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Jesus Has a Legal Right to be King of the Jews

Today, we are beginning a new series of topics that will help us to teach our physical and spiritual children about the fact that Jesus came as the promised King of the Jews. In fact, Jesus Christ will also be the Eternal King of kings and Lord of lords. These topics will be taken from the book of Matthew. In this topic, we will see that Jesus had the legal right to be the King of the Jews.

In Matthew 1:1-6, we read, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.” We see that Matthew begins this book by giving the genealogy of Joseph to show that Jesus has the legal right to be the King of the Jews. Then, the book of Luke gives a second genealogy in Luke 3:23-37, which is the genealogy of Mary, to show that she was also a descendant of Adam, Abraham and David. Romans 5 shows us why it is so important to have both genealogies.

Romans 5:12 says, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” Here, we see that it was through Adam that sin entered into the world. Then, we have a wonderful promise in Romans 5:19-21, where we read, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The first Adam brought sin and death upon all people. In contrast, Jesus Christ our Lord is the last Adam who showed that it was the grace of God that caused the Father to send His only begotten Son to pay the full penalty for sin so that God could offer eternal life to all as a free gift. That is why 1 Corinthians 15:45 says, “And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.” Jesus is both the Son of Man and Son of God.

This genealogy also includes four women. All four of these women are mentioned in the first six verses. First, we see that all four of these women were a part of Gentile families. In Genesis 38, we see that Tamar was a Canaanite. In Joshua 2:1, we read, “Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, ‘Go, view the land, especially Jericho.’ So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.” Here, we see that Rahab was from the city of Jericho. Ruth 1:4 says, “Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years.” Here, we see that Ruth was a Moabite. 2 Samuel 11:3 says, “So David sent and inquired about the woman. And *someone* said, ‘Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?’” Here, we see that Bathsheba was married to a Hittite.

Second, we see that these women pictured the grace of God to all people even in spite of things in their past that might cause many people to exclude them. Genesis 38:24 says, “And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, ‘Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry.’ So Judah said, ‘Bring her out and let her be burned!’” Then, in verse 26, Judah had to confess that he had committed incest with his daughter-in-law. Joshua 2:1 quoted above said that Rahab was a prostitute in the city of Jericho. Ruth was a Moabite and Deuteronomy 23:3 says, “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever.” Then, David committed adultery with Bathsheba and tried to cover up his sin by ordering the death of her husband, Uriah. God showed His grace to all four women.

Taken together, we can see that God wanted to make it very clear, by using the genealogy of Jesus, that no Gentile would be excluded from the salvation Jesus provided through His payment for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1-2 says, “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” Christ satisfied the requirement that all sin must be paid for - either by each of us because we are guilty of sin, or by believing that the Father was satisfied with the payment Jesus made for our sin and receiving Jesus as the Lord and Savior of our lives. The women in the genealogy also show that God will forgive the sin of unbelief and blot out all other sins for all who come to Christ in repentance and faith.

Matthew 1:7-11 says, “Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.” Jeconiah (Coniah) was such an evil king that his family was cut off from ever sitting on the throne of David in the future. Jeremiah 22:28-30 says, “‘Is this man Coniah a despised, broken idol—a vessel in which *is* no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his descendants, and cast into a land which they do not know? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD! 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.’”” God said that none of his biological children would ever sit on the throne of Israel in the future. Joseph was a descendant of Jeconiah and so had a legal right to be king but this curse would have made that impossible.

That is one reason why it is so important that Jesus was born of a virgin. Luke 1:34-35 says, “Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*’” Here, we see that Jesus was both totally God and totally human. He is the Son of God and He was born of a woman. Jesus has the legal right to sit on the throne of David because Joseph was a descendant of Jeconiah (Coniah). However, the curse on the biological descendants of Coniah did not affect Jesus because of the fact that He is the Son of God and was born to a virgin.

A much more important reason for Jesus to be born of a virgin was to fulfill the Old Testament. Isaiah 7:14 says, “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” This promise given through Isaiah said that Jesus would be born of a virgin and thus fulfilled this prophecy. This verse also points out the fact that this virgin birth was to be a sign to the nation of Israel. Both Matthew and Luke mentioned the virgin birth of Jesus as a part of the books God inspired them to write about the birth of Jesus. Matthew included the genealogy of Joseph to show that as the adopted son of Joseph, Jesus had a legal right to be the king. Luke included the genealogy of Mary *to show* that Jesus was the son of David, the Son of Abraham and the son of Adam as well as being the Son of God *to show* that Jesus fulfilled all of the prophecies about the Messiah.

Matthew 1:12-17 gives the genealogy of Joseph from the time of Jeconiah down to Joseph to show the completion of that legal line. Those verses say, “And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. 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.”

The genealogies of the Jews were available at the temple at the time the books of Matthew and Luke were written. However, just a few years later in 70 A.D. the city of Jerusalem and the temple were completely destroyed along with the genealogies. Here, we see that God had preserved these genealogies until the books of Matthew and Luke could be written to show both the legal line through Joseph and the actual line through Mary. God wants all of the Jews to know that Jesus is the Messiah.

David was the last individual to receive the promise that the Messiah would come from his family. Psalm 45:6 says, “Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom.” The writer of Hebrews quoted this verse in Hebrews 1:8, where we read, “But to the Son *He says*: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.’” Then, Hebrews says in Hebrews 13:20-21, “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.” God wanted to make it clear to the Jews that Jesus Christ is the One who fulfilled all of the promises given in the Old Testament. In the same way, we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand why the virgin birth is so important. May the Lord richly bless you as you explain this important lesson to your children.