

Messiah's Family Tree

Read Matthew 1:1-16

For a Jew in biblical times, his genealogy was a key part of his resume. It was his pedigree. This was particularly true for Messiah. Since He was prophesied to come from the line of David, Matthew begins his gospel with a genealogy showing that Jesus indeed descended from David's line.

But genealogies included mostly men. The genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1 bends tradition by including five women. And what a colorful lot they were!

- Tamar (Matthew 1:3) entered Jesus' family tree by seducing her father-in-law (Genesis 38:1-26). She was a Canaanite, a non-Jew.
- Rahab (Matthew 1:5) is apparently the Rahab from the Jericho story (Joshua 2; 6:15-25). She was a prostitute and also a Canaanite, a non-Jew.
- Ruth (Matthew 1:5) was a Moabite, a non-Jew. Moabites were specifically forbidden to enter the assembly of God's people, and Jews were not to ever seek their peace or prosperity (Deuteronomy 23:3-6).
- Bathsheba is referred to as "Uriah's wife" (Matthew 1:6). She got a place in Jesus' genealogy through her adultery with King David (2 Samuel 11:1 – 12:25).
- And finally, Mary (Matthew 1:16) was a teenager who became pregnant before she was married.

Even in Jesus' family tree, God broke down all the barriers between Himself and us, as well as all our barriers of gender and race. The forgiveness and renewal that we saw at the birth of Solomon runs all the way through Messiah's genealogy. God truly redeems us from our sin. He renews and brings new life where only sin and death had been.

Even the gentile nations have a part in Jesus' lineage. Though Matthew's gospel was apparently written primarily to the Jews, he emphasizes that Jesus is the Light of the World for the gentiles as well. His genealogy in Matthew 1 prepares the way for the coming of the magi in Matthew 2. And the entire gospel culminates with Jesus sending His disciples to all the nations (28:19-20)

Jesus embraces us all as His own family if we simply trust Him. *In Him there is no Jew nor Gentile, male nor female. We are all one in Jesus Christ* (Galatians 3:26, 28, para.).

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