman who does not appear in the genealogy, but was very important in preserving it, is Esther. She is responsible for saving all of the Jews from complete destruction.

King Ahasuerus reigned from India through Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty

provinces. He got rid of his queen Vashti for disobeying him, and took Esther for his queen.

Esther 2:17

And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; **so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.**

There was one thing that no one knew. Esther was a Jew and Mordecai, her uncle, who served the king, had asked her not to reveal it.

Esther 2:20

Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

The king had a servant named Haman who didn't think that Mordecai gave Haman the proper respect. When Haman found out that Mordecai was a Jew, he talked the king into issuing an order that every Jew in the vast kingdom be killed.

Esther 3:8-11

And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, **There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws:** therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. **If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.** And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. **And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.**

When Esther found out, she, at great risk to her life, tried to persuade the king to reverse the destruction order.

Esther 8:5-6

And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, **let**

it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces: For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

However, the destruction order, by law, could not be taken back, even by the king himself. So the king issued another order giving all Jews the right, indeed the obligation, to defend themselves from the people sent to destroy them.

Esther 8:11-13

Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey, Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar. The copy of the writing for a commandment to

be given in every province was published unto all people, and that **the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.**

So, you see, Esther was a brave woman who risked her life to save her people, the Jews, from certain and complete destruction. She is listed here in the section of the women in Jesus' genealogy because, without her, there would have been no one left in the royal line of David!