

# The Lineage of the King

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Preacher: Shawn Woo

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning, everyone. My name is Sean, for those of you who don't know me. It's my joy and privilege to preach God's Word to you this morning. We just finished a sermon series in the Book of Ecclesiastes and had a break in the series for baptisms last week. And today we're starting a new sermon series for Advent in the Gospel of Matthew. So please turn with me in the Gospel of Matthew. And after Advent and Christmas, we're going to go right on ahead and go through the rest of the Gospel of Matthew, which is probably going to take us a little over a year, but it's the longest of the four Gospels. So we're in Matthew, written by one of Jesus' disciples.

It's an account of the life and the ministry of Jesus. If you don't have a Bible, please raise your hand. We'd love to give you a copy that you can use. Okay. Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's Word. Heavenly Father, your Word is truth. Your Word does not return empty. It always fulfills its promises. The purposes for which it was sent out. And we believe, Lord, that your Word here, even in Matthew 1, has your purpose to accomplish in our hearts and in our lives. And we ask that you would do that by the power of your Holy Spirit.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you are able, please stand as we honor God in the reading of God's Word. I'll be reading chapter 1, verses 1 through 17.

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob. And Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. And Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar. And Perez the father of Hishon, and Hishon the father of Ram.

And Ram the father of Aminadab. And Aminadab the father of Nashon. And Nashon the father of Salmon. And Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab. And Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth. And Obed the father of Jesse.

[ 3 : 0 1 ] And Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah. And Solomon the father of Rehoboam. And Rehoboam the father of Abijah. And Abijah the father of Asaph.

And Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat. And Jehoshaphat the father of Joram. And Joram the father of Uzziah. And Uzziah the father of Jotham. And Jotham the father of Ahaz.

And Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. And Hezekiah the father of Manasseh. and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zedok, and Zedok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eliezer, and Eliezer the father of Methan, and Methan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations. This is God's holy and authoritative word. You may be seated.

I was talking to Charles earlier because he just got back and hasn't slept a wink. He just got back from China, and he was telling me that I hope I can stay awake through the service this morning, and I joked with him, well, we are in the genealogy of the Gospel of Matthew, and no, I think this is, hopefully, with the Lord's help, will not be a sermon that puts you to sleep.

[ 5 : 15 ] This is an important passage, and it's important because God is included in his word, and that means it has something to say to us, and some purpose that God is seeking to accomplish in our midst. This passage begins curiously in verse one as the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Matthew claims that this is a genealogical book, but this is the only place in the long 28 chapters of the Gospel where we find the genealogy of Jesus, and it doesn't even take the entire chapter, and that's because Matthew is making an allusion here to the book of Genesis. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the book of Genesis is organized around this recurring phrase, the book of the genealogy of dot, dot, dot. Genesis 2, 4 begins the book of the genealogy of the heavens and the earth. Genesis 5, 2 begins the book of the genealogy of Adam, and Genesis 6, 9, the book of the genealogy of Noah. Genesis 25, 19, the book of the genealogy of Isaac.

Genesis 37, 2, the book of the genealogy of Jacob. So for first century believers, immediately when they read this, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, they would have made this connection to the book of Genesis. By using the same phrase, in Genesis, we are introduced to the beginning, the origin, and the history of the heavens and the earth of all creation, and of the creation of the people of God, really, through Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And by using the same phrase, Matthew is now signaling to us that this, here, what he has written is the history and origin of the new creation, and the birth and the bringing about of the new covenant people of God.

But why is the genealogy important, of interest to us? Probably only a handful of us, you know, come to genealogies in the Bible with eager anticipation. Nowadays, most of us, unless you're John Buckley, only have a passing interest in genealogies. Keeping a genealogical record can preserve a sense of heritage and tradition, but our ancestors moved to say little to nothing about who we are, what kind of people we are today. But there are some people in the world for whom genealogies are very important, and you can probably guess. For example, the British royal family.

The genealogical record for them is critical, because their documented lineage is what provides legitimacy to their claim to the throne. There are detailed books that are updated annually, like some of our British compatriots here would know better. DeBrett's Peerage, Peerage apparently is a book of nobility, like people who are of noble status, because the word peer used to mean nobles, or it's probably used that way in Britain still. Burke's Peerage, they keep a record of the British nobilities and their genealogies. Here in Matthew 1, 1 to 7, we find the genealogy of Jesus, and it's important for similar reasons. If, as verse 1 claims, verse 1 is kind of the thesis of the entire genealogy and the entire book, if, as verse 1 claims, Jesus is the Christ, which is not Jesus' last name, but it's his title. We can see that clearly in verse 16, which says, Jesus was born, who is called

Christ. That's what people called him. It's his title, which means anointed one, which is a title of representing the messianic king. So then if Jesus is the Christ, he has to be a descendant of David, who is the father of all Jews, as we see in Matthew 3, 9. Is Jesus really the Christ?

[ 9 : 48 ] Is Jesus truly the one that we had all been waiting for? At the onset of the gospel, Matthew is answering that question with this genealogy. He is telling us that Jesus is the promised messianic king who restores the kingdom of God. First, we want to see how Jesus fulfills the promise to Abraham.

Secondly, we'll see how Jesus fulfills the promise to David. And thirdly, we'll see how Jesus fulfills his promise, God's promise to the exiles. First, Matthew shows us that Jesus is the son of Abraham who fulfills God's promise to Abraham. Verses 2 to 6 follow the summary genealogies found in 1 Chronicles 2 and Ruth 4, and they trace Jesus' lineage from Abraham to David. To a then childless Abraham, God had promised this in Genesis 12 too, I will make of you a great nation.

And in Genesis 15, 5, he said, look toward heaven and number the stars. If you are able to number them, so shall your offspring be. This is what God had promised to Abraham. It was a pipe dream, a fool's fantasy by the standard of any man, except that it wasn't promised by a man. It was promised by God whose word never falls to the ground. This genealogy proves that God's promise to Abraham has been fulfilled. Abraham did become the father of a great Jewish nation of which Jesus is a member.

However, this proves Jesus' Jewish heritage. But God hadn't merely promised Abraham that he would become a father of one nation. He had said to Abraham in Genesis 17, 4 to 5, behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abraham, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

God had promised to bless Abraham and through him to bless all the families of the earth so that he might be called the father of a multitude of nations. That's in fact what his new name, Abraham, means, father of multitudes. So the nation of Israel alone, ethnic Israel alone, is not sufficient evidence that all of God's promises to Abraham has been fulfilled. And it is through Jesus that Abraham, that this becoming the father of the multitude of nations will be fulfilled. Through Jesus, not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles, indeed all the nations of the earth who put their faith in him will be saved and have eternal life and become citizens of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven.

[ 12 : 35 ] Where do I get that from this text? The unusual features of this genealogy hint at this point. Because God appointed men to be heads of their respective households, biblical genealogies are all patrilineal. They're traced through the father's genealogical line. But there's unusually here in this genealogy, four women in addition to the mother of Jesus and Mary who are included that you would not have otherwise expected to be included. First in verse three, it mentions that Judah fathered Perez by Tamar. The Bible doesn't tell us much about Tamar's background, but Genesis 38 tells us that she was a Canaanite woman, a Gentile. And this is most likely the case since Judah himself took a Canaanite wife, and then he's the one who took wives for his sons, including heir. And because there's no mention of him going back to his fatherland, homeland, to find a wife for his son. Second, verse five says that Solomon fathered Boaz by Rahab. The only human being named Rahab mentioned in the Bible is a

Canaanite woman who helps the Israelite spies escape Jericho in Joshua 2. So she too is a foreigner, a Gentile. Third, verse five says that Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth. And Ruth, more famously, as many of you know, is a Moabite. She's also a Gentile. Fourth, verse six says that David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, Bathsheba, we know her as, whose father was Eliam, Eliam, according to 2 Samuel 11, verse three. And if he's the same Eliam mentioned in 2 Samuel 23, 34, he was also a Canaanite. There are four mothers. Mary, you understand why she's mentioned.

Four mothers alone mentioned in this entire genealogy of Jesus, and all four of them are foreigners. Non-Jews. And that is not a coincidence. This, the inclusion of the Gentiles in this genealogy of the Christ foreshadows the inclusion of the Gentiles in the kingdom of God through the Christ.

This is for me profoundly moving in two different ways. First, how is it that after all these years, God still keeps the promises he made to Abraham and to the nation of Israel? Israelites have sinned and have broken their covenant with God a hundred times over. And yet, God still keeps every last promise he made to Abraham and to Isaac, to Jacob. And the son of God. Think of what kind of privilege that is. The son of God, the savior of the world is born a Jew. So that as Jesus says in John 4, 22, salvation is from the Jews. Because Jesus is a Jewish Messiah. It's moving to me in another way.

Secondly, how is this? After all these years, God grafts Gentiles into his promise of the kingdom. These Gentiles that have hated and persecuted and warred against and killed countless Jews, the people of God. I love the story of the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15. She begs Jesus to cure her daughter who is severely oppressed by a demon. And then Jesus says, I was sent only, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, which at the time Jesus says that is true because it's before Jesus' death and resurrection. It's only after that the great commission to go out to all the nations, it is given. But the woman replies, she insists, yes, Lord, it is true. I'm not one of God's people. I'm not one of your people. She says, yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table. And dog is the derogatory way that Jews refer to Gentiles. And she applies it to herself. Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table. And Jesus answers, oh, woman, great is your faith. And he heals her daughter so that even this Canaanite woman, like Bathsheba, like Rahab and Ruth and Tamar before her, is included in the kingdom of God, delivered from the oppression and dominion of the evil one. We have a few Jewish brothers who are members of our church, but the rest of us are uncircumcised Gentiles who are, according to Ephesians 2.11, once separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of

[ 17 : 52 ] Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. I am a Gentile dog, descended of man and woman who have opposed God and have oppressed his people all throughout human history.

And yet, how is it that God, in his mercy, would count me as one of his own? In Jesus, it says in Ephesians 2, the dividing wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles have been broken down so that there is now one new man in Jesus Christ in place of the two, so that we are no longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

So that while salvation is from the Jews, it is no longer only for the Jews, but for all nations. Which is why Jesus commissions us to go make disciples of all nations at the end of this gospel, at the gospel of Matthew, chapter 28.

And that means, it's something important, no matter how different from us people may look, no matter what language they might speak, no matter how they might dress, there is not a single person in this world that we can look at and say, you cannot come into the kingdom of God.

No, every person is invited. If only he or she would repent of their sins and turn and put their faith in Jesus Christ alone. Even the Babylonians and the Persians who massacred God's people and exiled the Jews, even the Romans who oppressed and killed the Jews, including Jesus himself, even the Germans descended of the Nazis, even Hamas militants who have raped and killed Jews, all of them, by God's radical mercy, can be grafted into the family tree of the Messiah and become citizens of the kingdom of God.

[ 20 : 10 ] Isn't that amazing? Then in verses 6 to 11, Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy from King David to Jeconiah to show that Jesus is the promised messianic king who fulfills God's promise to David.

There are significant discrepancies between Matthew's genealogy of Jesus and Luke's genealogy of Jesus. I was just talking with Josh about this before the service. In Luke 3, you find the genealogy of Jesus.

For example, Matthew lists 41 male heads of families, while Luke lists 57. And from David to Jesus, there are in fact only two overlapping names, which is surprising, right?

You'd expect the genealogies to look the same. There are several reasons for these discrepancies. First, the word father can be used narrowly, more specifically to refer to one's immediate biological father, or it could refer more broadly to someone's ancestor.

And that's the same in English as it is here in the Greek. So similarly, the word son can refer narrowly to one's immediate biological son or broadly to one's descendant, which is why Matthew can say that Jesus is the son of David.

[ 21 : 22 ] He's not the literal son of David. He's a descendant of David. So there's some flexibility in the way the words father and son are used. Second, genealogies are not always exhaustive.

Rather, they are often selective. For example, Matthew, Matthew explicitly says in verse 17, so all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations.

And from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations. And from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations. So he has a clear organizational structure.

He has a scheme to this genealogy. And this scheme possibly is related to the Jewish numbering system called gematria. Gematria is a method by which Jews assigned a numerical value to every Hebrew letter so that someone's name can be added up each letter into a number.

According to this method, the name David has the numerical value of 14, which may be why Matthew lists three sets of 14 names. Now, just a warning, I don't want you to go home and then try to use gematria to find the hidden meaning of every single number in the Bible.

[ 22 : 36 ] I think that's a recipe for interpretive disaster. And will no doubt engender many heresies and fringe ideas. There are only two places in the Bible where I'm personally convinced that gematria is used, and that's Matthew 1.17 and Revelation 13.18.

I don't think it's all over the place. And I think we should only use it when there seems to be exegetical warrant for doing so. And I think it is there here in this text because Matthew knows that we can count, and we can easily count 14 with each section.

But he explicitly tells us three times in the last verse, in verse 17, that there are 14 generations with each of those sections.

And I think that's his clue. He's wanting us to make the connection between 14 and David to prove that Jesus really is the son of David, to emphasize that point. So that's the second reason, because the genealogists are selective, why there's a discrepancy between Luke 3 and Matthew 1.

A third reason, Jews practiced what you call levirate marriage. Deuteronomy 25, 5 to 10 stipulated that if a man dies without a son to carry on his name, then it was his brother's duty to produce a son for his deceased brother by taking to himself the surviving wife of the brother as his own wife.

[ 23 : 57 ] This was important because in Jewish inheritance laws, if you weren't included in the genealogy, you didn't have an inheritance.

And so he was connected to being a part of the people of God. Although God does make an exception for the daughters of Zelophehad, who had five daughters and no son. Jeez, God does make an exception for them so that the daughters inherit there.

But this rule, levirate marriage, understandably can complicate genealogies. Because a son of a levirate marriage would be the legal son of the deceased man, but the physical son of his brother.

And so that may also account for some of the discrepancies. Overall, the discrepancies between Matthew and Luke's genealogies are best accounted for when we understand that Matthew's is a royal genealogy, genealogy, and that Luke's is a biological genealogy, a physical genealogy.

The line of people that Joseph, Jesus' adopted father, is physically descended from. However, Matthew focuses on the royal genealogy, people who are the legal heirs of the Davidic line.

[ 25 : 11 ] I think there are several evidences of this. We can see this because the middle section of this genealogy comes from 1 Chronicles 3, 10-17, which is a summary of the succession of Judah's kings.

While Luke's genealogy lists no kings, no king of Judah, save David. So Matthew starts the section with David, who is the first king of the Davidic monarchy, and then ends with Jeconiah, also called Jehoiachin, who reigned until he was taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.

So he's tracing the line of the Davidic kings. God had promised to King David in 2 Samuel 7, 12-14, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. That was the promise that God had given to King David.

In the immediate term, that prophecy is fulfilled by Solomon, who builds the temple, and who reigns in his father's stead, his father's place. However, that prophecy is not ultimately fulfilled by Solomon, because Solomon's reign ends, and so does all the kings, their reign come to an end with Jehoiachin.

[ 26 : 33 ] Because God's promise to establish his kingdom forever is not going to be fulfilled through them, but through Jesus, who is the greater son of David, and the final son of David. In fact, he is greater than David himself, because he's not merely man, but God.

That's why he's called the Christ, the prophesied king who would come to rescue the people of God. Think about it this way, how long awaited Jesus was as the Messiah.

In Tolkien's novel, The Lord of the Rings, only the heir of Elendil, who can claim, can claim the leadership of the Dúnedain.

Only the heir of Elendil can claim the kingship of Gondor. Only the heir of Elendil can wield the sword, Narsil, which once defeated Sauron, and can be used again to finally defeat him and destroy him.

And that's why it's so exciting, as you're reading through the novel or watching the movies, when Aragorn Elessar is revealed to be the true heir of Elendil. Perhaps now, finally after all these years, it raises the hope among the characters that Sauron can be destroyed for good, because the true king has returned.

[ 27 : 51 ] That's the premise of the book, The Return of the King. Similarly, for centuries, the Jews had been suffering the consequences of their sin and rebellion. Because of their idolatry and unfaithfulness to God, they were conquered and oppressed by foreign nations, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, and the Greeks, and then the Romans.

They would return to the Lord and repent for brief periods of time, but then they would backslide again, and then in their suffering, they were yearning and waiting for the Christ to come.

Now, you could imagine some of the conversations that housewives would have, or people at the bar would have, or a conversation that workers would have as they're doing their duties together.

When the Christ comes, he will make all things right. When the Christ comes, he will establish his kingdom forever. When the Christ comes, he will rescue us once and for all.

When the Christ comes, he will rule. This government is unrighteous, but when the Christ comes, he will rule with righteousness and justice. We don't have a true king right now, but when the Christ comes, we will have a king.

[ 29 : 05 ] We will have a king, all right, and we will have a kingdom, and we will be citizens there, not aliens. And here, Matthew is announcing, unmistakably to all, Christ, the Christ has come.

The king that you've been waiting for has come. And Jesus came not to abolish the Roman Empire, to establish an earthly kingdom, but he came to establish a heavenly kingdom, and in order to do that, he needed to wage war against Satan, to unseat him, because Satan is called the ruler of this world in the Gospel of John.

In Ephesians 2, he's called the prince of the power of the air, who is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Jesus dons the crown of thorns, and then he hangs on the cross, and he dies to pay the penalty for the sins of his people.

And then he rises again from the dead to defeat sin, and to defeat death, and to destroy Satan's claim over his people, to transfer us from the dominion of darkness to the dominion of light and the kingdom of light.

This is how Jesus sets into motion the restoration of the kingdom of God. And that's why the evil one has no longer any claim on us.

[ 30 : 29 ] We have a king, and it's not Satan. It's the Christ, because he has come. So Jesus, to use some analogies, establishes during his ministry, during his life here on earth, a beachhead, a beachhead in the spiritual warfare.

Beachhead is when, like, you know, an army goes in and establishes some ground, takes some ground of the enemy territory from which then they can operate further to take over the rest of the territory.

That's what Jesus does. He establishes a beachhead for the kingdom of God. He establishes his church. He builds his church. And this church is representative of the ultimate kingdom and the rule of God.

And we are an outpost or an embassy of the kingdom of God. Because in this world, there is still much rebellion against God. And we daily endure countless indignities to our Lord and to our Lord's name and to his glory and to his people.

In this world, we have persecutions and we have trials and we have tribulations and we have temptations. But whenever we gather together in the name of Jesus Christ as the church and we lay aside our burdens and distractions and we look and fix our eyes on Christ our King, we are declaring to the world, here is the beachhead.

[ 31 : 56 ] Here is the embassy. We have a king and we are citizens of a kingdom. It's not this one. And as we celebrate Advent, the first coming of Jesus the King to establish this beachhead, we also celebrate and we await the second coming, the second Advent when Jesus will return this time to complete, to usher in, to complete the kingdom of God fully.

The kingdom of God is already here but then it will be fully here when Jesus returns and he will wipe away every tear from our eyes. And finally, in verses 12 to 17, Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy from Jeconiah to Christ to show that Jesus is the promised messianic king who fulfills God's promise to the exiles.

Even though none of Jeconiah's seven sons would sit on Judah's throne, the Davidic line continued through his eldest son, Shealtiel. And Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel.

Zerubbabel played a significant role among the Jewish exiles. Ezra and Nehemiah recount in their respective books how Zerubbabel led the first round of the first band of Jews that returned from Babylonian exile to Jerusalem and Judah.

And then he served as the governor of Judah. And in Haggai 2, 21 to 23, God says to Zerubbabel, on that day declares the Lord of armies, I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, my servant, declares the Lord.

- [ 33 : 34 ] And I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the Lord of hosts, Lord of the armies. God's choice of Zerubbabel and his description of Zerubbabel as his signet ring shows that that Davidic line, God's chosen line, continues through him, even though it has officially ceased to exist after the reign of Jehoiachin.

And we have to remember what desperate situation these exiles were in, these Jewish exiles were in. They were thinking to themselves, they lost the temple, they lost the promised land, they're in exile in a foreign land, and they're thinking to themselves, well, this time we've really done it.

We've sinned too many times. We've messed up once too many times. Now all hope is lost. The Davidic line is terminated and we shall never be saved.

And yet God promises to these exiles in Jeremiah 33, 14 to 17, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah in those days and at that time I will cause a righteous branch to spring up for David and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called, the Lord is our righteousness. For thus says the Lord, David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel.

- [ 35 : 08 ] Another amazing promise, a pipe dream by human standards. They're in exile. How can you, God, make sure that there's no one, that the Davidic line continues when it's clearly ended?

And God's promising here about Jesus, the Messiah, the righteous branch who is to come, through whom the new Israel is established in him and the new Jerusalem also.

For those struggling sinners in our midst who struggle and who think that they've struggled, that they have strayed a little too far, far beyond restoration.

For those exiles in our midst who think that they are forgotten and that they can never be restored to the fatherland. For people who think that they are damaged goods, this is a reassurance and a promise from God that Jesus did come to redeem and reclaim such people.

We read from Hebrews 2 from the assurance of pardon that in order to redeem human beings who have sinned, who are flesh and blood, that Jesus had to himself take on flesh and blood.

- [ 36 : 23 ] And it's only by sharing in our humanity that he then lifts up those who put their trust in him out of their quagmire of sin and death to the kingdom of God.

And that's the wonder of the incarnation. That the creator put on the robes of human flesh and became a creature. That the son of God became a son of man.

That Jesus, the word of God who braces all of the cosmos and upholds it, became a babbling infant in the arms of Virgin Mary.

And we can see the wonder of the incarnation in the genealogy itself. Let's look at some of the fine characters that are mentioned in this genealogy.

Verse 7 tells us that Jesus' ancestor, one of them, was Rehoboam. You might remember that Rehoboam was the son of Solomon. It was Rehoboam's folly and unnecessary cruelty that split the kingdom of Israel in half.

- [ 37 : 35 ] Northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah in 1 Kings 12. And according to 1 Kings 14, under his reign, Judah was led into all kinds of idolatry and cult prostitution and abominations.



He was succeeded later by Ahaz who succeeded Jotham and then Ahaz even burned his son as an offering according to the despicable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel.

2 Kings 16, 3-4, Manasseh was even worse. Even though his father, Hezekiah, sought to bring reform to Israel and get rid of the idols, Manasseh rebuilt all of them and even desecrated the temple of God by building pagan altars and idols inside it.

2 Kings 21, 9 summarizes this way, Manasseh led Judah astray to do more evil than the pagan nations had done whom the Lord destroyed before the people of Israel.

And then, of course, famous Jeconiah under whom Israel is sent into exile in Babylonian exile due to Nebuchadnezzar. And in Genesis 38, Judah sleeps with the woman that he thinks is a prostitute only to discover that she was Tamar, his daughter-in-law, who had disguised herself in order to get impregnated by him since Judah had been unjustly withholding his son from her that he owed to her according to the Levitic marriage principle.

[ 39 : 12 ] So Tamar is included in Jesus' genealogy, the woman who prostituted herself, and Perez, who was born through their incest between Judah and Tamar.

Verse 5 tells us that King David's great-great-grandfather Salmon, father Boaz, by Rahab, and some of you know the story from Joshua 2.1, she was also a Canaanite prostitute.

And verse 6 is the kicker of them all. It says, David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

He could have said Bathsheba, he doesn't say Bathsheba. The wife of Uriah. To make the point abundantly clear, that David committed adultery.

Bathsheba was not his wife, the wife of Uriah. And then David tried to cover it up by committing murder, by killing Uriah. Look at this genealogy.

[ 40 : 20 ] David, wife of Uriah, Rahab, Tamar, Judah. It's a very checkered genealogy.

It's the kind of stuff that if you were trying to establish your royal kingship, you might want to take a sharpie and let's get rid of that. Let's erase this one.

But it's all in here. Because in his genealogy, Jesus embraces all of our humanity and all of our sin so that he can carry us and he can take that sin upon himself and die and hang on the cross.

So no matter where you came from, no matter how checkered your own history is, no matter how checkered your own genealogy is, no matter what sort of sins are in your past or even in the present, that if you repent of your sins and turn to Jesus, Jesus is a savior who can embrace you, who can lift you, who can save you.

I pray that all of you will embrace Jesus as your savior this morning.

[ 41 : 38 ] Let's pray.