

## Melva's Corner



# Jesus Family Tree

May 14, 2007

(Luke 2:8-14)

**Central Truth: The message of Jesus' family is this: no one need think that God will not accept them, because they're not good enough. God's grace is sufficient for everyone who comes and places their faith in Jesus.**

How many of you, when you are reading the Bible, skip the "begets?" Come on, 'fess up! Those endless lists of names may not be the most exciting parts of God's Word, but they're there for a reason. Now in the case of the genealogy recorded in the first six verses of the gospel of Matthew, we have Matthew introducing Jesus to His Jewish audience in the proper Jewish fashion. You see, in those days, before people were interested in anything else, they were interested in who your father was, and who your father's father was and so on.

But I think Matthew had more in mind than just Jesus' proper intro to His Jewish audience. As you look at Jesus' ancestors, you are looking at the hand of God at work. From Abraham on down, God has rolled up His sleeves to insure that Jesus would come into the world. These genealogies, which we so often skip over, are really testimonies to the sovereign power of God. Each generation tells us a story of God's working, His caring, His thrusting into the lives of His people. Don't you feel bad about skipping them now? It's time you redeemed yourself by taking a look at just a few of these people with me! I'll try not to make it too painful.

The first person I want to bring to your attention is Tamar. Does anyone remember Tamar? She's a Sunday School teacher's nightmare. Talk about your proverbial skeleton in the family closet! She was a glowing example of pragmatism. Her motto was, "I will do whatever I have to in order to get the job done." Even if that involved pretending she was a prostitute in order to sleep with her father-in-law! (Read about her in Genesis 38:6) Tamar, certainly wasn't tame!

Next I want you to look at Rahab. It was bad enough that Tamar pretended to be a prostitute, but now we have the real thing. And to make matters worse, Rahab was not only a prostitute, she was also a Gentile. What was God thinking when He was putting together Jesus family tree? Couldn't He have worked through **MORE RESPECTABLE PEOPLE?**

Rahab may have been a prostitute, but when she heard about the God of Israel, she knew He was the real thing and she responded. The rest of Jericho had the same news and the same opportunity, but she was the only one to take advantage of the opportunity. One person can be confronted with the reality of God and look the other way. Another person will see the mess they've made of their lives and turn to Him in faith. Rahab happily walked out of the rubble of sin, and hopelessness, and became an example of faith, and an instrument of God's grace. Rahab may have been a **REPROBATE**, but she was the only one who had the wisdom and faith to choose God's way!

Next, we have Ruth. She's another person you just don't expect to see in Jesus' family tree. I mean, she was a Moabite. She was from a people whom God had declared it was unlawful to marry. In other words, she was from the wrong side of the tracks and then some! A "good Jew" just wouldn't have married a Moabite. Right! Ruth may have been from the wrong side of the tracks, but her loyalty and her faith are inspiring. Ruth is a statement of God's grace. According to the letter of the Law, she shouldn't have even married a Jew, but her heart, her loyalty, and her faith, brought blessing for Naomi, and the entire world because she, too, is part of Jesus' family tree.

Finally we have "Uriah's wife." This is interesting, isn't it? Bathsheba isn't mentioned by name. She is described as the one who had been Uriah's wife. **WHAT A WAY TO BE REMEMBERED!** Could it be that Matthew didn't think she was worthy enough to be named? Perhaps he wanted to remind us of her sin? Regardless, God forgave David and Bathsheba the great sin they had committed, and blessed them with Solomon. David and Uriah's **WIFE** certainly caused God some serious issues, but that didn't stop Him from using her to bring us grace through **JESUS' LIFE**.

When you start to dig into Jesus family tree you find all kinds of skeletons in His closet. Why would God bring His Son through such a group? What's the point?

Well, think about it for a minute — even though I've mentioned only four of Jesus' ancestors, all of them were less than perfect, all of them had things in their lives they regretted, or at least things they should have regretted! The bottom line is that we were all sinners. But, more than that, Jesus is God's gift of grace to a world that needed most of all mercy and love. And, as the living, breathing, walking, serving, suffering, dying example of God's grace, it's only fitting that He came from a family already wondrously touched, directed, and redeemed by His grace.

The message of Jesus' family is this: no one need think that God will not accept them, because they're not good enough. God's grace is sufficient for everyone who comes and places their faith in Jesus. Not only will He accept them, but He will forgive their sins, touch their lives, change their hearts, and use them to bring forth His eternal purpose in this world. Just as He used Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba.

**And the angels said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find a babe rapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. (Luke 2:8-14, KJV)**

Jesus is in every way, God's expression of "goodwill toward all men" regardless of what they've have done, or where they're from. Praise God for this most wonderful, and unexpected of all gifts, the gift of God's grace through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

#### **Scriptural References:**

**And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.  
(Luke 2:10-14, KJV)**