

The book is well written and represents a fair debate on the issue of divine foreknowledge. Erickson does a good job of maintaining an impartial spirit. This book is recommended for anyone who desires to know more about the issues involved.

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Mothers on the Margin?: The Significance of the Women in Matthew's Genealogy by E. Anne Clements. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014. 310 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1625640635. Hardcover US\$59.00.

One thing that has intrigued scholars and general readers alike is the inclusion of certain women in Matthew's all important genealogy of Jesus Christ. The fact that these particular women -Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, 'by her who had been the wife of Uriah', and Mary the mother of Jesus have been included, has raised some questions.

Anne Clements based this book on her doctoral research. In it, she argues that Matthew's gospel contains a counter-narrative focused on women. The presence of the five women in the genealogy shows that the birth of the Messiah will bring about a crisis in Israel's identity in terms of ethnicity, marginality, and gender. Clements goes on to narrate the women here signal that Matthew's Gospel is concerned with the understanding of a new identity for God's chosen people. She also seeks to justify the presence of these particular women by demonstrating that they anticipate the main themes of Mathew's gospel. Instead of being a problem for readers, they are examples of all that Matthew wants to say about Christian discipleship.

Clements begins her book (chapters 1-2) by showing the importance and purpose of genealogies in the bible and goes on to outline the customary views for the inclusion of women. These views range from their presence as role models as ancestral mothers to proving that, however, marginalized and sinful they may be no one is beyond the saving grace of God. Clements also challenges the stereotyping of women being just outsiders, objects to be owned, powerless, and child-bearers. She argues that the 'mothers on the margin' are much more than that, as indicated by the question in the book's title.

The body of the book (Chapters 3-7) narrates the individual stories of these women and shows that each one personifies certain virtues that are defining of Israel. Tamar is described as being 'righteous and put in the same boat as Noah and Abraham, which challenges the more commonly

accepted definitions of righteousness, which is a theme widely explored in the gospel of Matthew. Rahab's story shows the faith in the God of Israel. The author plays on another of Matthew's themes by emphasizing in Rahab's story the questions of Israel's identity and faith, and ultimately draws a parallel about who is included and excluded from the nation of Israel and the kingdom of God.

Ruth is shown to have attributes of loyalty and faithfulness, which are both characteristics of discipleship, another of Matthew's themes. "Her who had been the wife of Uriah", Bathsheba, throws serious questions on the all important royal name in the genealogy, someone whom the Jews held in high regard, King David. All these women show the important role they play, not only in the genealogy but also throughout the whole gospel of Matthew. Moreover, their example of righteousness, faith, and loyalty await Matthew's emphasis on these themes throughout his gospel.

In the second half of the book (chapters 8-10), Clements convincingly supports these claims by giving a detailed analysis of Matthew's gospel. According to Matthew, Clements argues that it is often by these marginalized, despised outsiders, who illustrate true faith and have a legitimate claim to be included in the kingdom of God.

By rejecting traditional and feminist views, Anne Clements assumes a close literary reading of the narratives to distinguish how each woman is characterized and presented. From this, Clements explores why Matthew may have named these women in his important genealogy and what implications their inclusion may have for the ongoing gospel narrative. Clements unpacks the immense significance of the inclusion these five women in Matthew's genealogy. They are all significant scriptural figures on the margins of Israelite society. She carefully explores their individual stories and the particular reasons why they are named. With careful scholarly insight brought to the text, Clements demonstrates that the inclusive nature of the gospel has a wide-ranging application to our understanding of the nature of the gospel and of the church today.

I personally found this book to be an intriguing, well-balanced, academic discourse. Clements arguments are convincing, remarkably researched, and written with boldness. I would recommend this book.

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