

Jesus' family tree

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[0:00] A few years ago, I met someone who discovered that my name was a bit unusual, Shappala. They wanted to find out more about where my family had come from.

They asked me if I knew much, and to be honest, I didn't know much at all. And so they said, could they go and research my family history? And so they did.

And a few months later, I was handed a thick folder full of all sorts of details about the Shappala family tree. And it was interesting.

It was really interesting to find out who I'd come from. It was interesting to find out my granddad spent a few years in Algeria as a missionary before World War II.

It was fascinating to see how my great auntie, it looked like she'd traveled to visit him on a boat before she then moved to live in Canada.

[1:01] And that was just a couple of interesting things we found out looking at my family tree. And this morning, as we heard Becky reading to us from Matthew chapter 1, we have seen Jesus' family tree.

And if I'm honest, if I was reading the Bible for the first time, and I was given Matthew to read, and I saw all this list of names, I would think, that's a bit boring.

I don't want to read through them. I might either start where the good stuff begins, or I might just put the book down. Like if Harry Potter and those books, which are so popular, if that started with a list of Harry's family tree, I'm not sure it would be as popular as it is today.

But Matthew is doing that. Matthew is starting with a family tree. This is the way the whole New Testament starts. What's he doing? Well, he's helping us to see where did Jesus come from, helping us to understand and appreciate who he is.

Now, have a look at verse 1, the first few words. It says, this is the genealogy. This is the genealogy. And that word genealogy can mean Genesis.

[2:35] Now, I wonder, particularly younger ones, where else in the Bible might you find Genesis? Otis, do you have an idea?

No? I thought you had your hand up. Gracie. The beginning. Yeah, Genesis is right at the beginning of the Bible.

And that's what genealogy means. It means origin or beginning. And the first book, as Gracie has told us, is the very beginning of the Bible.

It's called Genesis. It shows us where we all have come from, where human beings have come from, how our world began. And now we come to the New Testament and we read of a Genesis. We read of a new beginning. We read an origin story. We read of where Jesus has come from. If you like superhero movies at all, you might be familiar with an origin story.

[3:42] They're quite popular. To see how did this person become a superhero? What influenced them? And that's what we have here.

We have Jesus' origin story. And in Jesus, we find that each of us also have an opportunity for a new beginning.

Because that's what we need. We need a new beginning. The book of the Bible, Genesis, that we mentioned, it tells us about what went wrong with the world. It tells us what's wrong with us.

It explains to us that Adam and Eve rebelled in the garden in God's good creation. It tells us, and we've seen this before in the past. It tells us how Adam and Eve said, But in this origin story of Jesus, we see that we can and we need a new beginning.

And it's found in the person mentioned in verse 1. This is the genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah. This is all focused on Jesus.

[5:05] And we're going to see more about him in a moment. But firstly, we're going to sing another song. Which helps us to sing about the world that God had made. What went wrong with it.

And it helps us to think Jesus came to save. Phil's going to lead us on the guitar. It goes to the tune of Jingle Bells.

So we'll all know the tune, even if we don't know the words. So, we'll stand and we'll sing. Go the gospel in Jingle Bells.

So, this morning, we've seen in Matthew 1 so far, it's all about Jesus. It shows us his family tree. And that's encouraging to us.

That should be encouraging to us. That Jesus was born into a real family. This is a list, as we've discovered, of real human beings who are all related.

[6:07] And as you read through, you can see, like Abraham, he was the father of Isaac. And Isaac, the father of Jacob. Jacob, the father of Judah. And his brothers. And so on. It's talking about real people who had real children.

Who had other children. And families are rather Christmas related, aren't they? Many of us will get to spend time with families over Christmas.

Some of us will really love our families. Some of us may actually really struggle with our families. Some of us may have one or two people in our families we don't mention.

Don't mention uncle so-and-so at the meal table. Families are messy. Families are complicated. But Jesus was born into a real family.

And that should be an encouragement to us. He understands the messiness that families bring. Like at the meal table, at Christmas Day. Well, not that they did that.

[7:11] But as Jesus and his family ate dinner together. They probably wouldn't mention great, great, great, great. I'm not sure how many greats. Granddad Manasseh. Because he was a really wicked king.

But they might speak a lot about Josiah. Because he was a great king. And he was in the family line of Jesus. So Jesus was born into a real family.

And there's two of his relatives that I particularly want us to think about this morning. Have a look at verse 1. Can anybody tell me who were the two relatives spoken about there?

Richard. Yeah. David and Abraham. And we're going to think about both of them now. Firstly, Abraham. And Gracie's going to help us this morning to think about Abraham in a reading from Genesis.

Thank you. Genesis 12, 1-3.

[8:12] The Lord had said to Abraham, Go from your country, your people and your father's household, to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation.

And I will bless you. And I will make your name great. And you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you.

And whoever curses you, I will curse. And all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. Thank you so much, Gracie, for reading that for us.

So, Abraham. What is God doing through this man, Abraham? Because it's important that we see. Because to be related to Abraham, as Jesus was, was to be properly part of God's people.

To be related to Abraham was to be properly Jewish. And through this man, Abraham, God was doing something new in the world.

[9:18] We see several new things that God promises to Abraham in these few verses. Firstly, he's going to use Abraham to bring about a new nation.

A new nation. He says, I will make you. God says, I will make you into a great nation. Which meant Abraham was going to have descendants.

People following him. People in his family line. And through him, a whole new people would come. But there was a problem for Abraham.

Abraham didn't have a descendant at that point. He didn't have a son or a daughter. So, what was going to happen? Well, God promises him other things elsewhere.

He says, and you could do this tonight. Look at the stars in the sky. Can you count all those stars? Abraham, your descendants will be as numerous as these.

[10:27] He's going to make Abraham into a great nation. And we can see in this list in Genesis that what God promised him was true.

In Matthew even. That what God promised him was true. Abraham became the father of Isaac. And Isaac, the father of Jacob. And Jacob, the father of Judah. And so on. Abraham did have descendants.

He had. Out of him was forming a new nation. Also with Abraham, he was going to give him a new name. I will make your name great.

And we're told in the book of Genesis that Abraham's name changes from Abraham, as it was in Gracie's reading, to Abraham. And think about the name Abraham.

And you think, this is a great guy. This was someone that God had made great promises to for the blessing of the whole world.

[11:27] And people look back and think, wow, what a great man Abraham was. How good it was that God used him to bring about all his promises.

And we also see with Abraham that God was going to bring about new blessing. Bless or blessing is mentioned a lot in the reading that Gracie gave us.

You will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you. And there's more blessing. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you. New blessing for the world.

So many times in those verses, blessing comes. And the blessing for the whole world comes most clearly in Matthew chapter 1.

As we see at the end of this list of names, at the end of the list of names of the family of Abraham, we see Jesus. Verse 16, Jacob became the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

[12:42] Jesus born into Abraham's line. And it's through Jesus that all nations on earth will be blessed. If you come back tonight, you'll see that even more clearly in this list.

But how would Jesus bring blessing to the world? Well, have a look down at verse 21. The angel told Joseph that Mary would give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins.

You remember that problem that I said we all have? That problem of sin? Well, Jesus has come to save us from our sin.

To rescue us, to forgive us from that problem we have. We said we need a new beginning. We need a new genesis. We need a new beginning because of our sin.

And it's found in Jesus. It's amazing that God himself was willing to come down and be born as a real human being, in a real human family, in all the muck and mess of it, to save us from our sins.

[14:07] It's not about whether we have been particularly good or whether we've been born in the right family. Maybe you have done lots of good this year.

Maybe you've given money to charities and you're sending 50 Christmas cards to people. That's good. But it's not about that. It's about trusting Jesus to save you.

And Jesus can give you a new beginning as he forgives your sin and gives you new life. We're going to sing again before we think about David.

We're going to sing this wonderful carol, A Little Town of Bethlehem. And the final verse speaks about how we can get that new beginning with Jesus. We can pray to him and ask him to cast out our sin and enter and be born in us today.

So that's something to think about as we sing that final verse. So let's stand and let's sing together. Let's remind ourselves in verse 1 who are the two people we see Jesus is related to.

[15:24] David and Abraham. David and Abraham. Excellent. David and Abraham. So we've thought about the promises God made to Abraham and how we see them fulfilled in this Matthew 1 genealogy.

And now we're going to hear about promises made to David. And Isaac's going to come and read to us. Thank you. From 2 Samuel. The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you.

When your days are over and rest you with your ancestors. I will raise you up from your offspring and succeed you. Your own flesh and blood. And I will establish his kingdom.

He is the one who will build a house for my name. And I will establish a throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father and he will be my son.

When he does wrong I will punish him. With a rod wielded by men. With floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him.

[16:37] As I took away from Saul whom I removed before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me. Your throne will be established forever. This is read from the word of the Lord and Savior.

Thanks so much Isaac for reading those verses. Those promises to King David. And what I particularly want us to see in those promises.

God says the Lord himself declares to David. That when your days are over. When David dies. When he's not king anymore.

And you rest with your ancestors. I will raise up an offspring to succeed you. Your own flesh and blood. I'll establish his kingdom.

And it tells us that he will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. And so the question that we ask ourselves as we read on from those promises to David.

[17:45] Is who is that going to be? And the obvious person it might be. We might be thinking of. Is his son. Who succeeds him as king.

And we see who it is in this genealogy in Matthew 1. We see that David was the father of Solomon. So surely Solomon is going to be the one.

And if you read about Solomon and his rule. You'll see at the beginning. It starts really well. God asks him to ask him for something.

And Solomon says I want wisdom from you. And it seems that this is a really wise king ruling over God's people. This is the king surely that was being promised to David.

But as you read on through Solomon's rule. You see actually his heart goes astray. He ends up marrying like 700 wives plus.

[18:54] It turns out he's not such a good king. And then Solomon dies. But there's other people on this list.

Verses 7 to 11 who are potentials. So Solomon's son Rehoboam. He became king. And Abijah. And Asa. And Jehoshaphat.

And Jehoram. But none of them were that good kings. None of them we would really want to see ruling over God's kingdom forever.

There are some good kings on this list. We've got Uzziah and Hezekiah and Josiah. They're names that stand out to us as pretty good kings of God's people.

Could it be them? Well all of them die. It couldn't be them. They are David's flesh and blood.

[19:54] But they don't reign on David's throne and over his kingdom forever. And then we have a problem.

We see that in Matthew 1. Have a look at verse 11. There was a time of exile.

There was a time where God's people were thrown out of their land and taken under Babylonian rule. The kingdom was broken up.

The kingdom was in danger. But we read through the Bible and we see that a bunch of bad kings and no kingdom was not going to stop God's promises from coming about.

And so as we get to verse 16 of Matthew 1 we read this. Jacob, the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

[21:14] So we read that Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, is born into this line of Abraham and King David. And he marries Mary who becomes the mother of Jesus.

And Jesus is no ordinary child. We see here, right here in verse 16, this is the Messiah. This is the promised, anointed king of God's people.

And so the question of who is going to be this king? Who is going to be this king? This descendant of David to rule on David's throne forever. Could it be Jesus? We can read all through Matthew's gospel and see how Jesus was good.

How he was without any sin. How he was obedient to God. How he announced the kingdom of God is a coming. But Jesus the king ended up being put to death.

Wearing a crown made of thorns. With a notice above him that said the king of the Jews. Which was put there to mock him.

[22:33] And then he died. And so how could this be the king to rule forever? He's died on a cross. But we read on through Matthew.

And we see it's okay. Because three days in a tomb. And Jesus being dead won't stop God's promises to Abraham and David being fulfilled.

For we read that Jesus miraculously rose again. Triumphant over death. He is the promised one to reign on David's throne forever.

And so not only can we find in him forgiveness of sins. But we can find in him a place in his kingdom.

And that's good news for us this Christmas time. There's three reasons why I think this is good news. There's more reasons.

[23:40] But three reasons I thought I'd share with you this morning. First of all, we have a place in Jesus' kingdom. We have a place.

And that's something that some of us really need to hear this Christmas time. Because whilst everybody else seems to be having a good time. Meeting up with family and friends.

Actually we feel like we're left a bit alone. Maybe we used to spend Christmas time with family. But now people have died.

Or actually we're not talking to parts of our family anymore. But know this. That Jesus has come into this world to say you can have a place.

With me. In my kingdom. In this new family of brothers and sisters. He offers you a new beginning.

[24:42] New forgiveness for your sins. Life with him. Safe in his kingdom. Forever. And that's a special thing.

A second thing. Jesus knows what family is like. We've already said a bit about that already. But. Let Christmas time and time with family.

Remind you. That Jesus himself was born into a family. That he had a mom, dad, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunties, cousins.

And as the Bible shows us. God was bringing him. Making sure he was going to be brought into the right family.

With the descendant of Abraham. As his great, great, great, great, lots of great granddad. And also David. He was born into that family.

[25:37] He was born into that family. To bring about the promised blessings. For the whole world. So that the whole world can know the blessings of sins forgiven.

And a place in his kingdom. With Jesus as their king forever. So let's let our family time over Christmas remind us of that.

And finally. We have read some promises. Gracie and Isaac have helped us to see the promises made to Abraham and to David.

Those promises that we've read have come true in Jesus. And perhaps Christmas time reminds us actually of people who've made promises to us in the past.

Or even this year. About wonderful things that will happen. And we've wondered. Actually that's not happened. Maybe we've been let down a little. And maybe we ourselves have thought.

[26:41] If only I get this great Christmas gift. And this will be amazing. And even that Christmas gift that we've longed for has let us down. But know this morning.

That God's promises are true. And God's promises never fail. And that life with Jesus. As your king. In his kingdom.

Which will go on forever. Is good. And God will be with you. And his promises won't ever fail. Or let you down.

And that's good news. For us. We're going to hear now. A song.

Not a song that we're going to sing. We're going to hear a song on a video. I haven't even plugged it in. Which talks about. Jesus.

[27:37] Being king. Talks about many of the things we've thought about this morning. Oh. Steve. The laptop audio. Can you turn it down a second? That's a fun noise.

Isn't it? I'll just plug it in and see what happens. Oh. That's the wrong one. There we go.
Technology. This is a song that we'll sit and listen to.
And it's a really fun song. Which helps us to remind us of the trees we've thought about this
morning. So. If you want to sing along. Do you? If you want to dance.
Or clap along. Do you? If you just want to sit and listen. Do that as well. Let's play it. Oh.
No. This is my fault. This is why you should test the technology before. Let's play it.