

Matthew 1:1-17 | The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup> and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, <sup>4</sup> and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup> and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, <sup>7</sup> and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, <sup>8</sup> and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup> and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup> and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup> and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup> And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup> and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup> and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup> and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

<sup>17</sup> So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

## Matthew 1:1-17 | Advent: Mary

This is the third week in our Advent series. Advent is a time of looking back on Christ's coming in the flesh and looking forward to Christ's promised return. When the Son of God took on humanity he did not just take on the appearance of man, but took on all that it means to be human. We all have a lineage and so too does our Lord. The one who is eternally existent having no beginning and no end has taken upon himself an origin story. Matthew, therefore, begins his gospel with a genealogy.

There are many interpretive threads that we could pick up in Matthew's genealogy but this Advent we have followed the thread of the four women; Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. There is of course one more woman mentioned in the genealogy. This week we look at the story of Mary, the mother of our Lord. Your mother.

## 1. Mary in Matthew's Genealogy

Mark 1:16 | and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

This week once again we don't receive that refrain "the father of" when we encounter Joseph, because of course Joseph is not the father of Jesus. Although he is the husband of Mary, and the emphasis shifts to her as she is described as the one "of whom Jesus was born, who is called the christ" She is the fifth woman mentioned in the genealogy and certainly the most important as it is from Mary that Jesus is born.

When Eve sinned in the garden it was because she was deceived by the serpent and neglected by Adam her husband, the one who had received the covenantal instruction from the Lord to not eat from the tree. In their obedience to the serpent, humanity became slaves to Satan. Since humanity is the ruler of creation, that which is ruler of humanity receives as his dominion all that was our dominion. In an enemy occupied kingdom, the freedom of the oppressed and the destruction of the oppressor are the same. Therefore it is in the curse of the serpent that the promise of freedom is given to Eve.

Genesis 3:15 | I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Ever since then, the wise women of scripture have looked towards a future rescue in the promised son. The promised son would be the true husband that Adam was not. He would be obedient to God when Adam was not, he would take on Eve's enemies as his own, when Adam did not, and he would take responsibility for the sin of Eve rather than share in the sin of Eve. So the woman is named Eve, the mother of all living. And in her wisdom she begins looking for the promised son. Of her firstborn Cain she says "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." In Cain's murder of Able she in a sense loses both sons. But she doesn't stop looking and she conceive Seth, and says, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Able, for Cain killed him." Even death did not stop her looking toward the son, such is her faith in the promise of God.

Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, and of course Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba would look towards the promise of God for this coming King. Mary would look too, but unlike all the faithful mother's before her she would look and she would see.

## 2. Paradoxical Promise

Luke 1:34 | And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

In our fallen state we can easily forget that all things are from the Lord. We neglect him as God and consider ourselves creatures of our own making. But God understands this about

our frame and does not leave us wandering in our own confusion but has developed means of snapping us out of our stupor to lay absolute claim on his redemptive actions. One way God does this is by giving us signs of contradiction. When Mary is given the promise of Christ by the angel Gabriel her question is obvious, how? The virgin mother is one such contradiction. An oxymoron even in the words. Impossible, we say. Foolish. But Mary was not so smart as to see beyond the Lord. She knew who she was, who the Lord was, and what the word of the Lord meant.

Luke 1:38 | And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”

Perhaps the only one who could have understood as completely as Mary was Eve. Her husband had God directly as his father. This was a new Creation. Mary too would be the mother of all living.

### 3. The Treasure, Lost.

Mary’s glory would be her willingness to participate in the paradoxical promise of God. This will be shown in receiving her treasure in the Lord and then most completely receiving this treasure by losing it. One of the refrains of Mary’s life is treasuring up what she sees in Jesus. In commiserating with her relative Elizabeth while bearing John the Baptist she would pour out a song of praise, her “*soul magnifies the Lord!*” When the shepherd’s arrive with their news of the angelic announcement, Mary “*treasured up all these things pondering them in her heart.*” Make no mistake it is dangerous to have a treasure. It is safer to value nothing. Of this danger, Mary is warned.

When Jesus was newly born he was brought to the temple by his parents, and a faithful old man is astonished by his dim eyes as they look and see the salvation of the Lord in the infant Jesus. He blesses the boy and Mary and Joseph “*marveled at what was said about him.*” But Mary is given a difficult warning from the man.

Luke 2:34-35 | And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed <sup>35</sup> (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

But there is a moment where she must have felt a failure as a mother. A moment when it could have been said, he must not have truly been your treasure because where was your care and protection? More than a decade after visiting the temple and receiving the word from Simeon, Mary and Joseph visit the temple at the feast of passover as was their annual custom. And thinking her treasure was with them they departed. And for three days after the feast of passover Jesus was missing. Finally after three days he is found.

Luke 2:48 | And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.”

Jesus explains that of course he would be in his father’s house. Which Mary and Joseph didn’t understand. They returned home and Jesus remained submissive to them.

Luke 2:51 | And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

## 4. Mary at the cross

About 20 years later, back in Jerusalem at another passover feast Mary would lose her son again. When Jesus hung from the cross the jews who chanted for him to be put there argued with Pilate regarding the inscription over his head, which read “The king of the Jews” in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. The soldiers, save one, argued together over his tunic. But several women gathered with Mary looking at her son.

John 19:26-27 | When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!  
27 Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Jesus is a good son. He does not neglect the care of his mother. He is not like the pharisees who would deny care for their parents while they made sure to tithe their herbs. But more than that is happening here. He doesn’t call her Mary, or mother, he calls her Woman. And he gives to her as son not one whom the text refers to by name, but the beloved disciple. There was another who was only called woman and instructed to look for the son. Eve. She looked but didn’t see. Tamar looked for the son, but Judah in his cruelty wouldn’t give the husband. Ruth looked for the true husband redeemer. Bathsheba looked for the true king. Jesus speaks to Mary, but he doesn’t say Mary. Don’t you hear? The promise of the true Son long looked for, Jesus finally says, Woman behold your son.

But it is not himself that he is describing, but his disciple. The mother of Jesus becomes the Mother of us all. Mary here stands as a picture of the church herself. That mother established by God which gives birth to disciples, tends us, nurtures us, looks for us and finds us. John, the beloved disciple now looks at Mary his mother to love and care for her, and he looks up at Jesus his brother. Here, as the one true son dies, many sons are brought to glory. All the sons of this mother will be righteous, faithful, and everlasting. Paul writes,

Galatians 4:6-7 | But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.  
27 For it is written, “Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;  
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!  
For the children of the desolate one will be more  
than those of the one who has a husband.”

The Jerusalem above, the church, she is our mother. Rejoice O barren one, the children of the desolate, we might say the children of the one who saw her murdered son will be more than the one who has a husband. Another paradoxical sign, so that we might know it is the Lord's doing. But the paradoxes meet in Christ where the church is born and still stands at the foot of the cross. Pierced in our soul along with Mary as we see two paradoxes meet.

The paradox of the virgin mother gazes up at that other paradox, crucified savior. And just as the passover many years ago when she lost her treasure, three days later, she got him back.