

# the lineage ladies

This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, ~~Tamar~~ Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, ~~Rebekah~~ Boaz the father of Obed, ~~Ruth~~ Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

David was the father of Solomon (~~Naathshelra~~), Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah, Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation of Babylon.

After the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, Achim the father of Elvid, Elvid the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of ~~Mary~~, whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.  
Matthew 1:1-16

## A study on the Women in the Lineage of Christ

along with Tips & Tools on how to  
learn from and fall in love with Scripture

{Neighborhood}

S T U D I E S

Jennifer Clouse & Kay Wyma







# *the lineage ladies*

Tamar

Genesis 38

Rahab

Joshua 2-5

Ruth

Ruth 1-4

Bathsheba

2 Samuel 11-12

Mary

Luke 1-2





**A study on the Women in the Lineage of Christ**  
*along with Tips & Tools on how to learn from and fall in love with Scripture*

Sometimes it's hard to know exactly how to engage with Scripture (especially in the summer.) Compelled by so many reasons to read the Bible, we still shy away. But, rather than let hurdles keep us from experiencing the fullness of what is offered through the Old and New Testament pages, let's dive in together and further discover the mystery of God's love.

The Bible is so much more than a manual on how to live an upright life; it is actually a love story. It's the story of a Creator – with goodness beyond measure – who seeks after and saves his creation. So much did the Creator desire to have deep and intimate relationship, he gave his all to redeem his beloved. (That's us, by the way ☺)

If that sounds almost too good to be true, if that doesn't sound like the Bible you know, or if you know it to be true and want to learn more (with the Lord there's always more) – then pull up a chair and stay for a while. Let's take a girls' trip together through the Bible with a few unlikely & special ladies – those in the lineage of Christ.

*Lineage Ladies* focuses on gaining a better grasp of the Bible in overview while tapping into a few tried and true techniques for personal study. Tracking these stories, we cover the major biblical periods/sections:

- Patriarchs - Tamar
- Exodus/Law - Rahab
- The Judges - Ruth
- The Kings - Bathsheba
- Silent Years to the New Testament - Mary

and encounter life-changing Truth about the Lord, His provision, sovereignty, redemption and so much more.

**Then**, as a fun bonus or even beach read, we can experience more from these amazing stories through a creative historical-fiction account written by **Francine Rivers' *Lineage of Grace: Five Stories of Unlikely Women Who Changed Eternity.***

But first...

**Tips & Tools**

One of the first steps to reading and understanding Scripture is to spend time in it. So, **Begin by making a commitment.** We don't have to bite off more than we can chew. Simply commit to spending time with God over the next few weeks (and hopefully beyond.) It could be 5 or 50 minutes. Don't stress or worry about it. Maybe, consider a set time to open God's Word. Find a quiet spot and ask the Lord to prepare your heart and mind for time with Him.

The keys to this exercise are:

- 1) Commitment
- 2) Honesty
- 3) Commitment
- 4) Accountability
- 5) Commitment
- 6) 100% openness
- 7) Commitment
- 8) Leave any guilt/judgment/pre-suppositions behind and center your gaze on what's ahead!!

And get ready – because prolonged honest-interaction with Scripture promises to change your life. Not based on something we do, but because God promises us:

"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great  
and unsearchable things." Jeremiah 33:3

*(By the way, He always (ALWAYS) does what He says he's going to do.)*

Each day of the following devotional includes very simple prompt questions. They can be short or long, whatever is a blessing to you. They're meant to invite you into the process with only minimal hand-holding. This is a chance for **you** to interact with Scripture as you read it, asking the Lord to teach you along the way. Then journal/answer the prompts in the space provided, in the margins or however works best.

There will also be *Scripture Search* prompts for those who want a little extra. Don't feel like you have to bite off more than you can chew. This study is for you. It's not an opportunity to prove something or to outshine – it's simply an opportunity to learn about God.

- Each time you open the Bible, **begin with PRAYER:** "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18)
- **Read and re-read the passage.** Sometimes the Bible's mysteries can be unclear, even confusing. But no worries. Stretch yourself, think about getting out of your comfort zone, and don't be afraid. The truth is: God is our teacher (1 Corinthians 2:12-13) - and a pretty good one at that. Our role is simple (sort of ☺) – come with



a humble, contrite and teachable heart. Most importantly, come.

Teach me your way, LORD,  
that I may rely on your faithfulness;  
give me an undivided heart,  
that I may fear your name.  
<sup>12</sup> I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;  
I will glorify your name forever.  
<sup>13</sup> For great is your love toward me;  
you have delivered me from the depths,  
from the realm of the dead.  
Psalm 86:11-13

- **Read to know God.** This incredible *living word* is God's Word. There is so much to know about him and He has put himself forth from Genesis to Revelation. He wants us to know Him. Do you believe it? It's true.

We can even learn a little something about Him from a genealogy:

This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

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

David was the father of Solomon (**by the wife of Uriah**), Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah, Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah, 1:11 and Josiah 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, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud, Eliud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of **Mary**, by whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

(Matthew 1:1-16 NET Bible)

What's there to know about God in that? Well, for one thing: the Lord knows each and every one of us by name. Each of us. We, like the folks in this list, are seen and have purpose even when it might feel otherwise. And a few more things:

- These are people, in a family (lots of them least-likely's). Ruth & Boaz were David's great grandparents. (Do you think they were still alive when David was born?)
- The list includes people who were wronged and people who did wrong. The abused and the abuser. The murdered and the murderer. No circumstance is over the Lord. God redeems.
- God is in control. He does what He says. It's not happenstance or by chance. (14 generations, to 14 generations, to 14 generations)
- Each of these names represents a relationship - the good, the bad & the ugly.
- God is working/listening even when it might feel like He's forgotten/can't hear. "And after the deportation to Babylon," Jechoniah, Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Zadok, Achim..." After 400 years of silence on God's part, it's clear that He has not forgotten. **Then**, "Joseph the husband of Mary..."
- God is patient. The unfolding of his plans can take YEARS. But He is faithful and just and good and right and compassionate. And He *remembers*.
- Jesus is the end of the lineage lists. No more lists after this one. He's it. Jesus is the fulfillment of a promise made thousands of years earlier in a Garden. God keeps His promises – ALWAYS. He IS faithful.

And it's the women in that genealogy through whom we will get to know God a little better.

We're excited and hope you are too. This is a *come-as-you-are* party, simply as you are. No worries about what you bring (or don't bring) to the table. Together, let's ask the Lord to keep our hearts anchored on Him, to teach us and to help us in our unbelief.

"...But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:21b-24)

As noted above, each day of this study includes space for you to "journal" your thoughts as you go through the readings. It's a good idea to keep an account of what God is teaching you. Research has shown that the more senses we use in learning, the longer we will retain the information. Reading (eyes), speaking (mouth/maybe taste ☺), hearing a friend's response and the words out of your own mouth (ears), writing/journaling (touch) – not sure if we could get to a smell function, but 4 out of 5 isn't too shabby.

Stick to your guns. Stay the course. Take it one day at a time. If you snooze your clock, find some other times during the day – alone. The day isn't over until your head hits the pillow and your eyes are shut.

More than anything **HAVE FUN**. Enjoy and sink into all the wonderful things (even when some may be hard to swallow) the Lord has to share and teach us about himself. (And please forgive any typos - we're guessing there might be a few 😊)

## THOUGHTS/NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

"We can be tired, weary and emotionally distraught, but after spending time alone with God, we find that He injects into our bodies energy, power and strength."

-Charles Stanley





## Bible Overview and Study Methods Intro

Before diving in, let's begin with a simple Bible overview in order to get the lay of the land.

Considering the Bible and the way it's put together is something that many of us may never have spent time doing. We often gravitate to parts of the Bible that are comfortable – partly because they're familiar, partly because we may not understand what's going on in the books that seem harder to understand. So, for the purpose of putting a little structure to the process, we hope you find this helpful.

Knowing where we are in Scripture in light of the whole is important. A lot of us know the Bible stories, like Noah or Zacchaeus being a wee little man or Moses. But if we simply take the stand-alone stories, we might miss the overarching time-line that puts these stories into perspective and ties everything together. Knowing the way these work together can take our Bible to being three-dimensional rather than feeling flat. Scripture becomes alive as we put the pieces together. So let's start with the Table of Contents.

If we went to the bookstore, we would see the books arranged by subject and type of literature. Your Bible works in a similar way. It is one book, like a store, housing many books that are arranged by subject and type. The Bible's arrangement begins with two major books: the Old Testament (before Christ) and the New Testament (from Christ's birth – on.)

Interestingly enough, we have a Lineage Lady in each major period-section of Scripture, with Mary taking us into the New Testament (alive during the period of silence at the end of the Old Testament and a part of the Lord's breaking His silence with the Promise coming alive in His Son Jesus Christ.)

- The Patriarchs (Genesis) – Tamar
- The Exodus/Law - Rahab
- The Judges – Ruth
- The Kings – Bathsheba
- Silent Years – segue to the New Testament: Mary

## BIBLE OVERVIEW: The Old & New Testaments

The Old Testament is made up of 39 individual books written by twenty-eight different authors and spans the period of two thousand years. It begins with creation and tells the story of the Jewish people up to the time of Christ.

Within the **Old Testament**, are several books. The *historical books*, arranged chronologically, the *poetic books*, and the *prophetic books*. The prophetic books *proclaimed* the word of God both for the future and for the present. These books were penned before, during and after the time of the Jewish nation's exile from the land promised to them by God.

A natural division that we'll follow for the purposes of our study are:

- **The Patriarchs** covers the Lord's setting apart a people/nation through which redemption will come. Genesis chapter 12 records the covenantal promise made by God to Abraham. A promise that will be fulfilled by Christ through the line of Abraham:

<sup>2</sup> "I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.  
<sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:2-3)

- **The Exodus/Law** covers the period of the Jewish nation in which God leads them out of captivity in Egypt and into the land promised to the Patriarchs.
- **Judges** covers the period of time when the Lord led and governed the Jewish nation. God worked through *Judges* who were not only leaders, but also warriors and sometimes prophets.
- **The Kings** cover an expansive time in the Jewish nation's history as chronicled in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles as well as most of the poetic and all of the prophetic books. The prophetic books, located at the end of the Old Testament, are designated as major and minor simply based on size. They have further designation associated with the time of their authorship. [Time periods: Pre-Exile (PreE), during the Israelite's Exile (E), and Post-Exile (PostE).]
- **The Silent Years** refers to the time between the Old and New Testaments during which the Lord did not speak to the Jewish nation. This ended with the coming of John the Baptist, the Messiah's forerunner.

The following chart will hopefully help give some perspective on the Old Testament's timing:

<b>Historical: the history of the Israelites</b>	<b>Poetry –fits into the context of the historical books</b>	<b>Prophets: Major &amp; Minor (based on length of book) written during the time of 1 &amp; 2 Chronicles/Kings</b>
<b>Genesis</b> – “The Beginnings” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of man (Gen 1)</li> <li>- of sin (Gen 3)</li> <li>- of God’s plan of redemption (Gen 12 – from Abraham will come the seed through whom everyone will be blessed – Our Savior, Jesus)</li> <li>- of the patriarchs/fathers of faith</li> </ul>	<b>Job</b> – timing is during Genesis	<b>Isaiah</b> (PreE)
<b>Exodus</b> – “to leave” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moses</li> <li>- Deliverance from evils of Pharaoh</li> <li>- Introduction of the Law</li> <li>- The Wanderings</li> </ul>	<b>Psalms</b> – written during the time of 1 & 2 Samuel, Kings & Chronicles	<b>Jeremiah</b> (PreE)
<b>Leviticus</b> – “the Law”, expands upon the Law and how we should live so his people can be set apart, so that life might go well with them.	<b>Proverbs</b> – wise words of life written mostly by Solomon (King David’s son)	<b>Lamentations</b> (PreE)
<b>Numbers</b> –counting of the people	<b>Ecclesiastes</b>	<b>Ezekiel</b> (E)
<b>Deuteronomy</b> – “second law”, a restating of the Law and the story of the Israelites	<b>Song of Solomon</b>	<b>Daniel</b> (E)
<b>Joshua</b> - faith leads to obedience which leads to blessing		<b>Hosea</b> (PreE)
<b>Judges</b> – disbelief leads to disobedience which leads to consequence - then to repentance & redemption over & over		<b>Joel</b> (PreE)
<b>Ruth</b> – story of a faithful woman in the period of Judges		<b>Amos</b> (PreE)
<b>1 &amp; 2 Samuel</b> – beginning of the Jewish kings		<b>Obadiah</b> (PreE)
<b>1 &amp; 2 Kings</b> – history of the kingdoms		<b>Jonah</b> (PreE)
<b>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</b> – history of the kingdoms repeated		<b>Micah</b> (PreE)
<b>Ezra</b> (exile/post exile)		<b>Nahum</b> (PreE)
<b>Nehemiah</b> (exile/post exile)		<b>Habakuk</b> (PreE)
<b>Esther</b> (exile)		<b>Zephaniah</b> (PreE)
		<b>Haggai</b> (PostE)
		<b>Zechariah</b> (PostE)
		<b>Malachi</b> (PostE)

[illegible]

The **New Testament** is made up of 27 individual books written by nine different authors. It records Jesus' birth, ministry, death & resurrection as well as the ministry of His disciples. It also includes the prophetic book of Revelation, written by John. The New Testament covers a time period of less than a hundred years. It is made up of **Historical Books** (up until 60 AD), the **Pauline Epistles** (written between 48-67 AD) and the **General Epistles** (written between 48 and 95 AD).



<b>Historical Books</b> Gospels according named according to the author:	<b>Pauline Epistles</b> (authored by Paul)	<b>General Epistles</b>
<b>Mathew</b>	<b>Galatians</b> (48 AD)	<b>James</b> (48 AD, author James, half brother of Jesus)
<b>Mark</b>	<b>1 &amp; 2 Thessalonians</b> (50 AD)	<b>1 Peter</b> (62 AD, author Peter)
<b>Luke</b>	<b>1 &amp; 2 Corinthians</b> (53 AD)	<b>2 Peter</b> (62 AD, author Peter)
<b>John</b>	<b>Romans</b> (53 AD)	<b>Hebrews</b> (67 AD, author unknown)
	<b>Ephesians</b> (60 AD)	<b>Jude</b> (AD 67, author Jude, brother of James, half brother of Jesus)
	<b>Colossians</b> (60 AD)	<b>1 John</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>Philemon</b> (60 AD)	<b>1 John</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>Philippians</b> (60 AD)	<b>1 John</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>1 Timothy</b> (62 AD)	<b>Revelation</b> (95 AD, author John)
	<b>Titus</b> (62 AD)	
	<b>2 Timothy</b> (67 AD)	

### Bible Study Method - Intro

In the same way there are many translations of the Bible (the best of which is the one you're reading!), there are lots of ways to study it. The goals of our effort as we learn through the Lineage Ladies are:

- First and foremost **to inspire us to read and to engage with God's Word**. So don't let the method take over or draw us away from personally engaging with Scripture, lingering in it and asking the Lord to teach us about Him and about how to live life with eyes anchored on Him.
- **To provide a framework** for us to engage in Scripture whether we're studying alone or with a group. The Bible can be overwhelming – even indecision on where to start keeps us from starting. But rather than quit before beginning, let's employ a few simple study tips to prime the pump.
- **To offer some creative ways to help make Scripture come alive** and reveal its relevance to every day life – literally every day. As Solomon points out in Ecclesiastes, "Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever... What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." (1:4,8) Things that applied to the

patriarchs of old, things that informed the disciples, things promised to the Church - apply to us today. Because our Lord, who is "the same yesterday and today and forever," (Hebrews 13:8) resides in the midst.

The method we'll use for this study is based on an inductive Bible study. Inductive basically means slowing down a little, taking the time to consider beyond a simple reading to the context and meaning of it all. Then, after understanding more about what we're reading, we can think about how the passage applies to our own lives.

Going back to the idea of using all our senses, it can be like *eating* a BLT. **Book** – read the passage, **Look** – examine beyond the words to context and meaning, **Took** – what are the take-ways informing our life today.

Here are the basics:

**BOOK** – start by reading – not just reading by seeing the words, but going a step further and *thinking* about them. Park preconceived ideas (any about reading the Bible or even about the passages we'll study since some of them might be familiar) on the curb. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears to be able to see and hear what is available today/each day. The Bible is truly the "living word" – you never know what beautiful nuggets of truth are literally at your fingertips.

**LOOK** – after reading, we can go a step further to consider what the passage means. This can involve things like:

- considering the context (the 5 W's: who, what, when, where & why)
- paying attention to the words: nouns, verbs, articles – their tenses, what they modify, where they point our thoughts
- looking for common themes, patterns, repetitions, etc.
- taking note of the *so that's*, the *therefore's*, the *then's*, etc.
- making lists of easily grouped items, and such

LOOK might sound a tiny bit tedious, but it can be a lot of fun. It's sort of like a map to get us started. It's exciting to see themes come alive as they're repeated – not only in a passage, throughout Scripture. A literal treasure trove of precious promises and truths about God are available. How fun to see them revealed, repeated and come to fruition in front of us – together.

For the purposes of this study, we will rely heavily on Scripture informing Scripture – so please start there. But if there's something you bump into where a little more information would be super helpful, by all means LOOK further. We have access to terrific guidance from outside sources. **Dr. Constable's Sonic Light, Bible.org, Got Questions** are just a few.

**TOOK** – we study the Word of God to know the God of the Word and “to be transformed by the renewing our mind” (Romans 12). **The goal is not to complete the tasks but to *know Him* and live in light of His Word, will and ways.** As we study, let’s always be mindful of *applications*:

- What does this text teach me about God?
- What does this text tell me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day?

Remember, this time in Scripture is for YOU. It’s meant to be a blessing, not a burden. Some days we’ll have lots of passages to BLT. If it’s too much, do only what you can do. It’s not a race or a *good-student* exercise. It’s simply an opportunity to grow in our knowledge of God – walking through Scripture **together** (because lots of times we can learn things about God from each other that we might have missed on our own.)

Each week, we will have the opportunity to gather and discuss in person, but if you can’t be there – connect at [neighborhoodstudies.com/blog](http://neighborhoodstudies.com/blog) where the weekly discussions corresponding with each lesson will be posted.

## **A Special Overlay**

More than anything, our hope is that we will all fall in love with Scripture – truly the greatest love story ever told: God’s love for you – and that we will fall in love with our Creator.

Each and every day, through all the steps of inductive study and whatever other ways we interact with the passages, may our eyes and ears be ever open to see and hear God’s words **about Himself**. As we observe and interpret and before we jump to application – let’s consider and keep a running list of what we learn about God.

### Who He Is:

God is: faithful, trustworthy, a sanctuary, the same yesterday/today/forever, ...

### The things He does (explicit/implied):

God: hears, knows my name, is LORD, never wavers, always says what He means and means what He says, speaks ...

### The things He says, literally:

“But now, **this is what the LORD says** – he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.’” (Isaiah 43:1-3a)

On that note of speaking, God does speak - probably more often than we realize. In the New Testament, most modern Bibles have the words of Jesus in red-letter print. Why not "red-letter" God's words yourself? Highlight in special color, specific to this task, every word/phrase that follows these: "And the Lord God said,..." Then spend some time and consider who said those words and the power they pack. It's a little different than our own words of encouragement to each other.

Which leads us to ...

### Why?

In order to live a life of faith, to understand what it means to find peace and joy regardless of circumstances – we must know the ONE in whom we place that faith and trust. Faith – "confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1) – precedes trust that precedes humble obedience. It's hard to take steps of faith without knowing the One who encourages those steps.

As we read Scripture to know him, we'll learn about all the ways that HE is faithful. We'll see over and over that He never leaves us to walk alone – and that He knows us *by name*, because *we are his*.

"... I am your shield, your very great reward." (Genesis 15:1)

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."  
(Isaiah 41:10)

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

*(...by the way, those 1<sup>st</sup> two verses could be highlighted since they are words spoken by God ☺, the last is already set apart in red-letters since they are Christ's)*

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Ask the Lord to reveal Himself in new and meaningful ways. Journal below your thoughts, hopes, apprehensions, and prayers over the next few weeks.

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## THOUGHTS/NOTES

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## TAMAR

“And may the Lord give you descendants by this woman who will be like those of our ancestors Perez, the son of Tamar and Judah.”  
(Ruth 4:12)

The story of Tamar is interesting to say the least. Tucked in the middle of Joseph’s life-story, Judah and Tamar’s relationship could easily play itself off as a Harlequin Romance or daytime soap-opera. Apparently, fact *can* be stranger than fiction. Within a matter of 28 verses in one chapter, we encounter wickedness, deception, death, manipulation, more death, an apparent prostitute, adultery, a death sentence topped off by plot-twist redemption/restoration.

And someone from this story is in the lineage of Christ?

Yes!

Just that fact alone offers all of us a deeper understanding of the Lord’s love for us, His complete Lordship over every situation, His redemptive power, His commitment and faithfulness to His Promise, and His willingness/ability to meet us right where we are, just as we are. In this interesting story and the supporting passages, may we keep in mind that God not only meets us where we are, but He sees/watches over us in every situation. Then, going a step further, He redeems & restores what looks un-salvageable.

***Begin any time you open God’s Word with a simple prayer,***

***“Lord, open my eyes and ears to your Word today so that I might be used to bring glory and honor to your name.”***

***- or something like that. Namely, let’s get our eyes off ourselves and ask the Lord to reveal Himself to us.***

**Day 1:** Read (BOOK) Genesis 37 – 38. This passage sets-the-stage and shares the story of Tamar.

Upon prayerful reading (even re-reading) and pausing to think/notice, take a few moments to jot down your observations. They can be simple or complex; they can be questions or ideas, maybe even answers to questions you’ve pondered before. They can be ah-ha moments or *how many times have I read*

*this and have never seen* (fill in the blank), ... etc. What do you notice? What stands out to you? What would you like to ponder further?

Though this story might seem a bit unsettling at the onset – hang on for the rest of the ride. There’s more to the story, much of which centers on God, His plan, His faithfulness, mercy, provision, redemption, ... and much more. Tomorrow we’ll go back and do a quick survey of a rather large promise God made, planned to keep (because regardless of what we do, the Lord “will remain faithful, for He cannot disown Himself.” – 2 Timothy 2:13), and brought to fruition through his people – including Judah and Tamar.

**Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implicit.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 2:** Read (**LOOK**). A survey of Genesis, a glimpse of God

1. Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18). Then, read the following passages and jot down **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompt further investigation. It might look like a lot, but these verses give insight into the Lord and his character (often from his own mouth – remember to highlight his words if you'd like) and how this interesting story of Tamar could play such a critical role in the history of our faith.

The Promise:

Genesis 3:15	Adam
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Genesis 12:2-3	Abraham
Genesis 15	
Genesis 18:1-15	

Genesis 26: 1-6	Isaac
Genesis 26: 23-25	

Genesis 28: 10-22	Jacob
Genesis 32: 22-31	
Genesis 35: 1-15	

Jacob's sons: Genesis 35: 23-26

Then: Reuben (Gen. 35:22), Simeon & Levi (Gen. 34:30) lose their "rights" or legal status of the firstborn which is passed to the next in line, Judah.

Though reaching over a considerable span of time, try to consider the contextual questions (5 w's). What do you notice about these patriarchs? their faith? their obedience? the impact of their faith? ... (what else?) More than anything, what do you learn about the Lord? He is active and prevalent in these chapters/verses. What can we learn about his plan? about his protection? about ...? (have fun filling in the blank – writing down all the things you learn about God.) [*Remember to try to read Scripture to know God inasmuch as reading it to inform our way of life?*]

2. **Scripture Search:** We aren't given a lineage for Judah, but it's easy enough to make one ourselves. If you're up for it (and no worries if you're not), look back through the book of Genesis and put together a little family tree. Who is

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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**Day 3:** Read (**LOOK**). Genesis 37- 38.

1. Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.” (Psalm 119:18). Then, read Genesis 37-38 and jot down **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompts further investigation, ...

Consider the 5W contextual questions. What stands out to you in this story? Both of these accounts are tough stories to read and to understand – especially in the case of Tamar since many of the customs during that time don’t apply to us today. But remember to keep one eye anchored on the Lord and His big picture plan. What are the facts? What questions arise? (Consider asking the Lord to give you insight.) What do you learn about Joseph, the brothers, Judah, Er, Onan, Tamar?

2. **Scripture Search:** Read Deuteronomy 25:5-6 and Matthew 22:23-38 to get a better understanding of the Law as it related to Tamar and her rights as Er’s wife. After taking time to read and consider on your own, feel free to consult outside sources (like [soniclight.com](http://soniclight.com))

3. **Special Overlay:** Keep a running list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 4:** Read (**LOOK**). Genesis 43:7 – 14, 44:18 – 45:11.

1. Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.” (Psalm 119:18). Then, read Genesis 43:7 – 14, 44:18 – 45:11 and jot down **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompts further investigation, ... etc. These verses pick up toward the end of Joseph’s rise to 2<sup>nd</sup> in power to Egypt’s Pharaoh – a path paved with highly unusual circumstances including slavery and prison. Tamar’s path to security in Judah’s home was also paved with unusual circumstances. What might this teach us about the Lord, his lordship over circumstances, his relationship with the world’s winning ways?

Consider the 5W contextual questions. Though we aren't reading all of Joseph's history and encounters with his brothers, what can we learn about their situation? What emotions are involved (the brothers, Jacob, Joseph)? What can we learn about the Lord, his provision, his sovereignty, his... (fill in the blank – with LOTS.)

2. **Scripture Search:** If you have time and *only* if you want to (this is not a race or box-checking or a *good-student* moment), consider filling in the blanks with Joseph's rest-of-the-story chronicled in Genesis chapters 39-45. And if you can't put a good book down, 46-50 takes us to the end of the Patriarch period landing before launching us into the Exodus where the Lord's prophecy to Abraham (Gen. 15:13-14) plays out.

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next to us and ways to love them well.

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things whether we see it or not. He's amazing that way. Does that give you comfort? spur questions? (If the Lord is over all things, then why suffering? why death? why did God allow Tamar hardship rather than step in and insulate?... and likely many more.)

Maybe this is where faith comes into the picture as we fight to land on words that are true (words that pack a stronger punch the deeper we know the Lord) about his sovereignty and about His exceedingly abundant love for us: God is good; He is faithful; He is our refuge, our strength and ever-present help in times of trouble – ALWAYS (even when we can only see the moment instead of the entire picture.)

Think back over your week of studying the life of Tamar. Read Genesis 38 once more. Consider and take note:

- What has this text taught me about God?
- What does this text tell me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) had special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference) through the passages we've read. List below anything you learned about: who He is,

the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied). Feel free to look back over the weeks and re-record aspects below:

God has a plan - Gen 12:1-3

God's timing can be long (generations: Gen - Matthew)

The Lord is our "shield" & "very great reward" Gen 15:1

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Then, spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to search your heart and to mold it into a heart that is after His own heart. (1 Samuel 13:14)

THOUGHTS/NOTES

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## RAHAB

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

...

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days.

By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.”

(Hebrews 11: 1-2, 29-31)

After Jacob’s family (the Patriarchal period) relocated to Egypt during a time of famine, the nation of Israel grew and prospered. So much so, they became a blight on the nation of Egypt. As a result, and to take back control, Pharaoh enslaved them. Still, the Lord never lost sight of His people. He heard their cry and tapped Moses to lead them back to land promised to Abraham (in Genesis 12.) This story, documented in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy is worth the read. But for the sake of calling out our Lineage Ladies, we pick up just on the other side of Moses’ death in the book of Joshua.

God tapped Joshua to take over as leader of the Hebrew nation and to lead them into the Promised Land. First on the docket in Canaan’s conquest is the city of Jericho. It was located close to the Jordan River just north of the Dead Sea. Jericho had an excellent water supply and a favorable climate, making it a desirable place to live. Historians and archeologists have given Jericho the distinction of being the world’s oldest city. Its location made it the gateway to the heartland of Canaan, a key to gaining control of the land.

Before embarking upon conquest, Joshua sent two spies into Jericho to scout for information. This is where Rahab comes into the picture.

**Day 1:** Read (**BOOK**) Joshua 1-6.

Reading six chapters might sound like a lot, but it really only takes 15-20 minutes for a leisurely read. Maybe 40 for those who like to sit, ponder and get side-tracked on Scripture-searching for cross references. Upon prayerful reading and pausing to think/notice, take a few moments to jot down your observations. They can be simple or complex; they can be questions or ideas, maybe even answers to questions you've pondered before. They can be ah-ha moments or *how many times have I read this and have never seen* (fill in the blank), ... etc. What do you notice? What stands out to you? What would you like to ponder further?

**Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 2:** Read (**LOOK**). Joshua 1 & 2

1. Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18). Then, read the following passages and jot down **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompt further investigation. Start with the contextual questions (who, what, when, where & why) and go from there. In Joshua 1 – what did the Lord direct the nation of Israel to do? How did he repeat himself? – why do you think the Lord kept saying these words? What is his remedy to fear? What was Joshua's response?

In Joshua 2: Consider the 5 W's. Who is Rahab? What can we learn about her? What are the reasons behind her actions? What does she know about the Lord? What do we learn about God? ... what else? In these chapters, what questions do you have?

2. **Scripture Search:** Interested in a little background information? Flip back in your Bible to Exodus 1:1-14, 2:1-4, 3:1-22 (what is God going to do?! Key verse 3:14) and 4:1-20 to get a picture of why the Lord's Name precedes him and a glimpse into why Rahab responds as she does.

OR check out another scouting expedition (Numbers 13) for the same purpose as that directed by Joshua (claiming the land the Lord had set aside for the nation of Israel – promised land – a precursor to the epitome of *promised-land* found through Jesus Christ.) What is different about this scouting expedition than a similar one in Exodus? What is the same? What can we learn about refuge/protection? Does it harken back to anything familiar in Exodus?

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 3:** Read (**LOOK**). Joshua 3 & 4

Read Joshua 3-4. Consider and takes note of the 5W contextual questions. What can we learn about the Lord (his power, knowledge, plans, promise, his Lordship over nature/the elements, ...) How did Joshua approach/react to God? What can we learn about the nation of Israel? How does the Lord help the nation of Israel (us) in our disbelief? What do we learn from the stones? What do they mean? Why did they use them to build an altar?

What has the Lord done in your life or lives of people you know/love that warrant remembrance/gratitude? How might God's provision, salvation, steadfastness, ... inform our circumstances today? What can we use to remind us of God's character, deliverance, Lordship, ...? What else?

2. **Scripture Search:** What does “consecrate yourselves” mean/signify (Psalm 51:7, Matthew 3:2, 4:17)? How does this point to Christ (Hebrews 10:1-25)? When is another time that the people met a large body of water that was held back from its path so that people could stand on dry ground? What do these teach us about the Lord, humility, obedience, faith, ... etc?

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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**Day 5: TOOK:** The story of Joshua and Rahab is packed full of adventure. Think back over the week (filled to the brim with information) and spend some quiet time reading again/contemplating the specifics about Rahab in Joshua 2 and 6:22-23.

Consider and take note:

- What has this text taught me about God?
- What does this text tell me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) had special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference) through the passages we’ve read. List below anything you learned about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied). Feel free to look back over the weeks and re-record aspects below:

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Then, spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to search your heart and to mold it into a heart that is after His own heart. (1 Samuel 13:14)

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**Just for Fun:**

Building a literal form of remembrance in the form of an altar with rocks from the dry Jordan River bed would serve the nation of Israel well as they forged their way through battles for the land. We can do something similar. Maybe not with rocks, but with words.



Do you know that research has shown that keeping a gratitude journal actually increases our ability to function – even in the most dire of circumstances? Not only are we reminded of the good things and the Lord’s provision – gratitude pulls our eyes off ourselves and onto God. What stress or hardship is vying for your attention? How can gratitude usher in perspective? Make a list today of things for which you are grateful. Is it hard to start? Go simple – begin with the fact that today you have clothes to wear, breakfast to eat, and go from there.

*Finding gratitude and appreciation is key to resilience. People who take the time to list things they are grateful for are happier and healthier. It turns out that counting your blessings can actually increase your blessings. My New Year’s resolution this year is to write down three moments of joy before I go to bed each night. This simple practice has changed my life. Because no matter what happens each day, I go to sleep thinking of something cheerful. Try it. (- Sheryl Sandberg, Cal Berkeley Commencement speech 5/16)*

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**Not ready to put a good book down?** Read the rest of the book of Joshua. How many times do the words *do not be afraid/do not be discouraged* appear? What usually follows? (Hint: It has something to do with not fearing or being discouraged – and words from the Lord “...for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”)

THOUGHTS/NOTES

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## RUTH

“Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David.”

(Matthew 1:5)

Have you found it interesting – these ladies in the lineage? Not quite the women of finest upbringing or pedigree one might expect to play pivotal roles in bringing to fruition a promise set forth from the Beginning. But the Lord often sees and does things a bit differently than we do. In Isaiah He tells us:

<sup>8</sup>“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways,”  
declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>“As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55: 8-9)

And so, we meet Ruth, a seemingly quiet, hard-working, devoted girl – a Moabite soon to be joined into the Hebrew family of Elimelek by marriage. Ruth’s life wasn’t easy. Widowed early on, she had no children or hopes of finding a place in society. But she stayed positive and remained with her mother-in-law to whom she pledged her loyalty. And in doing so, she met Boaz, her kinsman-redeemer (a term special to each of us, too.)

It’s so fun to think about Ruth being King David’s great grandmother (!) and Rahab being Boaz’s – Ruth’s future husband – grandmother! Did Ruth see David crowned King? Was Rahab at Ruth’s wedding? Who can say - but it certainly makes the Bible come alive when we realize that these are people, not just stories or historical facts.

Ruth lives in Moab during the period of Judges in the nation of Israel’s history. At this time the Lord was Israel’s king. He raised up and acted through Judges – warriors/prophets – to protect and guide his people.

The story of Ruth takes place during a time of peace between Israel and Moab.

**Day 1:** Read (**BOOK**) the book of Ruth.

The whole book?! No worries – it’s only 4 chapters and will probably take around fifteen minutes. Upon prayerful reading and pausing to think/notice,

**Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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**Day 2:** Read (**LOOK**). A small survey of Judges, setting the stage for Ruth

But before diving in, here's a quick overview of the historical period of Judges:

Judges Of Israel	Length Of Rule	Verses
1. Othniel	8 years	Judges 3
2. Ehud	18 years	Judges 3
3. Shamgar	Unknown	Judges 3
4. Deborah/Barak	20 years	Judges 4-5
5. Gideon	7 years	Judges 6-8
6. Abimelech	3 years	Judges 9
7. Tola	23 years	Judges 10:1-2
8. Jair	22 years	Judges 10
9. Jephthah	6 years	Judges 11 – 12:7
10. Ibzan	7 years	Judges 12:8-10
11. Elon	10 years	Judges 12:11-12
12. Abdon	8 years	Judges 12: 13-15
13. Samson	20 years	Judges 13 - 16
14. Eli	40 years	1 Sam 1
15. Samuel	12 years (aprox.) Until Saul made king	1 Sam 2, 7

1. Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18). Then, read the following passages and jot down **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompt further investigation. These verses set the stage for Ruth and give insight into the Lord and his character, often from his own mouth (remember to highlight his words if you'd like) and how another interesting story of Ruth, a Moabitess (see Deuteronomy 23:3-6) could play such a critical role in the history of our faith.

Read: **Joshua 24: 1-15, 28-33; Judges 1:1-4, Judges 3:12-28** (strange account, but the story of Ruth is thought to have occurred during the time of peace that came with it.) Consider the context (5 w's). Then, what do we learn about the Hebrew nation, Joshua, our relationship with fear, the judges, God as King, ... what else?

**Scripture Search:** Before renewing the covenant at Shechem (Joshua 24), Joshua gave a farewell speech to the leaders of the Hebrew nation. It's a quick flip back to Joshua 23 and has many special truths about The Lord sewn within. Truths like: "You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been

2. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself. List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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1. **Read Ruth 1-2.** Consider and takes note of the 5W contextual questions (who, what, when, where & why.) Context can be extremely helpful in the study of historical accounts. What do we learn about Naomi, Ruth, Boaz,

**2. Scripture Search:** More on Moab: Numbers 22:12. There's so much more to story of Balak, Balaam & Moab (numbers 21 – 24), but take a peek at Deuteronomy 23:1-6 to give some insight on the enormity of Ruth's place in Christ's lineage. Then a few, tiny glimpses of our Redeemer: Psalm 34:15-22, Job 19:25-27.

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 4:** Read (LOOK).

1. **Read Ruth 3-4.** Consider the context (5 ws). Where do we find Naomi, Ruth, Boaz? What can we learn about obedience, faith, hope, provision, peace, ...? Where do we see righteous living? In what/whom do Boaz, Ruth and Naomi put their faith? How has Naomi grown from her despair in Chapter 2 to now? How does the story end? Does it look familiar (Matthew 1) ...what else?
2. **Scripture Search:** Leviticus 25:25-28 offers more info on the Kinsman Redeemer as it relates to the story of Boaz and Ruth. This is a precursor to the ultimate Kinsman Redeemer, the Messiah – our Lord Jesus Christ. Sneak peek: Coming up when we look at Mary is a group waiting for the ultimate Redeemer – and they weren't disappointed (Luke 2: 25-38)
3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 5: TOOK:** The story of Ruth provides insight into how the Lord’s plan and dominion over anything the world, religion, socio-economic or racial forces offer. Think back over the week and spend some quiet time reading again/contemplating the book of Ruth. How can the underlying themes and over-arching truths of this story inform our lives today?

Consider and take note:

- What has this text taught me about God?
- What does this text tell me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) had special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

Then, spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to search your heart and to mold it into a heart that is after His own heart. (1 Samuel 13:14)

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## BATHSHEBA

“..and Jesse the father of King DavidDavid was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife...”

Matthew 1:6

A pattern common to man lands us in the story of David and Bathsheba – some seeing, some wanting and a little taking. We don’t always get to the the taking-action step, but rarely a day goes by when we don’t encounter the former. (Just ask the mother of a 2-year-old.)

At the end of Judges, the Hebrew nation looks around, sees something they want then beg and beg until they get it – a king. The Lord appoints Saul as their first king, then David as the second. It is through the line of David that the Lord has chosen to fulfill His covenant (2 Samuel 7, Jeremiah 23, Psalm 132, and more.)

This is where we meet Bathsheba (and a little more seeing, wanting & taking.)

***Remember, begin any time you open God’s Word with a simple prayer,***

***“Lord, open my eyes and ears to your Word today so that I might be used to bring glory and honor to your name.”***

***- or something like that. Namely, let’s get our eyes off ourselves and ask the Lord to reveal Himself to us.***

**Day 1:** Read (BOOK) 1 Samuel 11-12

Though this story might be familiar to many readers, for the moment try to park preconceptions and conclusions off to the side. Maybe even read the story in another Bible translation. Ask the Lord to teach you afresh what He would have you learn from today’s reading.

Upon prayerful reading (possible re-reading) and pausing to think/notice, take a few moments to jot down your observations. They can be simple or complex; they can be questions or ideas, maybe even answers to questions you’ve pondered before. They can be ah-ha moments or *how many times have I read this and have never seen* (fill in the blank), ... etc. What do you notice? What stands out to you? What would you like to ponder further?

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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Before further study of Bathsheba, let's flip back and fill in the context within which we find this lineage lady.

**2. Scripture Search:** If you have time and can't put this good book down, peek back at another interesting lady, Hannah – Samuel's mother. Read 1 Samuel 1 – 2:11 and take note of how the Lord reveals himself in and through her.

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next to us and ways to love them well.

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**Day 3:** Read (**LOOK**). David

Israel asked for and is granted a king. And as the Lord warned, it wouldn't be all they thought it would be. They (like David in 1 Samuel 11-12) saw, wanted and in the form of choosing the world's ways over God – took. Today, let's catch up on David and his rise to power.

1. Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18). **Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13 and 2 Samuel 2:1-7, 5:1-4, and 7.** Start with the contextual questions (who, what, when, where & why) and go from there. What can we learn about Samuel, David, the Israelites and most importantly God? What do we learn about David's heart – why would God would testify "concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'" (Acts 13)?

2. **Scripture Search:** 2 Samuel 7:16 provides a hint/confirmation that the Lord's promise made so long ago in Genesis 3, put into motion with Abraham in Genesis 12 will continue through the line of David. Take a moment to look again at the lineage of Christ in Matthew 1. Have the words started to become more than a boring list? What is the Lord teaching you about Himself through them?

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord reveals to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day4:** Read (**LOOK**). Bathsheba (finally!) and David

And here comes the elephant-in-the-room question: If David is a man after God's own heart, then how could he have done what he did with Bathsheba, Uriah and Joab? Try to park preconceived ideas, answers, conclusions and ask the Lord to open your eyes and heart to what He would have us learn about Him and about ourselves.

1. Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.” (Psalm 119:18). **Read 2 Samuel 11 and 12** – again, slowly, thoughtfully. Begin with contextual questions. Where was David? Why was he here there? Where was Bathsheba? What happened? How did they go about their actions? Why? Then jot down what we can we learn about and from David, Bathsheba, Uriah, Joab, Nathan, David’s attendants, David’s actions. Most importantly – what can we learn about God?

**2. Scripture Search:** Read Psalm 51 and 32. What can we learn from David's outpouring and God's forgiveness, ...?

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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**Day 5: TOOK:** For this week, use Acts 13:13-42 to help you think back over the week. Journal what the Lord is teaching you about Himself and spend some quiet time reading again/contemplating Bathsheba, David and the Lord's faithfulness.

How can the underlying themes and over-arching truths of this story inform our lives today?

Consider and take note:

- What has this text taught me about God?
- What does this text tell me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What verse(s) had special meaning?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day/week?

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Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference) through the passages we've read. List below anything you learned about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied). Feel free to look back over the week and re-record aspects below:

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THOUGHTS/NOTES

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WOW! You're doing GREAT. That was a long week of Scripture. Keep up the terrific effort. Never worry about how much or how little you get done. May our time in God's Word be a blessing and not a burden.





## Mary

“I am the Lord’s servant.”  
(Luke 1:38)

Matthew 1:7-16 provides a glimpse into the timeline between David and Bathsheba’s story, through the kings pre and post exile. All of which is summed up by Matthew’s observation,

“Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.” (1:17)

Which is where we meet Mary.

The story of Mary is well-known across cultures and history – a young virgin chosen by God to give birth to the promised Messiah. But, as is often the case in God’s plan, none of it went off quite in the way preceding generations might have expected or hoped. The highly anticipated Savior/King came with no fanfare – born in a stable, in the presence of animals and shepherds and foreign Magi – the son of a young girl whose heart belonged to the Lord.

**Day 1:** Read (**BOOK**) Luke 1 - 2

Upon prayerful reading (even re-reading) and pausing to think/notice, jot down your observations. They can be simple or complex; they can be questions, maybe even answers to questions you’ve pondered before; they can be ah-ha moments or *how many times have I read this and have never seen* (fill in the blank), ... etc. What do you notice? What stands out to you? What would you like to ponder further?

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive.

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**Day 2: Read (LOOK)**

1. Begin with prayer, “Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word.” (Psalm 119:18). Then, read the passages and jot down initial **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompt further investigation.
2. **Read Luke 1:1 – 38, Matthew 1:18-24.** Consider the 5-W contextual questions, *Who, What, When, Where & Why*. Make note of any ideas/words that are repeated, character traits exhibited, anything that sticks out to you. What is unusual? How might it inform our perspective? What does it teach us about the Lord, his power, his nature? In what ways were Zechariah’s, Joseph’s and Mary’s situations similar and different? How did their reaction to similar situations play out? What else do you see? What can we learn about the Lord in these passages?



Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next to us and ways to love them well.

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1. Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18). Then, read **Luke 1:38-80** and jot down initial **observations**, ideas, questions, things that prompt further investigation.

Beautifully woven into Scripture are songs. Psalms records the largest collection, but songs are scattered throughout the Bible. Miriam and Moses sang after the Lord's deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 15). Deborah and Barak sang after defeating the ruthless Canaanite king, Jabin (Judges 5). And here we find songs sung by Zechariah and Mary after their incredible encounters with the Lord's promise and provision.

Begin with a quick contextual overview (5 W's). What do you learn about each character (Elizabeth, Mary, Zechariah, John)? What stands out to you? Most importantly, what can we learn about the Lord in these passages? Write a list of the Lord's character traits explicitly and implicitly defined in these verses.

2. **Scripture Search:** Take it a step further and think back to the lineage-ladies we've already studied. What kind of song might they have penned? Would any of the Lord's praises/character traits be similar? What does this teach us about God's sovereignty? timing? provision? promise? faithfulness? – keep going. Maybe take some extra time and take a peek at the aforementioned songs in Exodus and Judges. Consider what they reveal about the Lord's unchanging character.

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

Spend time in prayer – ask God to make His Word come alive. Pray that He open our eyes throughout the day to see the people walking next to us and ways to love them well.

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**Day 4: Read (LOOK)**

1. Begin with prayer, "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what you have to show me in your Word." (Psalm 119:18). Then, **Read Luke 2 and Matthew 2** and jot down initial observations, ideas, questions, things that prompts further investigation.

Though Luke 2 might be a familiar passage, try to read it with fresh eyes, asking the Lord to show you something new.

Begin with a quick contextual overview (5 W's). Then spend some time looking at each character group. What do you learn about/from Joseph, Mary, the shepherds, the angels, Simeon, Anna, Jesus? What do these passages reveal to us about obedience?... patience?... faith? What stands out to you? Most importantly, what do you learn about God, his promises, the way He works, ...?

**2. Scripture Search:** Matthew offers many Old Testament references to prophecy. Consider flipping back and checking out the specific nature of these prophecies, the mystery, the fulfillment through Christ's birth. What can we learn? How does this inform our knowledge of God? His faithfulness, sovereignty, love, ... ?

In Luke, the brief story of Anna harkens back to an Old Testament character with the same Hebrew name (Hannah) meaning *gracious*. She praises God for

3. **Special Overlay:** While reading the passages, make a list of what the Lord has revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference). List anything you learn about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied.)

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**Day 5:** Consider and apply (**TOOK**)

As always, begin this time with prayer. Skim back through this week's time in Scripture. If you missed a day or didn't have time to finish reading, use today to do so. Or go back to a passage of interest and take further consideration.

Remember, we study the Word of God to know the God of the Word and “to be transformed by the renewing our mind” (Romans 12). **The goal is not to complete the tasks but to *know Him* and live in light of His Word, will and ways.**

Make a list of what the Lord revealed to you about Himself (with Scripture reference) through the passages we've read. List below anything you learned about: who He is, the things He says/speaks, the things He does (explicit/implied).

He tells us what will happen before it does (L 2:26)

He protects (Matt 2)

- What has this week's text inspired me to do?
- What truths (or promises) do I need to claim?
- What thought(s) will I carry throughout the day?
- What verse(s) would I like to commit to memorizing?
- How has this week's lesson inspired me to anchor my thoughts on the Lord and His truth rather than allowing the ways of the world to inform my thoughts, self-worth, actions, ...?

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Thanks for taking this girls-trip through the Bible. We hope it was a refreshing and inspiring blessing.

Much love, Jen & Kay

