

# EXPLORATION: BIBLE

By Chip Thompson

*“Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, Jesus expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27). There are hundreds places where the Old Testament scriptures link directly to Jesus – all of these connections combined make up what is called the “Scarlet Thread.”*

## SCARLET THREAD #1 FOUR UNUSUAL WOMEN

Woven into the Biblical narrative are four women who were honored by God in spite of their hard lives. The “Scarlet Thread” begins with Eve, and then links specifically to the following four women: Tamar (Genesis 38); Rahab (Joshua 2 & 6); Ruth (Book of Ruth); and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11-12 & 1 Kings 1). Some people will struggle with this article because, to be honest, these stories are disturbing and frankly, they make us feel uncomfortable. Thankfully, God does NOT see people the way we see people.

### EVE

Eve was created by Yahweh God to be the perfect helpmate for Adam. Eve, however, fell prey to the deception of Satan, the “Serpent of old” (Revelation 12:9), and she led her husband in disobedience to God. Adam and Eve’s sin resulted in severe judgments and plunged the human race into spiritual darkness.

Yahweh God, however, was gracious toward Eve when he cursed the “serpent” with this promise, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15). In a twist of fate, as Satan had preyed upon “the woman,” even so, God would use the special “Seed” of “the woman” to crush the Serpent’s head. This article is about four women who were esteemed by God and helped to fulfill this prophecy.

### TAMAR

Tamar’s life is a tragic story; widowed twice and then neglected, she eventually conceived children by deception and prostitution through an incestuous relationship with her father-in-law, Judah. When Tamar’s pregnancy began to show, Judah sentenced her to death for harlotry – until Tamar produced the evidence that Judah was the father.

At the birth of Tamar’s twin boys, Zerah thrust his hand out of the birth canal first. The midwife tied a “Scarlet Thread” to his wrist, denoting him as the firstborn. However, he withdrew his hand and his brother, Perez, came out first. This breach in the birth canal was symbolic – Jesus said, “But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” (Matthew 19:30). Tamar and Perez were honored by God and placed in the lineage of Jesus.

### RAHAB

Rahab was a harlot, from the cursed line of Ham, through his son Canaan. Yet Rahab was saved by God’s grace, though her faith in Yahweh, the God of Israel (see her testimony in Joshua 2:8-21). Rahab spared the lives of two Israelite spies just prior to the destruction of Jericho. She helped these spies escape Jericho by means of a “Scarlet Chord” which she used to lower the men from her window that was on the city wall. The spies promised to save her life if the “Scarlet Chord” was hanging from her window when they attacked. Her faith in Yahweh, God of Israel, not only saved her life but also earned her a place in the lineage of the Jewish Messiah.

### Jericho, German Excavations 1907-1909, Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger



**Joshua 2:15, “Then Rahab let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall.” This small section of the Jericho city wall is the only part of the wall where the mud brick fortifications did not completely collapse – pictured is a house with a window built on the wall. This was Rahab’s house.**

### RUTH

Ruth was a woman from a cursed nation, a descendant of Moab (Deuteronomy 23:3-5). In an act of faith, she chose to reject the false gods of Moab and follow Yahweh, the God of Naomi her Mother-in-law (Ruth 1:16). God honored her faith by orchestrating the marriage of Ruth to a man named Boaz, from the tribe of Judah. By God’s grace, Ruth the Moabite is in the lineage of the Jewish Messiah.

### BATHSHEBAH

Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, had an adulterous one-night stand with King David. When Bathsheba conceived, David attempted to hide the sin by murdering Uriah and marrying Bathsheba. These were heinous sins, which had severe consequences, yet when David confessed his sins, God forgave him, and later He and Bathsheba were blessed with a son. Bathsheba’s son, Solomon succeeded his father as king of Israel, which placed him in the direct lineage of Jesus.

Matthew 1:1-16 is the genealogy of Joseph, husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. In Joseph’s genealogy, four women are included, which is unusual – most ancient genealogies only list fathers and sons. Even more unusual is the fact that all four of these women had blemished backgrounds. In Jewish culture NONE of these women would be esteemed, rather, they would all be an embarrassment. So why were they honored?

When God chose these women, to be in the lineage of his Son, Jesus Christ, He was making a bold statement. **FIRST**, Jesus is the Savior of both Jews and Gentiles, so it is fitting that Gentile women would be included. **SECOND**, “pedigree” does not matter – anyone who places his or her faith in Yahweh God is held in highest esteem. **THIRD**, even the most heinous sins are forgiven when we confess them to God and ask for His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

If this story bothers you, God has a message he wants you to hear. The Apostle Paul said it best, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15). It is, therefore, fitting that “sinful women” were highlighted (with “sinful men”) in his genealogy. Anyone who claims to be righteous is deceived, “For, there is none righteous, no, not one... There is none who does good, no, not one... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:10-12, 23 & Psalm 13:2-3). The message in this lesson is clear, Jesus loves sinners, and He loved them so much that he came to earth to die so sinners could be saved. This is the Gospel, the Good News, of Jesus Christ.