

CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
JANUARY 11 2025

the fathers God chose for His Son

Scripture Story: 2 Samuel 7; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:21-38.
Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 70; *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 2.
Key Text: Luke 3:22.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of Jesus' birth recorded in Matthew and Luke includes the genealogy of Jesus. However, when the story of His birth is told, the genealogy is often overlooked. No doubt the Bible writers did not intend for the reader to skip over this important information. The details of Jesus' background are critical to understanding the plan of salvation. Listing the ancestry of Jesus underscores the fact that He was indeed the long-awaited Messiah, the Son of David. In the 17 different verses in the New Testament where Jesus was referred to as the Son of David, it was meant primarily to refer to His messianic title as the Old Testament prophesied concerning Him.

There are many relevant talking points in this lesson. For example, by highlighting some of the characters in Jesus' family tree who had a questionable background you may wish to emphasize God's character of love. No matter how grievous our sins, if we repent God is willing to include every one of us in His family.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Recognize that God is in control of our world's history as seen in the genealogies of the ancient world. *(Know)*
- Feel touched by God's love to send His only Son into our world to save us. *(Feel)*
- Be willing to share the realization that God sent His Son into our world to reveal His love for us and to save us from our sins. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

The Father, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 3: "God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also those of the Father. (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 4:35; Ps. 110:1, 4; John 3:16; 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:28; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 4:8; Rev. 4:11.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? *section of their lesson. After they have completed it, grade the quiz and have each student share briefly their family history. Here are the answers to the quiz:*

1. 1900; the siblings were not born yet in 1880, and by 1910 they were probably not living with their parents.
2. Grandma; start with your relatives. The biggest regret family historians report is that they didn't interview relatives when they could.
3. First cousin once removed.

4. The baptismal record, because it was recorded when the event occurred—the closer the record to the event, the more reliable.

As an alternate way to introduce the topic, instruct each student to write a catchy, gripping opener to a book (give them the option of texting the assignment to you). After the students share their statements, invite them to reflect on the way Matthew started his Gospel. Why did Matthew start his account with the genealogy of Jesus? Review the power text, Luke 3:22. Why is it important when we learn about Jesus' human ancestors to recognize that ultimately Jesus is the Son of God?

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

Now that you know how important it is to grab your reader's attention from the start, let's look at Matthew's introduction to His Gospel:

"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. 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.

"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" (Matthew 1:1-16).

There you have the first *two* sentences in Matthew's book. Reading through the list can seem like a difficult feat, but once you understand the importance of Jesus' genealogy, you'll know why it was listed first.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

In your own words, explain:

In ancient Israel, people valued genealogies. Imagine their world: no iPads, no iPods, no TV. At night people would sit around the fire and tell stories. One of their favorite methods of storytelling was listing names. This gave people a sense of identity, passing from one generation to another. Hearing the lists, they would conclude, "I'm not just a nomad. Ask me who I am; I'll tell you about my people." Still today in the Middle East there are tribal nomads who can spend hours just reciting the names of ancestors.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story *section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

Jesus lived in an oral culture. For the most part, they did not keep written records. This meant that the only way to establish legal status, financial standing, vocational credibility, and property rights was to depend on their memory of genealogies. For example, if you wanted to be a priest in Jesus' day, you had to prove that you were in a line of descendants dating back to Aaron from the tribe of Levi.

So it's not surprising that Matthew would begin his book in the manner that he did. People would have loved that. To establish the identity of the Messiah—this rabbi who spoke with unrivaled authority—and show that this Anointed One came from the right line was not only captivating but also very important.

From the beginning of his Gospel, Matthew is establishing the fact that this baby "born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king" (Matthew 2:1) was indeed the Messiah, the Son of David.

There is some dispute about Jesus' genealogy in Luke. Some scholars argue that it is Mary's genealogy. Others explain that it is Joseph's *legal* genealogy as opposed to his *biological* genealogy, given that there was an adoption in Joseph's ancestry.

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

RABBI 101

Connecting the Dots

The lesson this week offers an ideal opportunity to help students connect the following dots:

- Connecting David and Jesus
- Connecting the Old Testament and the New Testament
- Connecting ordinary women and God's extraordinary grace
- Connecting the story of David and the birth of Jesus
- Connecting the ancient world and the modern world

Take advantage of this chance to help students get a wholistic perspective of the bigger story. By connecting the story of Tamar to David to Jesus to today the young people can gain a deeper appreciation for the story of salvation.

In either case, since Joseph was a faithful Jew his marriage to Mary indicates that she was from the house of David as well, since it was against the law to marry a person from a different ancestry. What is important to know is that Jesus descended from David through both parents, fulfilling the requirement for inheritance of the throne through Joseph, and fulfilling the prophecy of being the seed of David through Mary.

Sharing Context and Background

Explore with the students the stories of the women that Matthew includes in the opening paragraph of his book. Explain to the students how the inclusion of these women in the lineage of the Messiah would have been shocking to any reader in the ancient world.

"It is the exception, rather than the rule, to find women named in Hebrew genealogical lists. Even so, Matthew refers to them incidentally rather than specifically as genealogical links. The fact that the names of such honored women as Sarah and Rachel are omitted suggests that the four women mentioned were probably in each case included because of unusual circumstances. It is likely that all four—Thamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bath-sheba—were of Gentile origin. Herein lies an implied rebuke to Jewish exclusiveness, and a tacit recognition of the fact that Jesus belongs to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

"With the exception of Ruth, scandals were attached to the names of all these women. A merely human historian might have chosen to pass over their names in silence for fear that the honor of the Messiah be tarnished. But Matthew specifically quotes the Master as saying to the Pharisees that He came not 'to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (Matthew 9:13, KJV). It may be that Matthew, himself a publican and therefore some-

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**
  Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.
- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight *statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book* The Desire of Ages. *Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from* Out of the Story.
- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.
- **Further Insight**
  Ask them how the quote in Further Insight *conveys the point of the story in this lesson.*

times classed with harlots (see Matthew 21:31, 32), found in his heart a tender place for others who were generally shunned as living beyond the pale of respectability" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 278).

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Give each student a scarlet ribbon. Wrap each one individually and let them open the present at the end of class. See the summary below to connect the ribbon with the stories in this study. Close with an appeal to accept Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Summary

Consider the scarlet ribbon that weaves its way through the genealogy of Jesus:

Tamar gives birth to twin boys. One of them reaches his hand out first, and the midwife ties a scarlet cord around his wrist. In this way they could identify the firstborn—indicating which boy would receive the inheritance. You see, there is a blessing that is being passed down from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Judah. The ultimate blessing, our inheritance of eternal life, will be the Deliverer who will come from this line.

The spies informed Rahab that they were coming back and that Jericho would be destroyed. They told her that she and her family would be spared if she hung a scarlet cord out her window. The scarlet cord would be a sign to them, and she would be saved. This scarlet cord became the symbol of her freedom. Thanks to Rahab's great faith, the lives of those in her household were spared, and they joined themselves to the people of Israel.

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him" (Matthew 27:27, 28). Indeed, the scarlet robe is a symbol of our inheritance. It is a symbol of our blessing. And it is a symbol of our salvation.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*),* chapter 2.

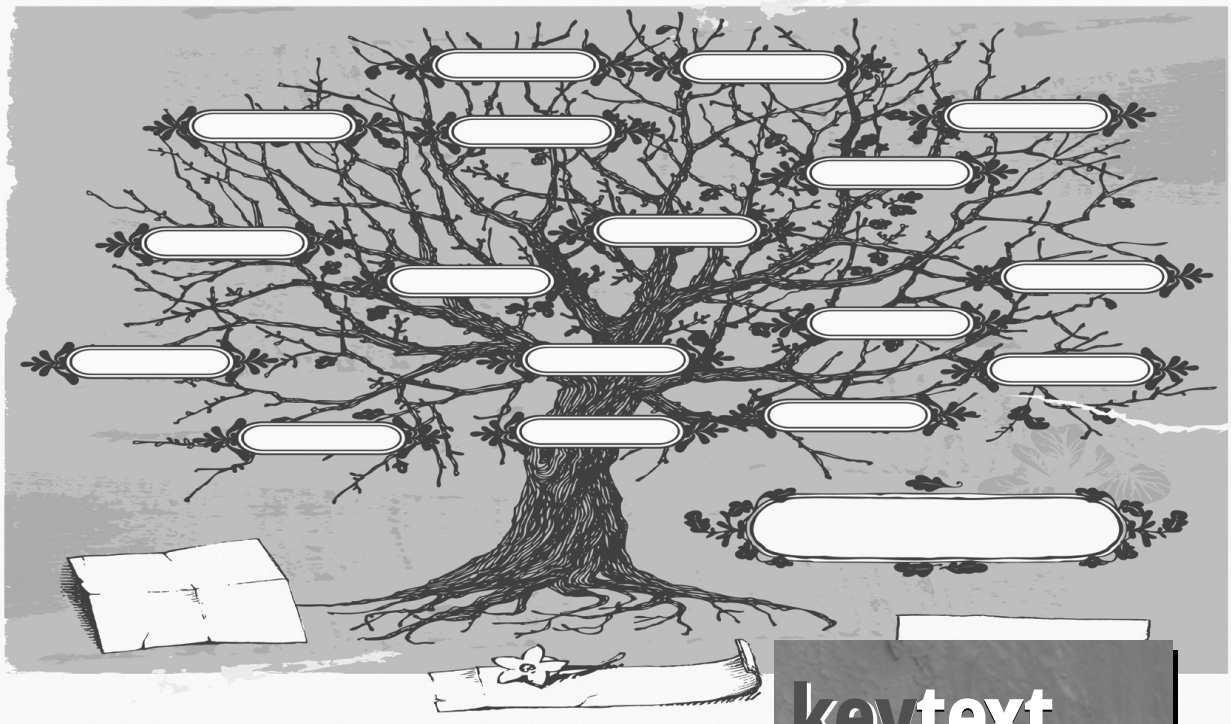
*A special adaptation, *Humble Hero*, has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.

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STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: 2 Samuel 7; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:21-38.
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the fathers God chose for His Son



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keytext

"You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

(Luke 3:22)

flashlight

"The Pharisees had gathered close about Jesus as He answered the question of the scribe. Now turning He put a question to them: 'What think ye of Christ? whose son is He?' This question was designed to test their belief concerning the Messiah,—to show whether they regarded Him simply as a man or as the Son of God. A chorus of voices answered, 'The Son of David.' This was the title which prophecy had given to the Messiah" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 608).

what do you think?

Here's a quiz to see how well you know genealogy:

1. You have the names of three siblings born between 1884 and 1887 and need to know the names of their parents. Which census would be the best one to start with?

___ 1880 ___ 1900 ___ 1910

2. The best place to start your genealogical research is . . .

___ Internet ___Grandma ___the library

3. Your grandfather's sister's daughter is your . . .

___ great-aunt ___ second cousin

___ first cousin once removed

4. You found several records that give your ancestor's birth date. Which source is most reliable?

___ 1834 baptismal record

___ 1850 census

___ 1902 death record

did you know?

There are 17 verses in the New Testament that describe Jesus as the "Son of David." But how is it possible for Jesus to be David's "son" if David lived approximately 1,000 years before Jesus? Matthew 1 outlines the genealogical proof that Jesus was a direct descendant of David through Joseph, Jesus' legal father. The genealogy in Luke 3 gives Jesus' lineage through His mother, Mary. Thus, Jesus is a descendant of David, both through Joseph by adoption and Mary by blood.



INTO THE STORY

"I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."

"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. . . .

" . . . And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ."

"Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er, the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, . . .the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God."

(2 Samuel 7:14-16; Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-38)

OUT OF THE STORY

Why do you think God tells David that He will be a father to his son and will punish him when he does wrong? Do you think this is a promise or a threat? (See Proverbs 3:12 and Hebrews 12:3-11.)

_____
_____
_____

How does the knowledge that God loves you too much to allow you to continue to do wrong and harm your relationship with Him, others, and yourself give you hope as you face life's difficulties?

_____
_____
_____

Scan through the genealogies (Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38).

Circle all the people who have stories with which you are familiar.

Star the names of the people whose story you know very well.

Both Matthew 1 and Luke 3 contain genealogies of Jesus. Read through each one and note how the two lists are similar and how they are different. For example, when the genealogies arrive at David, they split with David's sons: "Nathan," who is on Mary's side, and "Solomon," who is on Joseph's side.

Similarities:

_____
_____
_____

Differences:

_____
_____
_____

Why do you suppose they are different?

_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit' " **(Matthew 1:18-20).**

"And He said to them, 'How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David?' " **(Luke 20:41).**

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" **(Isaiah 53:5, 6).**

further insight

"Caesar Augustus is made the agent for the fulfillment of God's purpose in bringing the mother of Jesus to Bethlehem. She is of the lineage of David, and the Son of David must be born in David's city."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 44

Sabbath

Read John 14:11, 12.

The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also those of the Father" (The Father, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 3).

In a small group of friends, discuss the following:

• How far back in your family history can you go with knowing something about your ancestors?
• What is your family story? How does your family history color that story?
• What are the benefits of studying your family history?
• What are the benefits of studying the family history of Jesus?
• Numerous genealogies are listed in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Why do you think the writers of the Bible were so careful to include these lists? What can we learn from them?

_____
_____
_____

Sunday

Read 1 John 4:9-12.

Matthew's genealogy of Jesus would have sent shock waves through the community because of his inclusion of women. In the ancient world women did not establish bloodlines. They had no legal rights. They were treated as property. What was most explosive, however, had to do with *which* women Matthew included (see Matthew 1:3, 5, 6).

What do these women have in common? What is Matthew trying to tell us by mentioning these women in the bloodline of Jesus? What does this tell us about Jesus?

_____
_____
_____

Monday

Read John 3:16.

Read the *Key Text* and explain the significance of the two genealogies included in Luke 3: the human lineage of Jesus' ancestors and His divine origins that position Him as equal with God. How is this important to our understanding of who Jesus is?

_____
_____
_____

Tuesday

Read Matthew 16:13-16.

After reading the *Flashlight* section reflect on the question that Jesus put to the Pharisees: "What think ye of Christ? whose son is He?" Compare this question to the question that Jesus asked His disciples in Matthew 16:13: "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

Is this the same question? Explain.

_____
_____
_____

Consider what the following verses say about the identity of Christ and then complete the sentence:

Matthew 16:16—Jesus is _____
John 3:16, 17—Jesus is _____
John 10:30—Jesus is _____
Colossians 1:13-23—Jesus is _____

Wednesday

Read the three texts included in the *Punch Lines* section. How do Matthew 1:18-20 and Isaiah 53:5, 6 answer the question that Jesus poses in Luke 20:41?

_____
_____
_____

Thursday

Read Matthew 28:19.

Reflecting on Matthew's genealogy of Jesus, Martin Luther once said, "It is as though God intended for people to hear this genealogy and say to themselves, 'Oh, Christ is the kind of person who is not ashamed of sinners. See, he even puts them in his family tree.'"

Have you ever felt like Jesus was ashamed of you? The next time you feel that you have disappointed Jesus, read Matthew 1 and remember that there is no sin that would cause Jesus to love you less. His love knows no boundaries. His family tree is loaded with bad apples like you and me—and that's precisely why He came!

Friday

Read Romans 8:15.

It is in the Gospel of Matthew where we are told that the soldiers put a scarlet robe on Jesus' body. Toward the end of Jesus' life Matthew is saying, "Now you see the scarlet thread in the One who took on all of our sins. It is a sign of salvation, a symbol of grace, weaving all the way to a bloodstained cross. There's room in the family for you. Will you accept Jesus' invitation to join His family?"

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 2.

**Humble Hero* is a special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companionbooks#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.