

## WALMSLEY BIBLE STUDY – WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

Session 1 Monday 13 April 2026 @ 7.30pm

Session 2 Monday 11 May 2026 @ 7.30pm

Session 3 Monday 8 June 2026 @ 7.30pm

Session 4 Monday 13 July 2026 @ 7.30pm

## SESSION 1

PREFACE : TAMAR : *Gen. Ch 38*

RAHAB : *Josh. 2:1-21*

DEBORAH (& JAEL) : *Judges 4 & 5*

THE SIX MARYS

WOMEN CONVERTS OF NOTE

SESSION 1: PREFACE: OVERVIEW OF THE SUBJECT: a Feministic-Misogynistic contrast **A BRIEF DISCUSSION**

**It's (not) a Man's World: how women in the Bible surmount the patriarchy and what is to be learnt from them.**

*\*Patriarchy-a type of society or government where men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.*

### Who are the women in the Bible?

1. Before we start, let's review any women in the Bible with whom we are familiar (Good & Bad)
  - Who are they?
  - What did they do?
  - How do we think they would have been treated in Jesus' time and why?
  - If they were around today, how do you think they would be treated and why?

### Jesus the Feminist?

Nadia Bolz-Weber, a female Evangelical preacher states that she believes that Jesus was a feminist. Bolz-Weber cites Sarah Bessey's book *Jesus Feminist: An Invitation to Revisit the Bible's View of Women* to explain that women were a fundamental part of Jesus' ministry and that He chose a woman (Mary Magdalene) to be the 1<sup>st</sup> witness of His rising. *A quote from Bessey's book:*

"Perhaps it is no wonder that the women were first at the Cradle and last at the Cross. They had never known a man like this Man—there never has been another. A prophet and teacher who never nagged at them, never flattered or coaxed or patronized; who never made arch jokes about them, never treated them as "The women, God help us!" or "The ladies, God bless them!"; who rebuked without querulousness and praised without condescension; who took their questions and arguments seriously; who never mapped out their sphere for them, never urged them to be feminine or jeered at them for being female; who had no axe to grind and no uneasy male dignity to defend; who took them as he found them and was completely unselfconscious. There is no act, no sermon, no parable in the whole Gospel that borrows its pungency from female perversity; nobody could guess from the words and deeds of Jesus that there was anything "funny" about woman's nature."

*\*Feminist-a person who believes that women and men should have equal rights.*

2. Do you think that Jesus was a feminist? Why or why not?
3. Do you think that if you are a Christian that you should also be a feminist? Why or why not?

A TAMAR: *cf: Ruth Ch 4 v12; I Chron Ch 2 v 4; Matt Ch 1 v 3*

Gen 38 (NKJV)

It came to pass at that time that **Judah** departed from his brothers, and visited a certain **Adullamite** whose name was **Hirah**. And **Judah** saw there a daughter of a certain **Canaanite** whose name was **Shua**, and he married her and went in to her. So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name **Er**. She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name **Onan**. And she conceived yet again and bore a son, and called his name **Shelah**. He was at Chezib when she bore him. Then **Judah** took a wife for **Er** his firstborn, and her name was **Tamar**. But **Er**, **Judah's** firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him. And **Judah** said to **Onan**, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." But **Onan** knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also. Then **Judah** said to **Tamar** his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house till my son **Shelah** is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die as his brothers did." And **Tamar** went and dwelt in her father's house.

Now in the process of time the daughter of **Shua**, **Judah's** wife, died; and **Judah** was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend **Hirah** the **Adullamite**. And it was told **Tamar**, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." So she took off her widow's garments, covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that **Shelah** was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife. When **Judah** saw her (**Tamar**), he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face. Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, *"What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"* And he said, *"I will send you a young goat from the flock."* So she said, *"Will you give me a pledge till you send it?"* Then he said, *"What pledge shall I give you?"* So she said, *"Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand."* Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood. And **Judah** sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the **Adullamite**, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her. Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who was openly by the roadside?" And they said, "There was no harlot in this place." And he returned to **Judah** and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this place." Then **Judah** said, *"Let her take them for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent this young goat and you have not found her."*

And it came to pass, about three months after, that **Judah** was told, saying, "**Tamar** your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry." So **Judah** said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law (**Judah**), saying, *"By the man to whom these belong, I am with child."* And she said, *"Please determine whose these are--the signet and cord, and staff."* So **Judah** acknowledged them and said, *"She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son."* And he never knew her again.

Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, **twins** were in her womb. And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called **Perez**. Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called **Zerah**.

**Ruth 4:11-12** NKJV

And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in **Ephrathah** and be famous in **Bethlehem**. May your house be like the house of **Perez**, whom **Tamar** bore to **Judah**, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman (**Ruth**)."

**1 Chron 2:3-6** NKJV

The sons of **Judah** were **Er**, **Onan**, and **Shelah**. These three were born to him by the daughter of **Shua**, the **Canaanite**. **Er**, the firstborn of **Judah**, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; so He killed him. And **Tamar**, his daughter-in-law, bore him **Perez** and **Zerah**. All the sons of **Judah** were five. The sons of **Perez** were **Hezron** and **Hamul**. The sons of **Zerah** were **Zimri**, **Ethan**, **Heman**, **Calcol**, and **Dara**--five of them in all.

**B RAHAB** cf: Matt Ch 1 v 3 ; Exodus

**Josh 2:1-21**

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named **Rahab**, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country." So the king of Jericho sent to **Rahab**, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country." Then the **woman** took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them." (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.

Now before they lay down, **she** came up to them on the roof, and said to the men: *"I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."* So the men answered **her**, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you."

Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way." So the men said to *her*: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. So it shall be that whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear." Then *she* said, "According to your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And *she bound the scarlet cord in the window.*

**Exodus 12:13** NKJV

Now the **blood** shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

**Matt 1:1-6** NKJV

The book of the genealogy of **Jesus Christ**, the Son of **David**, the Son of **Abraham**: **Abraham** begot **Isaac**, **Isaac** begot **Jacob**, and **Jacob** begot **Judah** and his brothers. **Judah** begot **Perez** and **Zerah** by **Tamar**, **Perez** begot **Hezron**, and **Hezron** begot **Ram**. **Ram** begot **Amminadab**, **Amminadab** begot **Nahshon**, and **Nahshon** begot **Salmon**. **Salmon** begot **Boaz** by **Rahab**, **Boaz** begot **Obed** by **Ruth**, **Obed** begot **Jesse**, and **Jesse** begot **David** the king.

Q1 Why did **Tamar** behave in such a manner to deceive **Judah**? What moral contexts are there here?

Q2 Why did **Judah** consider that he was in error, and that **Tamar** was justified in her actions?

Q3 What were the outcomes of her actions and how to they reflect on our behaviour and attitudes today?

Q4 What do you think was the social status of **Rahab** in Jericho, and what standing did she have? How does that relate to our society and its historical context? What are our attitudes towards her status then and now?

Q5 What was it about **Rahab** that mattered as far as her salvation from destruction was concerned?

Q6 How do we see and treat those who are commonly considered pariahs of society, male & female?

Q7 In the context of the **Bloodline of Christ**, what is/are the governing factor(s) in these stories?