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CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS

By Christian Mommas



A Reflection on Matthew's account of Jesus's genealogy

By Dr. Temi Michael-O

The genealogy of Jesus reveals God's faithfulness, extravagant mercy, and willingness to work through imperfect vessels.

Jesus's genealogy begins with Abraham, a man born into idolatry. Abraham was worshipping idols when God uprooted him from his family and gave him a new beginning. God called Abraham out to start a new family and faith adventure because God is not ashamed of our story.

Tamar, the first woman mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus, was traumatized, abused, and rejected. To avenge herself, she committed incest and conceived twins through her father-in-law. Despite that, God saw it fit to mention her in Jesus' genealogy because God is not ashamed of our imperfect past or story. Also, Tamar's illegitimate children are welcome in God's family because the circumstances surrounding our birth cannot prevent God from using us for his glory.

Rahab and Ruth were foreigners God welcomed into his family. Regardless of our place of birth or nationality, we can become citizens of heaven. Jesus came to make us people adopted into God's family. While Ruth's life exemplifies what it takes to be wife material, Rahab was a harlot—She was not a wife material before God welcomed her into his family and transformed her life. Rahab became the mother of Boaz, a godly husband material. It is reasonable to say Boaz's life gives evidence to Rahab's transformation. Rahab is included in Matthew's account of Jesus' genealogy because Jesus came to take away our shame and make us people of honor (Isaiah 61:7).

David was a man after God's heart. However, the primary mistake he made in his lifetime, destroying Uriah's marriage (1 Kings 15:5), is referenced in Jesus' genealogy. I believe David's sin is included in Matthew's account of Jesus' genealogy because God loves to display the power of repentance and Jesus came to make sure we can always return to God each time we make a mistake (Proverbs 28:13).

Solomon had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines: and his wives turned away his heart (1 Kings 11:1-3). Solomon's sins did not stop God from keeping His covenant with Abraham and David. Jesus is called the son of David, and He came through David's lineage as proof God keeps His covenant (Psalm 89:34).

Some individuals in Jesus's genealogy loved God until they died, while others turned away from God at the end of their lives. Yet, everyone is listed in Jesus's genealogy because God is not ashamed of our story. To display the power of grace, God is not ashamed to be associated with those who have sinned (Romans 5:20).

Despite Joseph's lack of involvement in the conception of Jesus, God includes him in the story because God's ways are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9). Our earthly minds cannot comprehend the mystery of the conception of Jesus, yet, our spirit in union with Jesus's Spirit experiences the mystery of eternal life.

A Reflection on the Holy Spirit and Jesus

By Manoela Paz

Celebrating Christmas is a powerful yearly experience for each one of us. CHRISTMAS is ALIVE, reminding us of what Jesus did for us and that the Holy Spirit, the one the Father sent when Jesus went back to heaven (John 14:16,17), is living in us right now to help us live a life that points to Jesus.

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail." Luke 1:35-37 (NIV)

We see the Holy Spirit's presence throughout Jesus' life—before and at His conception, childhood, baptism, temptation, etc. The work of the Holy Spirit in God's redemptive plan is revealed in Jesus' relationship with the Holy Spirit.

The conception of Jesus through a virgin is due to the Holy Spirit's mysterious work. The same Spirit that overshadowed Mary at that time is active in all believers hearts today.

God sent the Holy Spirit to live inside you and me. When it seems impossible to do life as citizens of heaven because we have a fallen nature and live in a broken world, the Holy Spirit, the power of God, can help us shine the light of Jesus in all our ways. When we yield to the Holy Spirit, we reveal the nature of Jesus Christ.

Yield or respond to the Holy Spirit by being sensitive to His works in your daily life. Let the Holy Spirit do with you as He pleases. Trust the Spirit enough to say: "I am your slave; take me; use your omnipotent power to put me where you want me." If the heartbeat of your life is the glory of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will empower and help you with all His might.

I pray that through your lifestyle, people will know that Jesus Christ is the great Savior, the Son of the Most High God, and the everlasting King of kings.

A Reflection on Joseph's encounter with the angel of the Lord

By Monalisa Mitchell

In the book of Matthew, Jesus's story begins with his genealogy—14 generations from Abraham to David, 14 from David to the exile to Babylon, and 14 from the exile to the Messiah—culminating in the birth of the one whom God referenced to Adam & Eve in the garden (Genesis 3:15) and the prophets speak of throughout the Old Testament.

The story of Jesus comes to life for me in the lives of Joseph & Mary—they were chosen as parents of the Savior to the world. They may have had doubts about such a daunting task, but God provided counsel and peace.

For example, Matthew 1:20 (NLT) says, “As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit.”

An angel of the Lord counseled Joseph (in a dream) to address his doubts about Mary's pregnancy and what he considered (being a man of the law): to divorce her. The angel states Joseph's place and role in the lineage of the Messiah (as son of David) and commands him, “do not be afraid to **take** Mary as your wife”. The Greek translation of the word *to take* is *paralambano*, which means “take & receive.”

The angel of the Lord instructs Joseph to take and receive a huge responsibility, not to be afraid to wed the pregnant Mary because the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The message from God empowered Joseph to believe the truth about Mary's pregnancy, and Joseph demonstrated his faith in God through obedience.

As believers or parents, we may not fully see what our future holds for our work for God's kingdom or our children. However, if we hold fast to God's truth and remember daily the promises He has made to us (and our children), we can have peace and joy. We must never forget that being coheirs with Jesus Christ makes us integral to God's plan for humanity.

Prayer: Father God, I thank you for our Messiah who walked among us in earthly form, empowered by the Holy Spirit. I thank you for the Holy Spirit that brought life to humanity through the birth of our Savior, Jesus.

A Reflection on Mary and Jesus's Relationship

By Mary Mesikapp

There are many sweet stories of Mary and Jesus' relationship—from the first miracle of Jesus turning water to wine at Mary's request (John 2)—to watching Jesus as a child at the temple teaching elders from His wisdom (Luke 2)—to observing Jesus and His disciples building the Kingdom of God (Luke 8). And on the cross, Jesus comforted Mary by telling John to care for her (John 19:26-27). What a love!

God chose Mary, a humble young woman, to be the vessel for the King who saves us all. She answered God's call and fulfilled God's purpose for her life. Mary was blessed as a humble personal witness and chosen as we are to have a personal relationship with Jesus. Mary pondered many things in her heart (Luke 2:19)—her experience with Jesus and the words spoken about Him.

The Christmas season is a period to slow down and ponder Jesus, Immanuel, God with us—He is joy, love, new beginnings, and hope in a chaotic world. Jesus is the Prince of Peace and Lord of Lords. He came as a baby and dwelled among us. He understands human weakness because he took on humanness to gain understanding and compassion for our plight. He is Emmanuel! He is with us; ponder this truth.

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Matthew 1:23 (KJV)

About Christian Mommas

Christian Mommas is a non-profit organization guiding women to advance God's kingdom in mothering and marriage. Our mentorship program and psychospiritual resources promote spiritual and emotional intelligence, tackling global issues such as maternal and child suicide, infanticide, child abuse, and mental illnesses.

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