

May 9, 2021 - Mother's Day

Matthew 1:1-17

The Mothers of Christ
CornerstoneWestford.com

On Mother's Day 2021, Pastor Jonathan and several Cornerstone moms, Monica Romig, [Angela Christoffel](#), Ann Ralls, and Diana Walker-Moyer shared about the mothers and grandmothers of Jesus. You can find each one of their reflections here. Happy Mother's Day to all the biological, adoptive, and spiritual moms of Cornerstone Congregational Church!

1. Mary by Jonathan Romig

Happy Mother's Day! A woman named Anna Jarvis started Mother's Day all the way back in 1908, and it became an official U.S. holiday six years later in 1914. Anna later tried to stop Mother's Day because of how commercialized it became. "[Did you know?](#) More phone calls are made on Mother's Day than any other day of the year. These holiday chats with Mom often cause phone traffic to spike by as much as 37 percent."

Today Mother's Day is a special day to remember and thank our moms; typically our biological or adopted ones, but maybe spiritual moms too. I want today to be a special day at Cornerstone to celebrate the moms in our midst; and I thought it might be encouraging to look at some of the moms of the Bible. But instead of me telling you everything about these mothers, I've asked some of our Cornerstone moms to come and share a little about each mom and something that has encouraged or challenged them from their stories. I'm really excited to hear from them, but first I want to introduce to you these five moms.

These aren't just any moms. They're the five mothers of Christ. Maybe you're thinking, "What?! Jesus only had one mother, Mary." You are correct! She is the first mother I want to talk about.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

Mary was a young woman who lived in Nazareth, a town in Galilee far north of Jerusalem. One day an angel appeared to Mary and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." At first Mary was troubled, but the angel told her not to be afraid, but she had "found favor with God." And that through her would come the Son of the Most High, and they should name him Jesus. In other words, the angel told her she was going to give birth to God's son.

Mary asked how this could be since she was a virgin, and the angel said the Holy Spirit would overshadow her and she would conceive and give birth to a son. Mary's response tells us about her character. "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Whatever God wants, I'll do it.

When Mary gave birth to Jesus, angels announced to shepherds who this child was going to be. They came and worshipped him, and it says, "But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. Mary trusted the Lord and wondered what God was doing.

When Jesus grew older, Mary urged Jesus to save a wedding feast (John 2:1-11). Jesus told her it wasn't his time yet, but she didn't care. Jesus would do a miracle when she said it was time. Haha. Somewhere along the way she seemed to lose sight of God's special presence on him. Mary and Jesus' brothers tried to get Jesus to come home with them (Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21).

If we stop and look at the over-arching narrative of Mary's life; as a young woman she's faithful and blessed. As she grows older she wants Jesus to perform miracles, maybe to show what he can do. Then when he becomes too popular, she doesn't like it. You can only imagine how she must have felt when she watched

Jesus be crucified. Jesus called out to John, the disciple Jesus loved, and told him to treat Mary like his mother (John 19:26-27). Jesus loved her till the end.

How Mary encourages and challenges me.

What I appreciate about Mary is that she is on a journey. When we first meet her, she seems kind of perfect, submissive to God's will, almost ideal. I think church tradition has tended to idealize her. I mean, half the paintings we have of her put a halo over her head! But in so doing it has also made her less approachable. But if we look at her life, yes she honored Jesus, but she also treated him like her son, and maybe even lost site of his special status as God's son first. And yet, Jesus loves her, accepts her, and honors her. We don't honor mother's on mother's day for being perfect, but for being moms and loving us.

And that's the message I want the moms to hear this morning. You're on a journey. Sometimes you're close to Jesus, you're reading your Bible, praying, keeping the kids happy, healthy, fed, and well-behaved, doing all the good mom things, but other times it's really tough, and you feel like it's all falling apart. Whether you're the perfect mom, or having a hard day, you are a mom in need of grace. Jesus loves you. He loves you no matter what, just like he loved his own mother and took care of her, even as he was on the cross. Jesus loves you through the cross as well, offering you his kindness, grace, and love, just like he did Mary.

Jesus' mothers

But I told you today is about five mothers and how they can encourage us. If we read the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:1-17, we read of Mary, but also other "grand-mothers" in his family line. We read of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and "Uriah's wife," Bathsheba. Each one is significant in Jesus' story. The genealogy in Matthew includes these women, signifying their importance, and I want us to do that today too.

What better way to do that and to honor them and all mothers than by asking some of our Cornerstone moms to come and share about these characters, and how they encourage them. So we're going to sing a song, then **Monica** is going to share about **Tamar**. We'll sing another song, then **Angela** will tell us about **Rahab**. We'll sing a song of response to that, and then **Ann** will talk about **Ruth** followed by **Diana** sharing about **Uriah's wife, Bathsheba**. We'll close in worship, praising God for the amazing mothers of Jesus' story, and all the mothers he has given us. Let's sing.

Sources

Keller, Timothy. [*Hidden Christmas*](#). Penguin Publishing Group. Kindle Edition. His book is the inspiration of this Mother's Day message. You can also check out the "[Mothers of Jesus](#)" series at Free Christian Church in Andover, MA.

2. Tamar by Monica Romig

Tamar gets a bad rap when it comes to Bible stories. Not because of the way the story describes her, but the way people often remember her. She is remembered primarily for disguising herself as a prostitute and sleeping with her father-in-law. Granted that's not a great series of actions no matter what the context, but I actually think the context of this case is incredibly important. Because before I started reflecting on the story in preparation for this Mother's Day, I, like many other people, judged Tamar. I judged her to be a woman of questionable moral character who is listed in the genealogy of Christ primarily to show that God can use broken people. After reflecting, I still think that's true, but I also think there's more to it.

Tamar is judged within her own story as well. At first she is judged completely inaccurately. Judah, her father-in-law, judges her to be the problem in her marriage to his son. Her husband, Judah's oldest son, dies.

Judah follows an ancient tradition and tells his second son to marry Tamar and produce an heir for his brother. When it doesn't work out, Judah judges Tamar to be the issue. Now the story tells us that actually it was Judah's sons who were wicked and God smote them. But Judah thinks Tamar is the problem and he sends her back to her father's home to live as a widow and wait for his youngest son to grow up. But the text tells us Judah never intended to give his youngest son to Tamar because he thought she might be cursed and his youngest son would die if he married her. So, instead of caring for her as a member of his family he effectively stamps her forehead "defective merchandise: return to sender" and prevents her from marrying anyone else by telling her to live as a widow and wait for a marriage that will never happen.

In addition to Judah's judgment, Tamar would have felt societal judgment as well. It would've been incredibly shameful to live in her father's house as a widow having not had any children. In her culture this was the ultimate failure.

Have you ever been judged completely inaccurately? Have you ever had people make assumptions about you that were 100% off the mark? How does it feel when people who don't know the whole story decide that you're the one at fault?

As the story continues Tamar gets judged again. This time it's for something she does do. She does put on a veil and sit by the city gate. She does have sex with a man in exchange for the promise of material gain. And she does get pregnant. However it's the rest of the details of the story that make Tamar a bit of a more sympathetic character. Despite the fact that people often talk about Tamar seducing her father-in-law, the narrative doesn't describe it that way. Judah is the one who propositions her. Also the very next chapter is the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. A story where a woman clearly is attempting to seduce, tempt, and forcibly be physical with a man who resists her advances. This is a stark contrast to Tamar who puts on a veil and sits by the city gate. After one encounter she returns to her widow's clothes and returns to her father's house.

Nevertheless when Judah hears that Tamar is pregnant because of an act of prostitution he not only judges her he condemns her. He says that she must be burned to death. Judah does not seem eager to own up to his own moral failures in this department—One has to wonder how Tamar knew her father-in-law would be interested in sex with a harlot—nor does he seem concerned about the innocent life of the child that Tamar is carrying. But the fact remains that his judgment is grounded in reality. Tamar had acted as a prostitute and now she was facing the consequences.

Have you ever been judged for something that you did, that was wrong, and had to endure punishment? Have people ever looked at you and rightfully condemned your actions? Have you been made aware of your own failings and had to face them in a public way?

And then Tamar is judged again. As she is being brought out for her punishment she reveals to Judah that he is the one who has fathered her child. Judah makes the statement "she is more righteous than I." Notice it is not that Tamar is declared completely righteous. Just that she is more righteous than Judah. This is not saying much since up until now Judah has been essentially the villain of the story. However, her actions do seem somewhat vindicated as she gives birth to twin boys and through her older son the line of Judah is blessed. Even to the point where in the book of Ruth she and her son are used as a blessing from the townspeople to Boaz "may your household be like that of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah."

Have you ever been vindicated? Is there an area in your life right now where you are seeking or hoping for vindication?

Tamar has been cast in many lights. The broken woman whose sin God uses for good. The woman who is relentless in her pursuit of justice. The clever woman who uses her wits to make the best of a bad situation.

I think it's important to see her story in light of the broader narrative in Genesis. Before this encounter with Tamar, Judah is not a good guy. After it, he is the one who is willing to substitute himself for his brother Benjamin in order that Jacob, his father, would not be grieved again. Judah earns his father's blessing even as Jacob passed over his three older sons. Tamar offered her body and her actions bring about a new life in Judah. Tamar is judged and condemned yet in the end she becomes a vessel of blessing. In some sense Tamar foreshadows her ultimate descendant. She is the Christ figure of the story.

I do not think the lesson from the narrative is to be more like Tamar. I do think we can see ourselves in her story, and I think we're encouraged to see our own stories through the lens of her ultimate descendant, Jesus.

And seeing as it is Mother's day, I think the story of Tamar has something specifically for moms. Everyone else, you can listen in.

First, the story of Tamar reminds us not to judge other moms. It's so easy to judge other parents for the way they are raising their kids. And moms especially. From the time you're pregnant -- how much weight will you gain? How long will it take for the weight to come off? Are you drinking caffeine while you're pregnant? And it just keeps going once the baby is born -- Will you use formula? Will you go back to work? What kind of child care will you use? Are you co-sleeping? Did you sleep train? And it just keeps going-- What kinds of food are they eating? How much screen time are they getting? Are your kids polite? Rambunctious? Doing well academically? Are they physically fit? What kinds of clothes do they wear? How do they get along with other kids? Are they having trouble in school? Where will they go to college? What are their career aspirations? Are they dating anyone? Married? When will they have their own kids?

We love to judge, in part because it makes us feel better about ourselves. Judah probably felt relieved when he was able to condemn Tamar because it justified his actions towards her. But just like Judah, we don't always have all the information about the situation. And Jesus says, even if you see a reason to judge someone else, a speck in their own eye, make sure to take the log out of your own first.

And let's talk about those logs in our own eyes moms. Because we're gonna have logs. Tamar was judged for things that weren't her fault, but she was judged for the choices she did make too. We're not going to be perfect. We're going to mess up, and make mistakes, and do things that deserve judgment. And that's when the temptation comes to either try to justify ourselves or condemn ourselves. And the story of Tamar reminds us not to do either. Tamar doesn't come up with excuses for why she put on that veil and sat by that gate. And Tamar doesn't allow herself to be wrongfully condemned and put to death. On this side of the cross, we can look to that ultimate descendant of Tamar and know that He too was judged. He too was condemned. He took on our unrighteousness and suffered that consequence so that we can be declared righteous as a result. Moms, we're going to mess it up. But praise God, He forgives us. And he can work through us too, logs and all.

Because ultimately, it doesn't matter what other people think of our parenting. It doesn't matter what I think of Tamar. What matters is what God thinks of Tamar. And what God thinks of you. And if your faith is in Him, He sees you as His child. Holy and dearly loved. The story of Tamar reminds us not to put our identity in how we judge others, or how others judge us, or even how we judge ourselves but instead in our relationship to the true Judge who has declared us righteous in Him.

3. Rahab, Brave & Bold Mother of Jesus by [Angela Christoffel](#)

The mother of Jesus I am speaking about today is Rahab. I want to start her story at the end and rewind back to the beginning in a bit. What we know about Rahab at the end of her life is short and sweet. She was a faithful believer in God, a wife and the mother of Boaz. Matthew 1:5 simply states in the genealogy of Jesus--Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab. Boaz, her son, she raised to be kind, faithful,

generous and accepting of those who had different backgrounds. We know that after her death the writers of the New Testament were impressed with her faith and good works. She is hailed in the hall of faith in Hebrews 11 with men like Noah and Abraham and James 2:25 speaks of her acts in Jericho as righteous.

When you hear about how Rahab ended her life, you think what an amazing woman. If the end of her life was all you knew about, you might be tempted to think she must have been so blessed throughout her life. Her faith and righteous came about because of strife, difficulty and bold brave choices she made. Now let's rewind to the first time we hear about Rahab-it is in the city of Jericho where she is known as the prostitute named Rahab. Maybe not the label you would expect from a woman hailed in the hall of faith.

Rahab's story in the bible is short but action packed. You can find her entire story in Joshua Chapter 2 and Chapter 6. Since Jonathon only gave me up to 7 minutes, I will give you the Netflix synopsis version. Joshua sent spies to Jericho and they ended up staying at Rahab's house. The king of Jericho sent her a message (Joshua 2:3) "Bring out the men who came to you, they have come to spy out the whole land." Rahab lied to the King. Again, maybe not the behavior you would expect from someone James raved about as righteous. (Joshua 2:4-5) She admits the men were there but tells the King they left and says they might be able to catch up. As the King's men are trying to catch up to the spies outside the city gate, Rahab has safely hidden them on her roof.

Rahab boldly asks the spies to not only spare her own life, but also for the lives of her parents, siblings and all who belong to them. She is answered by the spies "Our lives for your lives!". The spies instruct her to tie a scarlet cord in her window, so they will know to spare her and all in her home when they attack. She lowers the spies out her window with a rope and tells the spies to go to the hills and hide for three days.

So, we see how Rahab's story begins with her being a prostitute and a liar. We see how Rahab's story ends with her being one of the mothers of Jesus and hailed in the Hall of Faith. How did she have a complete transformation? What I learned thru Rahab is not to fear bold moves based on faith. Rahab lived in a place that was going to be taken over by the Israelites. Even though the people of Jericho heard about all God had done for the Israelites-parting the red sea, conquering and destroying kingdoms, the people of Jericho around Rahab weren't going to believe in the Israelites God. However, Rahab did believe. Bold choice for someone living on the margins of society-literally she lived on the outside wall of Jericho and had an immoral career. Yet she says in verse Joshua 2:11 "...for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below."

Rahab's name will always be tied to the phrase "the prostitute". However, to me, it is small side note in her story, we all have done things we aren't proud of. What I see in Rahab is a brave woman who made a bold choice to have faith in God. She could have turned in the spies and been done with the drama. However, she heard of the amazing things God had done and believed them. Changing from prostitute to God's secret operative in one smooth move. She was willing to take a risk. In a moment, Rahab went from a town prostitute to a woman instrumental in getting God's people to their homeland.

She took the opportunity God gave her and started down the road to the hall of faith. Like something right out of a spy movie-She came up with the cover story for the men, found a place to hide them. She lied to the King and even sent his men away from the city. She came up with a plan to save her family. She planned the spy's escape. It makes me wonder if the spies had a plan at all! She found a way for her belief in God to transform her story.

Often, we are so practical about our faith. We are so busy as mothers; we forget to take risks. We get busy caring for our families-especially as we have dealt with the pandemic. Let me tell you in all honesty how this story would go if it were me. The two spies knock on my door and ask for my help. First, I would have to think about whether I really wanted to even answer the door. If I did answer it, most likely I would say, "that sounds like an amazing opportunity to help, do you mind coming back in a few days?" You see I would

need to make a pro/con list whether it is wise to do this. Then I would need to think about what will my neighbors think if I do this? Would these new God-fearing people accept me? Then I would most likely sit and worry about whether I would fit in and what would my family think.

So, in short Joshua would be waiting awhile. There are practices to get to, school work to look over, groceries to get, on top of that work. In the important tasks of the day to day of our lives we don't make room for God's opportunities. What started out as two strangers visiting a prostitute became the transformation of Rahab's life. Became the saving of the two spy's lives. It became Joshua's victory over Jericho. Became the saving of her family. It became her salvation and bold faith in God. It became a branch on the family tree of Jesus. That red cord Rahab placed in her window for protection is like the blood of Jesus that offers us protection. I know often, I forget just how amazing that protection is. I forget that protection is worth bold and brave acts of faith.

Our lives may not always offer us the opportunity to become God's spy or secret operative, unless you count me hiding in the bathroom from my family, but I bet if you look around your life there are opportunities to take risks for God. You are brave and this past year has forced us to face the unexpected and the unknown. The risks you take for God and the protection of Jesus, our scarlet cord, offers to our families can have long lasting repercussions. Think about Rahab's risk-it led to changes that lasted generations. Joshua says her descendants are still in that land to this day. She is in the family tree of Jesus, a mother of Jesus. So, no matter where your story is beginning, just remember bold faith and a willingness to take risks can transform your ending.

“By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient”. Hebrews 11:31

4. Ruth by Ann Ralls

I took most of this summary from [the website the Basilica](#). The story starts with a famine in the land of Judah. A man named Elimelek moved his family from Bethlehem to Moab. His wife's name was Naomi and they had two sons.

While in Moab, Elimelek died. Naomi was left with her two sons. They both married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about 10 years, both sons also died.

Naomi, hearing of the Lord's faithfulness to his people in the land of Judah, decided to return there. Both Ruth and Orpah insisted on going with her, but she told them to return to their own mothers instead. Hearing this, Orpah kissed Naomi and left, but Ruth clung to her, saying “Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” (Ruth 1:16)

Realizing that Ruth was determined to accompany her, Naomi set out with her towards Bethlehem. When they arrived in the land, the barley harvest was just beginning. Ruth went to glean (or pick grain) in the fields of a man named Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi. When he saw Ruth working there, he asked his reapers, “Whose young woman is this?” And they told him that she was a Moabite who had come with Naomi.

Boaz then spoke to Ruth, asking her to stay in his fields and offering her his protection. Ruth was awed by his kindness, asking what she could have done to earn his favor. He replied:

“I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not

know before. 12 May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” Ruth 2:11-12

After they spoke, Boaz instructed his other workers to leave extra grain for her to glean.

Ruth returned to her mother-in-law that night and told her where she had worked in the fields that day. Naomi responded with joy, say of Boaz:

“May he be blessed by the Lord, who never fails to show kindness to the living and to the dead. This man is a near relative of ours, one of our redeemers.” – Ruth 2:19-20

Then Naomi instructed Ruth to go see Boaz on the threshing floor that night. So Ruth did as Naomi bade her to, and went down to the threshing floor and uncovered his feet where he lay. Boaz awoke at midnight to see Ruth laying at his feet and was startled:

9 He said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings[a] over your servant, for you are a redeemer.” 10 And he said, “May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. 12 And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. 13 Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you.”- Ruth 3:9-13

After this, Boaz went and spoke to the elders of the city, telling them of Naomi’s inheritance: a parcel of land from their relative Elimelech. He told the redeemer that in taking this land, he would have the duty of marrying Ruth. But the redeemer renounced his claim to the land, and so Boaz bought it for himself. Then Boaz took Ruth as his wife, and together they had a son named Obed. Obed gave birth to Jesse, who was the father of David, the eventual king of Israel.

Ruth and I have one thing in common, we both left our own families and moved to a different land. What amazes me about Ruth is her loyalty to her mother in law with complete trust. She knew she would be despised by being a Moabite. She knew that she would remain poor by being a widow. She knew she may not see her family again. She set aside her own interests and followed Naomi and her God till death. Her love and care for Naomi were so evident that the Israelites took notice. She had never thought of herself and what would become of her by honoring Naomi’s request to go lay at Boaz’s feet at night. God weaved this woman in the lineage to Jesus to show us He too wants to redeem us from the sins that entangle us. This story encourages me to continue trusting God regardless the circumstances. He is our Father who loves us, our provider who gave us Jesus to redeem us through His blood and the giver of eternal life. John 3:16 says “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Original Article: <https://www.nationalshrine.org/blog/ruth-and-naomi-a-story-of-redemption/>

5. Bathsheba by Diana Walker-Moyer

2 Samuel 11: 1-4, 26-27, 1 Kings 1:11-31, 2:13-22, 1 Chronicles 3:5

I have always been grateful for this story of David, “a man after God’s own heart” who committed terrible sins yet repented and was shown God’s grace. What a reassurance for me. Bathsheba is part of this redemption story.

The Bible really doesn't say a lot about Bathsheba yet most of us know the story of David and Bathsheba, or at least the seamier side which was even immortalized in a 1951 movie starring Gregory Peck and Susan Hayward.

I'd like to tell you a little more of what we do know.

Bathsheba was a member of a God fearing family. Her grandfather, Ahithopel, was a valued military and political counselor to King David although he eventually betrayed him. Her father, Eliam, was one of David's officers and her husband, Uriah, was a high-ranking professional soldier, one of the elite "Group of Thirty". Bathsheba was no stranger to the politics of her day.

We do not know how old she was as this story begins but I imagine that she was a young woman and fairly recently wed as she had no children at that time. The story seems to indicate that David and Bathsheba had not met as, after seeing her, he had to send someone to find out about her. Learning that she was the daughter of one of his officers and the wife of one of his soldiers, he sent for her anyway.

Being summoned by the King, Bathsheba had little choice but to go. The scripture says "he slept with her. Then she went back home." 2 Sam 11:4. That sounds a little cold. I wonder what was going through her mind at that time. Was she ashamed, frightened, angry, anxious? In the next verse, we are told, "The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, I am pregnant." Here she seems to be a strong woman. She does not try to hide what has happened but confronts the King with the consequences of his sinful actions.

Unfortunately, this is where David compounds his sin. His initial attempts to cover up the paternity of Bathsheba's child by calling Uriah back from the battle front and encouraging him to go home to his wife fail and he resorts to a plan that will lead to Uriah's death. 2 Sam 11: 6-17 Now, he has added deceit, treachery and murder to his earlier sins of lust and adultery.

Bathsheba is now a widow and "when she heard that that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. After the time of mourning was over, (this may have been about 30 days) David had her brought to his house and she became his wife and bore him a son." 2 Sam 11:26-27 But as Nathan the prophet confronts David with his sin and God's anger, he tells David that "the son born to you will die." 2 Sam 12:4

Scripture describes in detail David's reaction to this, his fasting and praying but says little of what Bathsheba felt. Having had children of my own, I cannot imagine the anguish of losing a child. She and David must have felt the terrible guilt of this child's death knowing that it was a judgement for their sin.

But then, "David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son and they named him Solomon." 2 Sam 12:24. Now the text goes silent on Bathsheba and her life with David until much later when her story resumes as David is nearing death.

In the intervening years, we know that she bore David three more sons. We know the most about Solomon and from the man that he became, I imagine that Bathsheba was a wise and diligent mother.

Turning to 1 Kings, we have two more glimpses into Bathsheba's life.

At this time we see David as "old and well advanced in years, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him.: 1 Kings 1:1. One of David's sons, Adonijah "put himself forward and said, I will be king." 1 Kings 1:5. As he began to carry out his plan to take the throne, Nathan, the prophet, heard of this and went to Bathsheba. He advised her on what she should do to save her own life and that of her son Solomon. I believe that David was around 70 years old at this point, Bathsheba was probably about 50 and Solomon around 30. Nathan instructs Bathsheba to go to King David and remind him of his promise to have Solomon succeed him as King. And yet, Adonijah has declared himself King without David's knowledge. Nathan

would confirm this information. Bathsheba shows the King deference and then states her appeal. 1 Kings 1:17-21. Nathan arrives and corroborates what Bathsheba has said. David calls her back into his presence and then “the king took an oath: As surely as the Lord lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble, I will surely carry out today what I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel: Solomon, your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place. Then Bathsheba bowed low with her face to the ground and kneeling before the king, said, May my Lord, King David live forever!” 1 Kings 1:29-31.

Again, Bathsheba shows her strength in going to David with a situation that needs to be made right. She is holding David to his promise, but more importantly is carrying out the will of God as brought to her by the prophet Nathan. If Adonijah had become king, there was a strong chance that Solomon and Bathsheba would have been killed. Bathsheba’s boldness in going before the king saved both of their lives and, as we now know, continued David’s line through Solomon to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In the last story that we have of Bathsheba, Adonijah, having lost his chance to be king, comes to her and asks her to make a request of King Solomon for him. From this we can see that Bathsheba has recognized stature in the King’s reign. I believe that this speaks to the respect which Solomon must have for his mother, for her wisdom and strength and courage. Adonijah asks Bathsheba to ask Solomon to give Abishag the Shunammite woman who was David’s comfort in his last years to be his wife. When Bathsheba went to King Solomon, “the king stood up to meet her, bowed down to her and sat down on his throne. He had a throne brought for the king’s mother, and she sat down at his right hand.” 1 Kings 2:19.

This request of Adonijah was a threat to King Solomon as marriage to a widow of the previous king was a way of making a claim on the throne. This resulted in the execution of Adonijah and secured Solomon’s reign as king.

I imagine that Bathsheba lived out her days secure in the abundant and peaceful reign of her son.

What would have happened if Bathsheba had not gone with David’s messengers? I believe that, like Mary and other strong women of the Bible, she followed the prompting of the Holy Spirit – her actions were ordained by God.

As I said when I began, David’s story, in particular the story of his terrible sin has been a story for me of the reassurance of God’s mercy and grace. Bathsheba was the partner to this sin, she too suffered God’s wrath with the loss of her first-born son. And yet, God’s grace and mercy were also shown to her as she raised the next King of Israel and became one of the “mothers of Jesus”.

Discussion Questions

1. What do each of the mothers of Jesus have to teach you? Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary?
2. How can each one’s story encourage and challenge us?
3. What are some recurring themes you notice?
4. Why do you think the genealogy highlights each person?
5. What does Jesus’ love on the cross for his mother tell us about his love for moms today, and us?