

Matthew might be hinting at something important right at the start of his story – in his list of Jesus’ ancestors (a genealogy). Most scholars would say that the list is not meant to be taken as a genuine historical record. If that’s the case, what IS its purpose?

Take a look at the genealogical lists of Matthew and Luke (Matt. 1:1-17 & Luke 3:23-38). Note any obvious differences.

Of all the devout women in the Old Testament (Jewish scriptures), Matthew chooses FIVE (FOUR of whose reputations are quite dubious):

TAMAR – pretends to be a prostitute and seduces her Father-in-law (Genesis 38)

RAHAB – a prostitute (Joshua 2)

RUTH- seduces Boaz so that she can stay ‘in the country’ (Ruth 3)

URIAH’S WIFE- (Bathsheba) committed adultery with King David (2 Samuel 11)

Yet, despite the ‘dodgy’ reputations they all have, the Jewish scriptures treat them sympathetically and offer the reader the idea that because it was all part of God’s plan, good came out of ‘disgrace’.

In the light of this, what do you think Matthew might be suggesting about Mary’s pregnancy?

