

What You Probably Don't Know About Jesus' Human Ancestry

The following are the compelling stories of some of the primary people connected to the genealogy and birth of Jesus. What I respect so much about the Bible is the honesty sacred writ has related to not whitewashing the sordid history of some of their most important figures that contributed to redemption history.

Hezekiah

Matthew 1:10 says, "Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah."

Hezekiah was the great king who started a revival of faith by reinstituting the feast of Passover (see 2 Chr. 30:13-16), which pointed to the crucifixion of Jesus. He was sick unto death but prayed for 15 extra years and God answered his prayers (2 Kings 20). Unfortunately, his 15 extra years resulted in the birth of his son Manasseh who became the most wicked king who ever lived up till that point. He practiced divination, sacrificed his children in the fire, practiced sorcery, dealt with mediums and spiritists, and put an idol in the house of God. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him to anger (see 2 Chr. 33).

Josiah

Josiah was known as one of the greatest kings of Israel, and, as the genealogy shows, was actually the grandson of Manasseh, and son of Amon, both wicked kings. This shows that God can overcome generational curses and the sins of our fathers and mothers!

Josiah repaired the temple of God, discovered the law of the Lord and reinstituted Passover, as well as other reforms to

try to avert the judgment of God—but it was too little too late! God allowed Nebuchadnezzar the foreign king to pillage Jerusalem and take most of the Jewish people captive to the land he ruled in Babylon (see 2 Chr. 34, 35).

Zerubbabel (Matt. 1:13)

While in exile, Zerubbabel was named the governor of the Jews during the Persian exile and was commissioned to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple of God that was destroyed by the Babylonians (see Hag. 1:1-4).

Haggai 2:7-9 prophesies regarding the coming house of the Lord built by the future Messiah Jesus Christ:

“And I will shake all the nations, and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of Hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is Mine, says the Lord of Hosts. The glory of this latter house will be greater than the former, says the Lord of Hosts. And in this place I will give peace, says the Lord of Hosts.”

Hence, Zerubbabel was a type of Christ who was going to build the new temple of God and cause all the nations to bow down before Him and His throne.

Joseph (the stepfather of Jesus)

Matthew 1:16 says, “Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.”

Joseph was not called the earthly father of Jesus since He was born of the virgin Mary so that human sin would not be passed down to Him; however, He was a faithful man of integrity who was supernaturally led by visions and dreams (see Matt. 1:18-25).

He was also a carpenter who taught Jesus his trade. Matthew

13:55a says, "Is He not the carpenter's son? Is His mother not called Mary?"

A carpenter was a person who built things. Later on Jesus would say that He would build His church (see Matt. 16:18); Jesus was also the one who framed us in His own image and likeness (see Gen. 1:26, 27).

Mary (Matt. 1:16)

Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, a young woman who fulfilled the prophecy recorded in Isaiah 7:14. She was only a mere teenager who was a chosen vessel, a woman who was highly favored by God (see Luke 1:26-33). She was a woman of faith and obedience who responded to the angel announcing the birth of Messiah with these amazing words, "I am the servant of the Lord. May it be unto me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

She was saturated with the Scriptures and uttered a prophetic song called the Magnificat, which quoted at least nine passages, mostly from the book of Psalms (see Luke 1:46-56). She was a humble servant of the Lord who gave birth to Jesus in a manger (see Luke 2:7). She constantly treasured the things of God in her heart (see Luke 2:15-19; 48-51). Finally, Mary was one of the only ones who stood by Jesus at His crucifixion, which metaphorically caused a sword to pierce her soul (see Luke 2:34, 35).

John 19:25-27 records the moving scene in which Jesus—with only a few moments left to live—tells John the apostle to take care of Mary "But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then He said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time, this disciple took her to his own home."

As we conclude this article, ask yourself the question, "Which

of these characters in Jesus' genealogy do I relate with?" Can you see the power of redemption and grace through each of these stories—even in spite of some of the characters' wickedness? Do you see how Jesus came to die for the sins of the whole world—not just for one ethnic group or one kind of person, but people with various backgrounds, affiliations and sinful tendencies?

Finally, I hope that after reading this you will believe that, in spite of all odds, sins and challenges, God can use you for His glory and turn your mess into a message of redemption!