

Glorious Moments: Moments of Redemption

Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38

INTRO

Today, we want to glimpse the pre-story of the main Christmas event: the birth of the son of God, the Christ (messiah).

- When I talk about the pre-story, I'm not talking about the prophetic story. That's another incredible study that we will touch on on Christmas Eve.
- I'm talking about the part of the Christmas story that most people enjoy skipping, but it's a recorded, important aspect of both accounts in Matthew and Luke's gospels. We are talking about the genealogies, the names of historical figures who are part of Jesus's physical line.
- Matthew 1 and Luke 3 record at least 92 unique individuals, perhaps more or less, depending on how you interpret specific names.

Culturally speaking, we tend to miss the value of these recorded genealogies. Many people start to read through the Bible, hit the book of numbers, and grow numb, trying to find value in reading endless lists of Hebrew names that most of us can't pronounce.

We must understand the value of the ancient Jews' systematic record-keeping. Accurate genealogical records were essential for ensuring an accurate historical record of events, accurately tracking individuals' legal claims, tracing royalty according to bloodlines, and ensuring family heritage.

1. Verifying Historical Accuracy:

- Keeping accurate genealogical records sets the biblical narrative apart from other religious works and mythologies. Unlike mythologies or fictionalized stories, the Bible anchors its supernatural narrative in verifiable, natural history. Genealogies serve as a

record that ties the biblical story to real times, places, and people. This reliability has been corroborated by archeological findings and historical research.

2. Verifying Prophetic Accuracy:

We should also be grateful that these genealogies exist because they help verify the claims of Jesus' Messiah-ship. The Old Testament is full of messianic claims that are specific to family lines:

- **The Messiah would come through the line of Abraham (Gen. 12:3)**
- **The Messiah would be of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10)**
- **The Messiahs would come from the royal line and lineage of David (2 Samuel 7:12-16)**

3. Verifying legal and physical qualifications:

- **Matthew's Genealogy:** Focuses on Jesus' legal right to the throne of David through Joseph. Even though Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, the genealogy validates Jesus' legal standing as the heir to the Davidic kingdom.
- **Luke's Genealogy:** Likely traces Jesus' biological lineage through Mary, affirming His physical connection to David's line. This dual lineage underscores both His royal and human heritage.

4. Verifying God's Covenantal Faithfulness:

- The genealogies remind us that God's promises span generations. They are a testament to His faithfulness in fulfilling the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, despite the flaws and failures of the people in the line.
- **[Deu 7:9 NKJV] 9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;**

5. Verifying the Nature of God's Plans:

- God doesn't work apart from people, but He works in and through people... real people like you and me. I love that so many names are recorded in the Bible because that's what I am.... I am a name. And my name matters to Jesus. I can be part of the story that He has written and is playing out right here and right now.

So, next time you get bored reading the names, remember that just because you might not initially understand their value, it doesn't mean that they aren't important.

BIBLE PASSAGE**Matthew 1:1-17 (NKJV - New King James Version)**

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

² Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.

³ Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram.

⁴ Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon.

⁵ Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,

⁶ and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.

⁷ Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa.

⁸ Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah.

⁹ Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah.

¹⁰ Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah.

¹¹ Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

¹² And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel.

¹³ Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor.

¹⁴ Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud.

¹⁵ Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob.

¹⁶ And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 3:23-38 (NKJV - New King James Version)

²³ Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli,

²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph,

²⁵ the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,

²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah,

²⁷ the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,

²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er,

²⁹ the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,

³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim,

³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David,

³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,

³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,

³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,

³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah,

³⁶ the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,

³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan,

³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

INTRO (CONT)

No, I'm not going to do a 93-point sermon on each name, nor am I going to do a sermon on the apparent differences in the genealogies other than some basic information:

- First, the two genealogies seek to show two separate familial lines in which some people coincide.
- Secondly, some perceived contradictions can all be accounted for in the study of genealogies. When you factor in that:
 - Many people share the same names but are different people.
 - There could potentially be adoptions or levirate marriages involved (The widow of a childless man could marry his brother so that a child of the second marriage could legally be considered as the son of the deceased man in order to perpetuate his name. -Deuteronomy 25:5-6)
 - Sometimes, in genealogies, some generations will be intentionally skipped for various purposes. Trust me, if you choose to study these genealogies beyond a surface reading and look to professionals in the field, you will quickly realize that these two genealogies are fairly easily reconciled.

THE CONTRASTS OF THE GENEALOGIES

As we look at these two very different genealogies, we recognize the purposes of the authors:

- Matthew was writing to Jews who considered Abraham their father. They knew the prophecies of the Messiah being a son of Abraham and David. Therefore, Matthew

starts at Abraham and then focuses on the royal lineage of David to establish Jesus' legal right to the Messiah title.

- Luke is writing to the Gentiles. His genealogy traces back to Adam, the first man and father of all people. Jesus is not only the Jewish Messiah; he is the second Adam, who came to repair the rebellion and sin of the first Adam.
- Matthew's Genealogy traces the royal and legal qualifications through Joseph's line. While Jesus wasn't Joseph's biological son, he was his earthly son, which meant that Joseph had to be qualified and traced back to David and Abraham to make Jesus' messianic claim viable for the Jews.
- Luke traces the line through Mary:
 - You might not that Luke's statement begins with the line: **[Luk 3:23 NKJV] 23 Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli...**
 - The key phrase here is, "as was supposed." The Greek word means, "As held by custom." This has several possibilities:
 - Jewish custom stated that if Mary had no brothers, her husband would be considered her father's son. Hence, Joseph is the son of Heli (Mary's father) as opposed to Joseph's father, Jacob (according to Matthew).
 - As per custom, Luke doesn't mention any women in the genealogy, including Mary. This indicates that by listing Joseph's name, he is referring to his wife's family line.
 - By tracing Mary's family, Luke gives us the biological qualifications of Jesus. Prophecy tells us that the Messiah would come **"from the woman's seed" (Genesis 3:15)** and would be **"born of a virgin." (Isaiah 7:14)**
- ***In essence, without conferring with one another, Matthew, led by the Spirit, qualifies Jesus' legal messianic claims through Joseph's line, and Luke qualifies Jesus' biological messiahship claim through Mary's line.***

APPLICATION

For the rest of our time, I'd like to focus on specific characters found in these genealogies. The closer you look, the more you realize these records weren't manipulated or scrubbed to present a squeaky-clean version of the history of the human beings through whom the Messiah came forth. I love this because it speaks to me of God's grace and redemption throughout history. There were so many moments when human beings had the potential of

completely ruining God's plans through their disobedience, failure, weaknesses, or apparent disqualifications. Yet in all these stories, one thing remains clear: **God is a redeemer who takes the blemishes of human beings and brings forth a beautiful plan of hope and restoration.**

So let's look at some of the interesting people in the family line and what we can learn:

1 The Women - Broken people are welcomed into God's plan

APPLICATION

In the first 6 verses of Matthew's genealogy we find four women's names mentioned: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. This may seem minor to us, but it was a big deal in Jewish culture.

- Women were considered second class citizens, even within Jewish society at that time. The recognition of the women who were part of God's story was an elevation of their value and contribution.
- But when we look at those four women, it magnifies God's grace to an even greater degree:
 - Tamar (Genesis 38) pretended to be a prostitute to have a child with her father-in-law Judah.
 - Rahab (Joshua 2) was a Canaanite prostitute.
 - Ruth was a Gentile.
 - Bathsheba was a bit of an exhibitionist. We get the sense that bathing on the roof near the king's palace wasn't an accidental move. Even if she felt forced by the king, she still made an active decision to become an adulteress while her husband was out fighting battles.

A COMMON THREAD

Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba all have a mark on their record of sexual sin. Bathsheba lost her first child as a consequence of that action of adultery. There is an intertwining thread I found in their stories... I'll call it a scarlet thread.

TAMAR: When Tamar had her twin boys, fathered by her father-in-law Judah who thought she was a prostitute, we read:

[Gen 38:28-30 NIV] 28 As she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand; so the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his wrist and said, "This one came out first." 29 But when he drew back his hand, his brother came out, and she said, "So this is how you have broken out!" And he was named Perez. 30 Then his brother, who had the scarlet thread on his wrist, came out. And he was named Zerah.

The scarlet thread was tied around the hand of the firstborn to help distinguish him from his brother, but Perez (who ultimately would be part of the line of Jesus) overcame and broke out first, taking the place of the firstborn from the one marked by Scarlet.

RAHAB - fast forward to the battle of Jericho. Joshua's spies are being sought out and take refuge in the house of a prostitute who risks her own life to hide them and help them escape with nothing more than faith in this God of Israel that she had only heard about in stories. As God's power comes against Jericho there is one house that was marked for salvation.

[Jos 2:17-18, 21 NKJV] 17 So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, 18 "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. ... 21 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.

The scarlet cord that was once probably used for sinful practices will be redeemed to be the scarlet cord that will mark her and her household for salvation.

BATHSHEBA - probably a little ironic that the first half of her name includes the word bath, because that's what landed her in HOT WATER with the king of Israel. David sins greatly out of his own lust and selfishness by committing adultery, trying to cover up the consequences of his actions by committing the murder of her husband and his faithful servant, Uriah. Bathsheba had to bear the weight of her and David's sin by losing that first child. Later she gave birth to a boy named Solomon who would become the most prosperous and wisest King Israel ever knew. It was that same Solomon who would record the words of his mother.

Proverbs 31 is the description of the virtuous wife as told by the words of Bathsheba. Apparently a bad decision was not the end of her story. It's in that proverb we read:

[Pro 31:21 NKJV] 21 She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet.

Can anyone here think of another reference in the scripture that gives the picture of scarlet and snow together?

[Isa 1:18 NKJV] 18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

APPLICATION

I wonder if there's anyone in here with a scarlet past... I wonder if you are all aware that you all have a scarlet past.

- But perhaps there's a certain thing that has marked you; a scarlet indiscretion wrapped around your wrist, an scarlet decision hanging from your window. Perhaps there is scarlet shame... that scarlet letter that seeks to define your identity.
- You need to know something incredibly important:

"Your scarlet past can be met today with Jesus' scarlet promise."

Just prior to Jesus was being led to mount Calvary to be crucified, we read in Matthew:

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Mat 27:27-28 NKJV] 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. 28 And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

AN incredible physical picture of what Jesus accomplished spiritually for us. He took our scarlet robe, our sinful stain, and wore it on himself, and took his clean, white robes of

righteousness and placed them over us.

[2Co 5:21 NKJV] 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

RUTH

Ruth may not have had a past of sexual indiscretions, but she certainly had a past of idolatry. Ruth was a Moabite woman, a foreigner to the people of Israel and the God of Israel. She made an active, faith-filled decision to make the God of her Mother-in-law, Naomi, her God and leave behind her past and her national and religious identity to become one with the people of Israel.

Through an incredible and divinely ordained set of circumstances, Ruth ends up marrying into the family. A rich land owner named Boaz gives her a place, provides for her needs, and ultimately claims the right of a kinsman redeemer; one who would claim the responsibility of carrying on the family line of a deceased man by taking his wife to himself, redeeming the lost life and property and ensuring the family name continues.

When Boaz made the final deal at the city gate with another relative to redeem this family line, we read:

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rth 4:11-12 NKJV] 11 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. 12 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."

You can't make this up!

- Boaz would become famous in Bethlehem Ephrathah, but mostly because of the one who would come down the line: First, King David who would be from Bethlehem, but after:

- **[Mic 5:2 NKJV] 2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."**
- The everlasting God would come in human flesh from that same town that Boaz redeemed a gentile and blessed her. Jesus would come to redeem and graft in us Gentiles who were far from God, and draw us near through His sacrifice.
- Not only that, but Perez, born to Tamar and Judah? Yep, that same Tamar who made that questionable decision was Boaz's great, great, great, great, great grandma.

APPLICATION

If you have a tainted and broken past, or you're far from God, it's not your performance God is looking for, it's your faith. Do you believe that God can rescue you from coming judgment? Do you believe that God can take what Satan meant for evil and turn it for good? Like Ruth, are you willing to put your trust in the ultimate redeemer who wants to purchase you back from the grips of sin and adopt you into his eternal family? If the answer is yes, you can be part of God's continuing story!

2 Wicked Kings - God overcomes the schemes of man

APPLICATION

Matthew records Jesus's royal lineage through King David's line. Out of the 15 kings mentioned in this line, 7 were incredibly wicked, and two more, though considered good kings, were fairly compromised.

- Rehoboam divided the kingdom.
- Joram married wicked King Ahab's daughter and led Judah into great idolatry.
- Ahaz was infamous for his idolatry.

- Manasseh was considered Judah's most wicked king, leading God's people to do greater wickedness than the heathen nations around them.

The royal line ends with Jeconiah, a wicked and cursed king led away into Babylonian captivity.

THE CURSE

In fact this creates a very interesting question.

God made a promise to David regarding both his son Solomon and the messianic king who would come from that line and whose kingdom would have no end.

[2Sa 7:12-13 NKJV] 12 "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

But by the time we get to Jeconiah, we find a wicked king who also received a word from the Lord regarding his rebellion:

[Jer 22:30 NKJV] 30 Thus says the LORD: 'Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, and ruling anymore in Judah.'

And this was true. There was not another son in David's royal line who sat on the throne over the kingdom of Israel. But Josh, how is it that Jeconiah is in Jesus' genealogy and that Jesus, the ultimate King of Israel, came through His line?

There are a few incredible possibilities here in which God kept both of His promises.

1.) It was Joseph who was part of Jeconiah's line - This allows the legal requirement for Jesus' title to be fulfilled, but because Mary was a virgin, and her seed was of the Holy Spirit, the DNA of Jeconiah's line wasn't transferred to Jesus. Therefore, Jesus could legally still fulfill the prophetic requirements of the Messiah while physically ensuring that the curse on Jeconiah stood.

2.) The second option is a stretch, but still possible. Some scholars suggest that Shealtiel was not Jeconiah's physical son but an adopted son. This could ensure that the legal requirements were still met, but the physical curse was not compromised.

3.) God chose to reverse the curse of Jeconiah - Zurababel, Jeconiah's grandson, was a key player in the rebuilding of the temple after the Jews returned from Babylonian captivity. God told Zurababel through Haggai, the prophet, that He would make him like a "signet ring" on His right hand. This is a reversal of the language He spoke to Jeconiah about being a signet ring that he would discard from His hand.

But herein lies a reality that carry on into our present time:

QUOTE

“*The wickedness and failure of powerful people cannot thwart God's prophetic plans.*”

Pastor Josh

APPLICATION

World leaders, wealthy influencers, and all those who see themselves as power brokers in today's world may feel as though they have the ability to "play God" with their power and resources. They feel they have the power to move the world into their stream and toward their agenda. Little do many of them know that they are actually the pawns!

- **[Pro 21:1 NKJV] 1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.**
- Psalm 2 always gets my blood flowing when I think of politics and those in this world who think they are in control of humanity's destiny:

[Psa 2:1-12 NKJV] 1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of

the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

APPLICATION

Prophetically speaking, Jesus isn't done surprising the world with His arrival! He arrived 2000 years ago in a manger, he prophetically rode into Jerusalem as the humble servant King in a donkey, and the bible says that He is coming again as the mighty conquering King on a white horse of victory. On that day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord! No global economic forum, deep state government, United Nations, wealthy bankers, Hollywood stars or powerful governmental leaders are going to stop him. Not that any of them will hear it but:

Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Pope Francis, Vladimir Putin, Mark Zuckerberg, Xi Jinping, Joe Biden, Donald Trump, Macron, Trudeau, Warren Buffet, and the countless others who possess great wealth and influence: Bow your knee and humble yourself before the King who's come and the coming King, Jesus Christ. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling!

3 Adam - All humanity is invited

APPLICATION

There are so many more stories we could tell of the sons of Jacob, the founding tribes of Israel, and so many other names in between. But I find it interesting that Luke's account brings us all back to the beginning.

Luke begins with God in the manger and goes all the way back to God in the garden.

He traces the human line of Jesus past Abraham and Noah and leads us all the way back to Adam, the first human being. He calls Adam the son of God (not to be confused with the SON of God as the unique title of Christ). Adam was the son of God in that he was the first untainted human created in the image of God. I believe this is the picture Paul draws from when he writes this to the church in Rome:

[Rom 5:12, 15-19 NKJV] 12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-- ... 15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

As Luke takes us back to the first man, we are reminded of that man's failure as he represented the human race before God. But the second Adam, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God in human flesh, succeeded where Adam failed, and in doing so, has made forgiveness, life, righteousness, and reconciliation to God possible for all humanity. Everyone that has come from Adam can ultimately find salvation from their rebellion against God through Jesus Christ.

As Matthew shows us, Jesus is the Messiah and King of Israel, but He is also the King and Savior for the entire world, to all who believe in Him.

Mankind ran away from God in the Garden, but God ran toward mankind in the manger, redeemed mankind at the cross, and secured eternal life for mankind as he walked out of an empty tomb.

Today, you are either in the first Adam or, by faith, justified by the second Adam, Jesus Christ. You are either dead in your sins and trespasses, a natural enemy of God, or you are forgiven of your sins and trespasses, made a friend of God through Christ's sacrificial death on your behalf.

10:32

