



The Mission of Christmas

SUNDAY, December 11, 2022

Key Scripture: Matthew 1:1–17

INTRODUCTION

We're taking a break from our Romans series for the next few weeks to focus on the Christmas season. This week, we read Matthew's account of the genealogy of Jesus. And we learn that there were some folks included in Jesus' ancestry that might not seem to fit. There were non-Jews and folks who made some interesting choices. But, we learn who God is from this. The God of heaven is a God of grace. No one is beyond the reach of God, regardless of what you've done or what you think. The God who gave us Christmas is the God who gives us grace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think back to Sunday's message. What do you remember? Review your notes if you have them.
2. What do you know of your genealogy or ancestry? Are there any characters you're proud (or ashamed) of?
3. Why do you think Matthew thought it was so important to begin with the genealogy of Jesus?
4. Who stood out to you in Jesus' genealogy? What characters would Jesus have been proud (or ashamed) of?
5. What's the significance of Matthew including women in Jesus' genealogy?
6. Read Genesis 38:26. What do we learn about Tamar? Why do you think she's included?
7. Read Hebrews 11:31. What do we learn about Rahab's faith? Why do you think she's included not only in the genealogy but the Christian Hall of Faith?
8. Read Genesis 19:30–38. What is Ruth's lineage? How did she show her faith by her actions?
9. Read John 1:14. Based on the message and this passage, what does it reveal about the character of God?
10. What's one thing you learned from Sunday's message and today's discussion that will help you become a better disciple of Christ, and help others do the same?

Now What?

Take the next step forward.



NOTES

Biblically, genealogies are not just a list of names. They're a repository of information. In Matthew, the genealogy he begins with sets up the theme theologically for the whole rest of the book.

We see mentioned 14 generations—this is retelling the story of Israel.

Jesus includes outsiders: Tamar is probably a Canaanite, as is Rahab, and Ruth is a Moabite. Bathsheba is connected by marriage to the Hittites. All of these are outside nations. We learned last week of God's heart for the nations and this week that theme continues with who is included in the genealogy of Jesus.

DIGGING DEEPER

An interesting article showing the timeline of Moabite generations: <https://ingrace.us/ten-generations-dr-james-a-scurder/>

Matthew's genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:1–16), from Joseph's perspective, is important because it clearly demonstrates Jesus' legal right to the throne of David. According to Judaism, Jesus, as the adopted son of Joseph, would have all the legal rights of a biological heir. Joseph descended from David through Solomon, and that was the chosen line of David for someone to be considered king. Hence, the Lord Jesus was the son of David by biological descent through Mary and the king of Israel by legal right through Joseph.

The amazing part of all this is that God had cursed the line of Solomon so that no *physical* descendant of his could be named king. Jeremiah 22:30 says of Coniah, "Record this man as childless . . . none of his descendants will succeed in sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah." This created a "Catch 22" of sorts. Only a descendant of Solomon could be king, yet this line was cursed. Therefore, only Jesus could fulfill the Davidic covenant. Jesus had the legal right to be king through Joseph but, because He was virgin born, the curse on Coniah did not apply to Him. Instead, He was the son of David through His mother Mary. Matthew's genealogy is significant in establishing Jesus as the true Davidic king. -Dr. Michael Rydelnik is a professor of Jewish Studies at Moody Bible Institute

[Jesus & Genealogies](https://bibleproject.com/blog/jesus-genealogies/) from the Bible Project: <https://bibleproject.com/blog/jesus-genealogies/>