

Redemption and Hope for a New Life

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LEE’S SUMMIT, Mo.—Matthew began his Gospel with a genealogy of Jesus, and he made a point of mentioning three women: Tamar, Rahab and “her who had been the wife of Uriah,” who was named Bathsheba. He did so for a reason.

- Tamar (Genesis 38) through subterfuge prostituted herself to Judah the son of Jacob, the result of which were twin boys, one of whom became an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

- Rahab was a gentile in Jericho (Joshua 2). She was an “innkeeper,” but most traditional sources offer that she also plied the world’s oldest profession. The New Testament confirms this (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25) but also calls her a woman of faith. She is best known for hiding the Israelite spies and lying about it.

- Finally, Bathsheba, “who had been the wife of Uriah,” allowed King David to seduce her and later became the mother of Solomon the wise.

Matthew seems to go out of his way to relate that all three of these women, who by most standards had questionable pasts, became a part of the genealogy of the Messiah.

Think of it. The very Son of God, the Savior of the world, had questionable spots on His ancestry.

But, if we think of it in light of the Gospel, we can understand better the meaning of Jesus’ mission. True, all three women had moments that were considered other than G-rated. (For the record, the men involved in these incidents were no better and arguably worse.)

Yet Matthew mentions them as he does to illustrate not their sins but to give hope for redemption. Yes, they had sinful pasts, but those were set aside.

Consider the messages that are sent to disciples.

- Our past does not need to determine our future.
- In the Messiah, we have hope for a new life and a place in the plan of God.