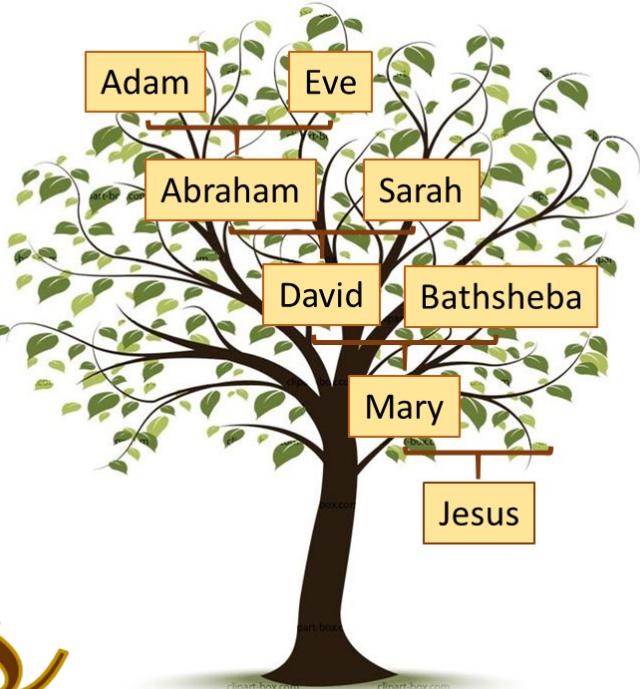


The Lineage Of Jesus



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Matthew 1:1 reads, “*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*” Luke records a similar, yet different genealogy beginning in Luke 3:23, “*And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being supposedly the son of Joseph, the son of Eli . . .*” While acknowledging that these sections of scripture are inspired (2 Tim 3:16), it is easy for many of us to only briefly scan these “hard to pronounce” genealogies (or skip over them entirely). Yet these genealogies are invaluable. For instance, they provide evidence that Jesus was who He said He was, that He was the Messiah and the fulfillment of all prophecy. Paul wrote about this in Ephesians 1:4, “*He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.*” Continuing in 1:7-8a, “*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us.*” These genealogies are not just obscure names in a family tree, but a record of real people, each of whom played a unique role in the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation.

Genealogies were very important to the Jews; without them they could not prove their tribal membership and associated rights. For example, among those who returned from Babylonian captivity, some sons of the priests, “*searched among their ancestral registration, but they could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean and were excluded from the*

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priesthood." Ezra 2:62 Anyone claiming to be "the Son of David" had to be able to prove it.

Luke's genealogy (Lu 3:23-38) focuses primarily on Mary's side of the family tree and begins with Jesus, who was assumed to be the son of Joseph, and continues backward in time through thousands of years to Adam, the son of God. On the other

hand, Matthew (Mt 1:1-25) appears to trace our Lord's lineage through His foster father. Since the Jews typically traced their genealogy only through their fathers, we might wonder why Jesus' lineage is recorded through both His mother and His foster father?

Jesus' birth was fundamentally different from that of any other child. Matthew carefully noted this fact, "*Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.*" Mt 1:16 "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together* (i.e., before their marriage was consummated) *she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.*" Mt 1:18 Of course, this "virgin birth" had been prophesied in Isaiah 7:14, "*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: 'Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.'*" It was therefore necessary to document Mary's bloodline. She too descended from King David, but through his son Nathan. By going back to Adam, Luke's account seems to connect "the son of man" to all humanity.

Matthew's genealogy basically traces the divine and royal lineage of Jesus through his foster father Joseph. As "his foster son," Jesus was accorded all the legal privileges of a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Judah. In addition, His royal lineage was therefore documented from King David, through Solomon, etc.

Both genealogies show that Jesus was the fulfillment of numerous prophesies. God told Abraham in Genesis 22:18, "*in your seed shall all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.*" Then to his great, great grandson God prophesied, "*the scepter shall not depart from Judah, or the ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh comes.*" Gen

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49:10a The prophet Nathan told King David, “*When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.*” 2 Sam 7:12-13 Roughly 600 years before Christ, Jeremiah wrote, “*Behold, the days are coming,*” declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.” Jer 23:5 Both Matthew’s and Luke’s genealogies document God’s patient and methodical unfolding of His plan of redemption; begun immediately after the creation when Eve was told, “*I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman and between your seed and her seed, He shall bruise you on the head.*” Gen 3:15a

We might have expected God to select righteous individuals through whom to bring forth the sinless Savior of the world. Many of our Lord’s ancestors were righteous, but unfortunately several weren’t. Some were downright evil and led God’s people into wickedness. A clear lesson for us is that God’s purpose(s) will be accomplished! King Nebuchadnezzar came to realize this when he said, “*He (God) does according to His will in the host of heaven . . . no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘what hast Thou done?’*” Dan 4:35 So a decision for each of us; will we do God’s will and work with Him or will we struggle through life rebelling against Him?

The following articles highlight the lives of nine different ancestors of Jesus. These can serve as examples to follow or to avoid. What will our legacy be? God lets us choose.

Noah

Ron Gray

There was a time when, “*the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*” Gen 6:5 The state of mankind was so bad that it grieved God to his heart and He “*was sorry that he had made man.*” How terrible it must have been to be living among people whose every thought was evil! No one could be trusted and any kindness would have been tied to selfish motives.

Hidden among this rabble was a man called Noah with his small family. They stood out in the eyes of man as oddities, but in the eyes of the Lord as righteous. Through this man would come the salvation of mankind, as God was prepared to wipe the earth clean.

When he received from the Lord the details for the construction of the ark, Noah did not argue, question, or offer an alternative plan. He did not ask God to give him a boat; he did not say, “I am no ship-builder” (though we can safely assume that he had never built a boat and it is likely that he had never seen one). In the end, he built a “ship” that would contain over 100,000 square feet of floor space.

Building a huge boat on dry land would have drawn ridicule from all who witnessed the project. It must have taken decades to complete, but Noah was quite willing to “look foolish” before men to fulfill the will of his God. In fact, the extreme nature of this spectacle could have easily brought spectators who mockingly asked

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why Noah was building this. If so, we know that Noah was ready to give an answer, just as we should be for what we are doing in the name of the Lord today. (1 Pet. 3:15)

The scriptures do not specifically say what roles the family played in constructing the ark, but considering the enormity of the project and the dire warning from the Lord, each member likely contributed wholeheartedly. The fact that none of them were left behind in punishment declares the godliness of Noah as a father and husband. His sons had not strayed from God and had chosen wives who were not pulling them into sin. Noah's wife supported him in this work after hearing the plan and did not fall into despair as Job's wife had done when she scolded Job saying, *"Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die."* Job 2:9

Noah was able to build and maintain such a faithful family because he chose to be "*a righteous man, blameless in his generation*" and "*walked with God.*" Gen 6:9 His father Lamech lived long enough to see the ark in construction, but died five years before the flood. We might surmise from Genesis 5:30 that Noah had many relatives who had turned their backs on God. They did not heed the words of warning which Noah, the preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5), would have lovingly delivered. He must have been grieved in his heart to have seen no repentance from any of his relatives or from those who watched him build day by day. Many of us as Christians can understand how that feels as we reach out to loved ones and come back empty-handed.

Considering God's desire to put an end to sinful man, why did He have Noah build

that massive ship plank-by-plank? Why did men continue to grieve God for all of those years? The answer is given in 1 Peter 3:20, "*God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.*" God waited not so much for Noah to finish; He could have given Noah a method of immediate escape. He waited to allow those who heard His word from Noah to repent and escape not only physical death, but spiritual death. "*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*" 2 Pet. 3:9

Noah proved his faith to God while building the ark, continuing steadfastly "*in reverent fear*" (Heb. 11:7), while surrounded on every side by sin. He continued to show that same faith for a year in the ark while surrounded by water. Fear could have besieged Noah. Fear of losing his extended family. Fear of the inability to accomplish all that God had given him to do. Fear that he might die in the flood waters while the accumulated food diminished daily. Fear of being all alone with his family in a world without any other human contact. But, his reverent fear of the Lord replaced any earthly doubts.

Sometimes we may feel as though we are the only ones who still stand for truth and godliness in this modern world which cherishes its favorite sins. But, as God told Elijah when he felt alone, "*I have reserved seven thousand...whose knees have not bowed to Baal.*" 1 Kgs 19:14,18 Noah, on the other hand, could truly say he was alone in his service to the Living God. Noah dared to be the

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last man standing for God in a world that chose to ignore their Creator and Provider. He dared to become the “new Adam” in a new world washed clean and ready to be replenished. He became the father of the line of Jesus Christ the Savior who would come offering to wash away sin in the world, one precious soul at a time.

As surely as the Bible is the inerrant word of God, each of us can look back to Noah and take pride in the faith of our grandfather (with many “greats” attached to that word). Just as we are all descendants of Adam, we all descend from Grandfather Noah and his faithful wife.

Isaac

Tom Rutledge

As with the establishment of the New Covenant by the coming of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, so was the establishment of God’s first covenant by the son of Abraham, Isaac, the son of promise. Abraham, later to be known as the father of the Jews, was blessed with a son so that through him all the nations of the world would be blessed. That blessing would be the gift of God’s son Jesus Christ who would come from the bloodline of Isaac.

Before Isaac was, God made a covenant with Abraham when he was 99-years old that He would “multiply you exceedingly” (Gen. 17) and “I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you...I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting cove-

nant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.”

Abraham’s wife, Sarai (Sarah), seeing she was past her childbearing years, took matters into her own hands and gave her handmaiden, Hagar, an Egyptian, to Abraham to be his wife and she bore him a son named Ishmael. However, this was not the lineage that God wanted Jesus to come from, nor to be His people. It would come about through Abraham and Sarai who was 90-years old. For Sarai would be the mother of many nations and kings of peoples would come from her (Gen. 17:17-21).

Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.” Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before You!” But God said, “No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him....But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year.” Gen 17:15-19

This miracle child, Isaac, would be the first generation from which God would establish the lineage of the Christ, the coming of the Messiah would come through Abraham and now through Isaac *all the nations*

of the world would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). And so as God did with Mary and Joseph about the coming birth of Jesus, God gives a son to Abraham and Sarah in a miraculous way and names him Isaac.

Years later, after the birth of Isaac, God would test Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice his son Isaac. By the wisdom of God, we see distinct comparisons of the sacrifice of Isaac with the gift sacrifice of God's own Son for the sins of the world and a New Covenant. In this we see a direct correlation between the sacrifice of Isaac to establish the first covenant of God's people and the sacrifice of Jesus, the Christ, God's own Son to establish the second and final covenant. It shows how God meticulously plans to bring about His own will.

As God did with Abraham, He blessed Isaac to assure he would prosper and that God's plan would be fulfilled. Later God would make the same promise to Isaac as he did with Abraham. "*I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.*" Gen. 26:4-5

Although there are no great achievements to speak of concerning Isaac's life, it was Isaac that God chose to continue the covenant line, the same line that would produce the Messiah, Jesus, the Christ. It was God who first proclaimed to Moses (Ex. 3:6) on Mt. Sinai that He, Jehovah was the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Peter, in his second sermon to the Jews in Acts 3:12-13 would again reference

these three patriarchs in the context of the slain savor: "*Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.*"

Later, the Hebrew writer would put all these wonderful things in context of the New Covenant. "*By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.*" Heb 11:8-12

Through the wonderful wisdom of our Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, our own relationship is made complete with Him by the promises that were made generations ago with Isaac and are now present with us today. Like Isaac, we too are the children of promise summed up so well by inspiration of the Holy Spirit through

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the words of Paul: “*For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. This is allegorically speaking, for these women are two covenants: one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. For it is written, ‘REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT HEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE NUMEROUS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND.* And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say? ‘CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.’ So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free

Jacob

Craig Sweet

Family trees are interesting to investigate. There are complete websites designed to help us investigate our ancestry. As we look at the lineage of Jesus (Matthew 1), Jacob appears in the 3rd generation in the list; the grandson of Abraham and the son of Isaac. Jacob’s mother was Rebekah and he had an older twin brother Esau. Jacob was raised in an atmosphere full of conflict and

deception. Jacob’s fighting days began when he and Esau were in their mother’s womb (Gen 25:19-24). A prophecy was given to Rebekah stating that the twins would continue to fight all their lives, even after they became two separate nations. The prophecy also stated that Esau would serve Jacob.

As the brothers grew, more conflict occurred because Isaac loved Esau more than Jacob and Rebekah loved Jacob more than Esau. One day when Esau came in from the field, being famished, he asked Jacob for a bowl of stew. Jacob took the opportunity to exchange the birthright of his older brother for the food. Esau agreed and the deal was struck (Gen 25:27-34).

Later, in Gen 27, Rebekah overheard a request from Isaac for Esau to go to the field, hunt for game and cook Jacob his favorite meal so he could receive his father’s blessing. Rebekah took the opportunity to coach Jacob in deceiving Isaac to receive the blessing that was to be Esau’s. So, Jacob took from Esau both the birthright and the blessing of Isaac which increased the lifelong conflict between the twin brothers.

In Gen 28, even though Jacob took the birthright and the blessing away from Esau, God confirmed that Jacob would be the one who would fulfill the promise to Abraham. Soon after Jacob’s theft, he was sent to Laban (Jacob’s uncle) to find a wife with whom to grow the family. Jacob met Rachel (Laban’s younger daughter) on his journey and fell in love with her. In exchange for her, Jacob agreed to work for seven years. However, with deception running deep in the family,

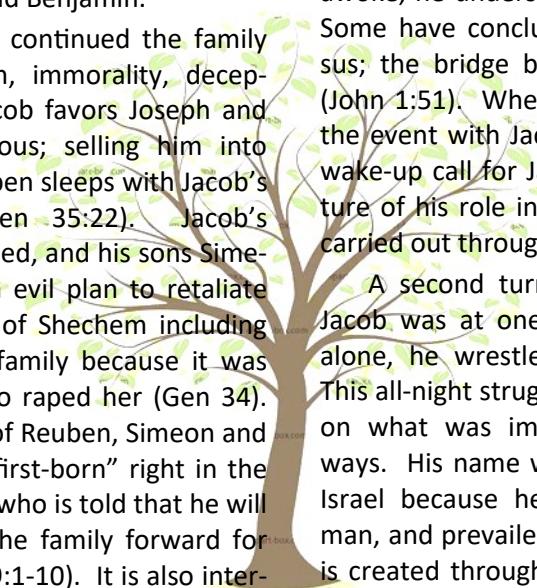
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Laban gave him Leah (his oldest daughter) instead of Rachael. Therefore, Jacob worked another seven years for Rachael.

Over the next several years, Jacob had 12 sons and one daughter between Leah, Rachael and their hand maids. Of the four mothers, Leah gave birth to seven of the 13 children. The first four children born to Leah were Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Rachel was barren until much later when she gave birth to Joseph and Benjamin.

Jacob's household continued the family tradition of favoritism, immorality, deception, and conflict. Jacob favors Joseph and his brothers are jealous; selling him into Egyptian slavery. Reuben sleeps with Jacob's concubine Bilhad (Gen 35:22). Jacob's daughter, Dinah, is raped, and his sons Simeon and Levi create an evil plan to retaliate and murder the men of Shechem including the men of Hamor's family because it was Shechem, his son, who raped her (Gen 34). Due to the evil deeds of Reuben, Simeon and Levi, they lose their "first-born" right in the genealogy. It is Judah who is told that he will be the one to carry the family forward for God's promise (Gen 49:1-10). It is also interesting that even though Jacob loved and favored Rachel and loved and favored Joseph, it was Judah the son of Leah who was to continue the blessings of God. Jacob did not choose Leah, but she was given to him.

Jacob had some turning points in his life when he needed God's help just as we look to Jesus for help. First, in Gen 28, we find Jacob running for his life from Esau. He has a dream of a ladder that was on the earth and reaching to the top of heaven. On it, the angels of God were ascending and descend-



ing. God stood above the ladder and told Jacob, "*I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*" (v13-14) When Jacob awoke, he understood the place was sacred. Some have concluded that the ladder is Jesus; the bridge between earth and heaven (John 1:51). Whether Jesus was referring to the event with Jacob or not, it was clearly a wake-up call for Jacob to see the bigger picture of his role in the blessing of God being carried out through his seed.

A second turning point occurred when Jacob was at one of his lowest points and alone, he wrestles with a man from God. This all-night struggle was to help Jacob focus on what was important and changing his ways. His name was soon to be changed to Israel because he struggled with God and man, and prevailed (Gen 32:24-32). A nation is created through Jacob from whom all the blessings of the earth will come; Jesus!

While looking at the history of Jacob and his family, it might make us wonder how Jesus came through this family tree? It should make us realize that God is in control and God created the perfect plan. He considered all the choices made by men, all the evil that would occur, and any other necessary events needed to bring Jesus into the world. God's plan prevailed even though each family member had a choice as to whether or not to follow God.

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God loved Jacob regardless of his faults and mistakes (Mal 1:2-3). God loves us regardless of our faults and mistakes. He loved us so much that he made the plan to bring Jesus into the world to save us from our sins. We cannot make excuses for our actions due to our family history nor can we blame the way we were raised as to why we commit evil deeds. In the end, God is going to hold us accountable for our actions and not of our parent's or grandparent's. We can choose to accept and obey Jesus, or reject him. Either way, God had a plan and Jesus was the finished product.

Boas & Ruth

Ephriam Davis

The Book of Ruth is a historical account and a beautiful story of love, devotion and redemption set in the period of Judges. (Ruth 1:1) It features Ruth, a Moabite woman who leaves her pagan heritage and culture to go to a foreign country to integrate with the children of Israel and submit to their God, because of the strong relationship she had developed with Naomi, her mother-in-law. (Ruth 1:16) The book showcases the providence of God and Ruth's **faithfulness** in a time of national **faithlessness** as characterized by the repeated "sin-cycles" of Israel in the period of Judges.

Ruth is 1 of only 4 women explicitly named and recognized in the inspired text that documents Christ's lineage: (1) Judah & Tamar parented Perez (Mt 1:3); (2) Salmon & Rahab parented Boaz. (Mt 1:5); (3) Boaz & Ruth parented Obed (Mt 1:5); (4)

Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus the Son of God. (Mat 1:16) David, of course, is the Great-Grandson of Boas and Ruth. The fact that Ruth, as well these other 3 women are referenced in Christ's lineage emphasizes the significance of the role of faithful women as well as men in God's scheme of redemption. The fact that Ruth was a foreigner, (Ruth 2:10) also emphasizes the significance of non-Israelites in that same scheme of redemption which would apply to Jews and Gentiles. (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 2:14) It's also worth noting while David parented Solomon with Bathsheba, she interestingly is only implicitly referenced and not explicitly named in the context of Matthew's account. One might speculate that this might be a consequence of the sin that led to this marriage.

The timing of the events documented in the book are "...*in the days when the judges ruled...*" Ruth 1:1 The early years of this period are the most logical, and more specifically near end of the 40 year period of rest and peace after the deliverance from the hand of the Mesopotamians by Othniel, and around the beginning of the Moabite oppression. (Judges 3:5-14). Since Boas was the son of Salmon by Rahab the harlot of Jericho, Boas would likely have lived about the same time as Othniel, who was the first named judge and the nephew of Caleb. (Jud 3:9, Ruth 4:21-22, Mt 1:5, Heb 11:30-31) Caleb and Joshua were the only 2 of 12 sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan, to bring back a "good report" with full confidence in the power of God to conquer its inhabitants. (Num 14:1-8)

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There are 2 key passages in the book of Ruth: First, "But Ruth said: Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me." Ruth 1:16-17 These verbal expressions of Ruth's loyalty to Naomi, her mother-in-law, were faithfully demonstrated by un-selfish actions that were recognized throughout the community of Bethlehem and ultimately by Boas. In the Second key passage is Ruth 3:10-12. Boas articulates his willingness to redeem Ruth according to the Law as a near kinsman. The key word in the book is redeemer. The concept of the "kinsman", "kinsman-redeemer" or "close-relative" is an important element of Christ's work. According Strong's Hebrew definition redeemer, [] 'nagaw-al') is to be the next of kin, and as such assumes the responsibility to buy-back, purchase, or ransom, a deceased relative's property, and marry his widow. He must also be an avenger, or deliverer.

Finally, as a "near-kinsman" to Ruth, Boas was a "type" of Christ who manifested His spiritual redemptive purpose to mankind in that they both shared at least four specific criteria: **He was:**

Related by blood to those he redeemed

Boas: According to the Law of God, "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall

go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel." Deut 25:5-6

The Christ: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'" Mt 1:23 "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." John 1:14 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10

Able pay the price of redemption

Boas: "There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech." Ruth 2:1

The Christ: "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28 "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet 1:18-19

Willing to redeem

Boas: "And he said, 'Who are you?' So she answered, 'I am Ruth, your maid servant. Take your maid servant under your wing, for you are a close relative.' Then he said, 'Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter!... And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman." Ruth 3:9-11

The Christ: "Just as the Son of Man did

not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Mt 20:28; "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father." John 10:15, 18

A free man himself

Boas: – Boas was a free man, who actually had hired servants who took commands from him. (Ruth 2:9, 15)

The Christ: The Christ was/is free from sin. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." Heb 4:15

Solomon

Gary Mangus

Solomon's life story is about a young man who wanted to please God and whose major life events point to the fulfillment of the promises that God made to Abraham and to his father King David. Early in his reign, the 1 Kings 3:3 writer notes this about the young king: "Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offering at the high places."

When you think of Solomon your first thought may be how wise he was. In fact he is known as the wisest man except for Jesus. 1 Kings 4:29-34 "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, ...and people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon..."

Solomon had an enormous task as king. His father, David had conquered many nations around them and ruled all the land that God had promised to Abraham. How could he rule such a great domain? He decides to worship God at the high place at Gibeon as was his custom and speaks to his commanders, judges, and leaders of Israel and made burnt offerings (see 2 Chron 1:2-6). God overlooks his worship in "high places" (Deut 12:1-7), and offers Solomon a great gift: (1 Kings 3:5) "*At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you."*"

What a great gift? Solomon knew that God could grant anything he asked for: riches, fame, etc. Instead Solomon showed strong character in his answer to God: "*You have shown great and steadfast love to David my father, and have made me king in his place. O LORD God, let your word to David my father be now fulfilled, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can govern this people of yours, which is so great?*" 2 Chron 1:7-10 God was very pleased with Solomon's request (2 Chron 1:11-12) and gave him the wisdom he requested and much more.

Then (1 Kings 3:15) Solomon went to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants. Note that after just receiving the gift of wisdom, he makes his offerings to God in the proper place. I think we could all agree this was a wise move.

Solomon grew in honor, wealth, and his wisdom was known throughout all the nations and there was peace throughout the kingdom. When the queen of Sheba heard the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to Jerusalem bearing much gifts to test him with hard questions. Solomon freely answered all her questions and there was nothing that he could not explain to her. *"The wisdom of Solomon took her breath away and she blessed God."*

1 Kings 10:1-10

Jesus uses this famous story in his response when asked to see a sign by some of the scribes and Pharisees. He had just performed a miracle from which the people were asking, *"Can this be the Son of David?"* In Matthew 12:39a, 42 he answered, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it . . . The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here."*

The Jews were searching for the one greater and wiser than Solomon, the Messiah. Jesus is saying I am He (the greater), just watch for the sign of the resurrection. The "queen of South came from the ends of the earth" to hear Solomon and yet these Jews did not believe the teachings of the Son of God, though He brought it to them.

Solomon manifested great wisdom as a builder and foremost of his projects was the construction of the temple. Other building projects started and completed in his lifetime included his palace, the terrace, the wall of Jerusalem, and a number of cities.

His father, King David had wanted to build the temple and the prophet Nathan gave David approval to construct it, but God intervened. Speaking to Nathan in a dream God laid out for David an amazing covenant whose promises continue to this present day (see 2 Sam 7). That through His Son God would establish the throne of His kingdom forever, to a specific people, and to a temple. The Messiah was to be the son of David.

David prepared to build the temple by gathering the supplies, providing the Temple construction plan, and telling his son Solomon to build it (See 1 Chron 22:2-8). In 1 Chronicles 28:9-19, David tells his son to *"know the God your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. Be careful now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."*

Solomon began the house of the LORD in Jerusalem in the fourth year of his reign and completed it in seven years. When the ark of the covenant of the LORD was brought into the temple (see 1 Kings 8:1-11) ". . . a cloud filled the house of the LORD...for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD."

When Solomon dedicated the temple with prayer and sacrifice (1 Kings 8:22-66), the major focus of his prayer of dedication was to request that the temple be a house of prayer to God where his servants could come to pray for anything, or look toward the temple and pray. He asked God in heaven to hear their prayers and their pleas. He even invited foreigners to pray there. He urged God to pay particular heed to their prayers: *"Thus all the*

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peoples of the earth will know Your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house...is called by your name.” 1 Kings 8:43

At this point God had fulfilled the promises made to David in building the house of the LORD, and his royal throne had been continued. The temple was now the place of worship for God’s people. Worship was through prayer and sacrifice for various events, blessings, repenting of sins, etc. Whenever God’s people were in trouble they were to look to the temple and pray, trusting that God would hear and answer their prayers. God’s promise to David of an eternal kingdom through the offspring of David is through Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 7:14 prophesied the Messiah would be born of a virgin. Thus the human lineage of Jesus to King David is through his mother which is through King David’s son Nathan. The royal lineage of Jesus is through King David’s son Solomon by the betrothal of Joseph and Mary, considered a legal marriage among the Jews. The reestablishment of the royal line of David was prophesied by Amos, “*In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old,*” Amos 9:11 When Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the temple, the Jews asked “*What sign do you show us for doing these things?*” Jesus answered, “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*” John 2:18-22 Israel and strangers worshiped God through prayer and sacrifice at the temple. Today God’s chosen people (believers) worship God through Jesus (His temple) by prayer made possible by the sacrifice that Jesus made for all mankind.

Rehoboam

Michael Parks

Rehoboam was forty one years of age when he ascended to the throne of a united Israelite nation. Rehoboam inherited a kingdom ruled by kings David and Solomon, his grandfather and father respectively. To say that Rehoboam had some tough acts to follow would be an understatement. His grandfather was, a man after God’s own heart; and his father was the wisest man to have ever lived. Rehoboam’s story can be found primarily in 1 Kings 12, and 2 Chronicles 10-12. As a result of Rehoboam’s unwillingness to listen to council, by rejecting the advice of older and wiser men; Rehoboam spent the majority of his seventeen years as king in a perpetual state of war. Rehoboam’s key mistake that led to his failure was his own ego-led refusal to heed wise instruction. In doing so he alienated those who otherwise should have been closest to him, and a great help and support to him.

Just a few years before, a prophecy had come to Jeroboam the servant of Solomon. Solomon had found Jeroboam to be quite industrious, and had given him charge over the forced labor of the house of Joseph. Jeroboam learned from the prophet Ahijah that one day the kingdom would be divided. This Israelite nation that had been promised to Abraham and his descendants was to be split between Rehoboam and him. The prophet Ahijah told Jeroboam that he would be given the northern 10 tribes, while the one southern tribe would remain with Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:31-32). When

Solomon learned of this he sought to put Jeroboam to death, but Jeroboam fled to Egypt for safety until Solomon's death.

When Solomon's passing came, there was day of coronation to anoint Rehoboam king of all of Israel. The people came to Rehoboam, including Jeroboam back from Egypt. The people sought a lighter load than Solomon had placed on them. Rehoboam wisely sought the council of others. There were two groups of counselors. The first group was comprised of men of age and experience who had served before Solomon. These men had the opportunity to hear and learn directly from Solomon's wisdom. Unfortunately Rehoboam chose to listen to the council of the second group of counselors comprised of younger men that had been Rehoboam's peers as he rose up. These men offered the opposite advice, which Rehoboam listened to. The advice of the older men was simply to grant the people's wish and lighten their load. They felt certain this would result in a people that would serve him forever as a unified and strong nation. The younger men, advised him to be harsh, and he was. He told them his little finger was thicker than his father's thigh.

This rejection of advice set in motion a series of events that the prophet Ahijah had prophesied to Jeroboam. The thrust of this prophecy can be found in I Kings 11:35. The northern 10 tribes would be taken from Rehoboam. One tribe would remain with him for the sake of His promises to David. This promise, like so many others before and after, was that if David would remain faithful he would establish his seed. God held true to His promise, and we learn and read in Matthew 1:7 that indeed David's lineage held true

through to the birth of The Christ Jesus, and that Rehoboam's name can be found in the accounting of Jesus' lineage.

After this tearing of the kingdom from Rehoboam, he reacted rather predictably. He amassed a large army, and sought to restore his kingdom with a fighting force of nearly 180,000 men. Before Rehoboam waged his war on Jeroboam, and nearly plunged the nation into civil war; Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and told him not to wage this war, and for every man to return to his home. We see that Rehoboam and the people obeyed God in this matter. 2 Chronicles 11:17 tells us that for three years the kingdom of Judah and Benjamin prospered because they walked in the ways of David and Solomon.

Unfortunately as time passed, and Rehoboam grew older, he and the people departed from serving God. Now with his fortified cities, it seems he had forgotten God. As a consequence God sent Shishak, the ruler of Egypt, to punish Judah. This army is described as 1,200 chariots strong, 60,000 horsemen, and peoples without numbers from several nations. This Egyptian horde took hold of all of the fortified cities that Rehoboam had built. They came even as far as Jerusalem, when Shemaiah came to the people and Rehoboam to tell them this had come upon them because they had abandoned the Lord. The people knew they had been wrong, and called God righteous in his pronouncement. Because the people had humbled themselves, God turned back Shishak from destroying Jerusalem also. However, the people would be servants to Shi-

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shak, that they might be better able to distinguish service to God versus service to foreign kingdoms. Shishak took all of the riches that Solomon had amassed, but Rehoboam proved to have humbled himself and Shishak's hand of destruction was turned. Rehoboam ruled for seventeen years, and was buried with his fathers. Abijah his son ruled after his death. What a relatively short lived and miserable rule!

Rehoboam's story is one we will all do well to heed. Just as in Rehoboam's case, God's purpose will be carried out. God had purposed that Jesus The Christ would come through the lineage of Abraham, and David. That purpose was accomplished even though Rehoboam strayed from God, and God subsequently brought destruction on Rehoboam and the entire kingdom. We see that rather than Rehoboam and the people enjoying the fruits of the rule of David and Solomon, they instead became servants of Egypt in a divided kingdom. Still God's purpose was accomplished through David's seed. Rehoboam could have prospered all his days, rather than seeing the kingdom divided and at perpetual war. We would all do well to also remember to keep faithfully all of our days that which we have begun, and seek wisdom of the older more experience wise men of our congregation.

Uzziah

Carol Fertig

What a tremendous responsibility it would be to be a "place holder" in the lineage of Jesus! The Jews all

knew from prophecy that Messiah would come through their nation, Israel, but it would strain credence to think that any one of the members of the lineage would understand his/her position and importance as later revealed. These people were just living their lives and serving God's people, and in so doing, bringing forth the Messiah. Uzziah's contributions were very important, and for the most part, he affected the Jews in a positive way. Only at the last of his life did he become a negative influence.

Uzziah was only sixteen years old when he became king. His father had been assassinated and 2 Chronicles 26:1 says, "...*all the people of Judah took Uzziah ... and made him king ...*" He started with a wave of public approval and support and added to that a strong foundation of faith and obedience to God's word. Zechariah instructed the king in "*the fear of God,*" as this king had "*set himself to seek God.*" (2 Chron 26:5) As long as Uzziah continued in this path, God made him prosper. This is the very embodiment of the advice given by the preacher in Ecclesiastes 12:1: "*Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them.'*" Uzziah did just what Paul instructed the young Timothy to do in 2 Timothy 4:12: "*Let no one despise you for your youth but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.*" Not only did his seeking for God and obedience to Him provide a viable example to the people of his time, it is still viable to us today.

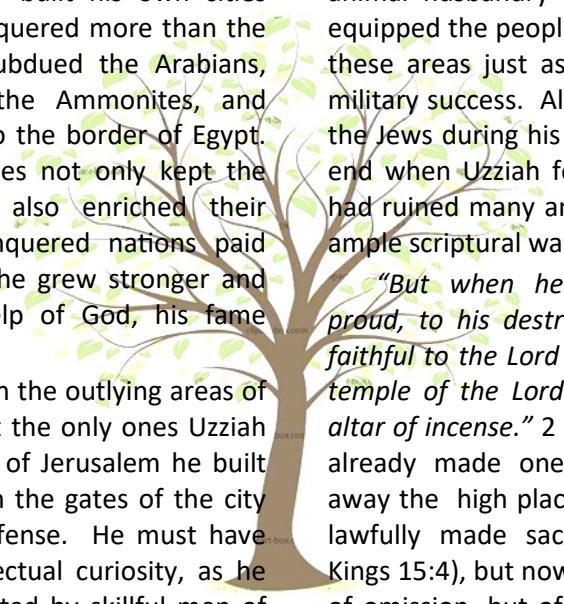
Uzziah was talented and active in providing physical safety for God's people as well

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as giving them a positive example of faith. From the wording of 2 Chronicles 26:6, it sounds as though he was a battlefield leader as well as a spiritual one, as it says he “*went out and made war against the Philistines ...*” This doesn’t necessarily mean that he was physically present at each battle, but he was very much involved. He and his army of 307,500 soldiers (2 Chronicles 26:13) completely took over the strongholds of the Philistines, and he wisely built his own cities among them. He conquered more than the Philistines; he also subdued the Arabians, the Meunites, and the Ammonites, and reached all the way to the border of Egypt. These successful battles not only kept the Israelites safe, they also enriched their coffers, as these conquered nations paid tribute to Uzziah. As he grew stronger and stronger with the help of God, his fame grew.

The fortifications in the outlying areas of the kingdom were not the only ones Uzziah built. Within the city of Jerusalem he built and fortified towers in the gates of the city providing a strong defense. He must have been a man of intellectual curiosity, as he made “engines” invented by skillful men of his force which skillful fighters could use to shoot arrows and stones to great effect. He also understood the importance of a well-equipped force, as 2 Chronicles 26:14 says: “*And Uzziah prepared for all the army shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, and stones for slinging.*” Imagine how much more confident a well-provisioned army is than an ill prepared one!

The people of Uzziah’s time were riding a wave of prosperity thanks to his faithfully



seeking God and keeping them safe from their enemies. They enjoyed not only the tribute of other nations, but were thriving under their own auspices as well. When Uzziah built towers in the wilderness, he also had cut out many cisterns for the large herds. 2 Chronicles 26:10 says that he loved the soil and had farmers and vinedressers in the hills. Uzziah understood the factors that were necessary for success in the world of animal husbandry and agriculture, and he equipped the people for accomplishments in these areas just as he did the soldiers for military success. All was well for Uzziah and the Jews during his long reign until near the end when Uzziah fell prey to a fault which had ruined many and against which there is ample scriptural warning.

“*But when he was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was unfaithful to the Lord his God and entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense.*” 2 Chronicles 26:16 He had already made one mistake in not taking away the high places where the people unlawfully made sacrifices and offerings (2 Kings 15:4), but now he committed a sin, not of omission, but of commission. One must wonder if he did not remember how others before him had committed the same sin of unlawfully making offerings to God with dire consequences: Nadab, Abihu, and even King Saul. Pride tells us we’re special, and that bad things won’t happen to us when we follow our own selfish desires, but we witness just how mistaken that notion is. Uzziah compounded his sin by becoming angry with the eighty priests who were withstanding

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him and trying to stop his unlawful act, and it was at that point that God struck him with leprosy. (2 Chronicles 26:19-20) Uzziah was rushed outside the city to a separate house where he remained until his death. What an ignominious end for one so talented and so blessed! We must remain in God's good graces by obedience and faithfulness to the end.

Uzziah was a positive example for much of his life, but certainly a negative one at the last. Even negative examples are useful, though not pleasant for the one providing them. Uzziah had to reign *in absentia* with his son Jotham since Uzziah was excluded from the society of the people and from the house of the Lord. Despite his sad end, he served the lineage of the Messiah well.

Joash & Josiah

Russ Ward

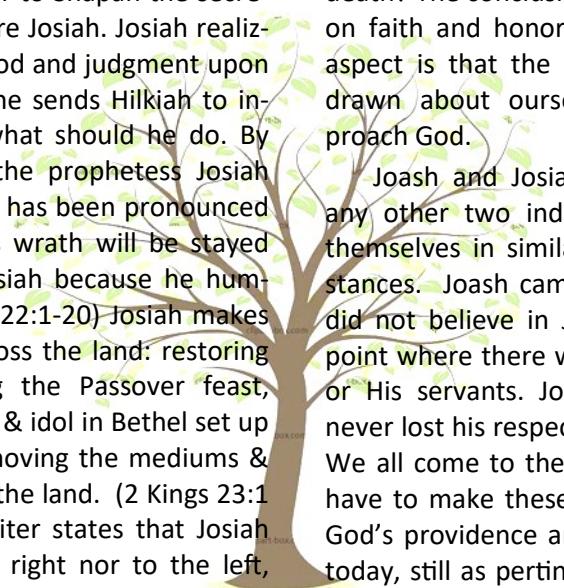
The lineage of Christ reflects both the providence of God and the faithfulness of His promises. The history of these people provides us with insight into a myriad of personalities, strengths, weaknesses, successes and failures culminating in Jesus of Nazareth the promised king and Messiah. These also provide an opportunity for understanding that through God's good pleasure man was provided hope and comfort through these people.

The boy kings Joash & Josiah provide an interesting contrast in the royal lineage of David. Here we have two individuals, who are placed into service as kings at a very young age, each of whom have similar stories in the beginning, yet whose paths diverge when

they become older. Let us consider the lessons learned from both of these kings and the influences that lead to their decisions and actions

Joash, son of Ahaziah was also the grandson of the wicked Queen Athaliah who pressed herself onto the throne by destroying the lineage of her husband and son. Joash, the only survivor was taken and hidden by Jehosheba wife of Jehoida the High Priest. Jehoida arranges for the overthrow of Athaliah and places Joash on the throne at the age of seven. Upon Athaliah's death and confirmation of Joash, Jehoida makes a covenant between Jehovah and the people that they should be God's people and as a result the temples of the false gods were torn down. (2 Kings 11:1-21) Joash reigned for 40 years and under the guidance and instruction of Jehoida he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord by restoring the temple and the items of the temple. (2 Kings 12:1-16) Upon Jehoida's death the princes of Judah become advisors to the King, leading Judah to revert back into idol worship. Zedekiah the son of Jehoida speaks out against the actions of the King and the people and by command of Joash he is stoned to death in the court yard of the temple. (2 Chron. 24:20-21) Joash in his latter days falls prey to Syria, paying tribute with the newly restored items of the temple, and eventually is wounded in battle with Syria. He is summarily assassinated by his servants because of the death of Zedekiah. Thus Jehovah executed judgment upon the nation of Judah for their sin and as a result Joash was not buried in the tombs of the kings by the people. (2 Chron. 24:23-27)

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Josiah, son of Amon was pronounced king upon the assassination of his father by his servants. Both his father and grandfather were wicked kings who lead Judah into intense idolatry and the shedding of innocent blood. (2 Kings 21:16-24) Josiah began his reign at age eight, reigning for 31 years and doing what was right in the eyes of the Lord. He restores the temple and during restoration Hilkiah the High Priest finds the “Book of Law,” who turns it over to Shapan the secretary who reads it before Josiah. Josiah realizes that the wrath of God and judgment upon Judah is to come, so he sends Hilkiah to inquire of God about what should he do. By prophecy of Huldah the prophetess Josiah realizes that judgment has been pronounced upon Judah yet God’s wrath will be stayed during the days of Josiah because he humbled himself. (2 Kings 22:1-20) Josiah makes sweeping changes across the land: restoring the temple, restoring the Passover feast, tearing down the altar & idol in Bethel set up by Jeroboam, and removing the mediums & necromancers across the land. (2 Kings 23:1-27) The Chronicle writer states that Josiah turned neither to the right nor to the left, walking as his father David walked, seeking God in the eighth year of his reign when he was yet a boy, instituting the changes above beginning in the twelfth year of his reign. (2 Chronicles 34:1-3) Josiah remained faithful to the Lord; maintaining the statutes that were brought before him.

When we look at the historical account, a question that might arise is why did one remain faithful and the other did not? Why did the child with a heavier direct influence in his formative years not hold true to the

instructions in both the words and deeds of his advisor? How is it, that Josiah was able to derive that the judgments in the reading of the Book of Law would be directed at Judah; yet Joash was actually able to live through God’s judgment and survive through his prophetic promise? How is it possible to have been saved from death by a man, taken in and raised as his son, only to in turn allow that very same man’s son to be stoned to death? The conclusion we must draw centers on faith and honor. The more enlightening aspect is that the same conclusion can be drawn about ourselves and how we approach God.

Joash and Josiah are no different than any other two individuals who might find themselves in similar, if not actual, circumstances. Joash came to a point wherein he did not believe in Jehovah or at least to a point where there was no regard for His law or His servants. Josiah on the other hand never lost his respect and reverence for God. We all come to these crossroads and we all have to make these decisions for ourselves. God’s providence and promise are still alive today, still as pertinent in our lives as it was in the lives of those two kings. Their place in history provides them no additional, no special, and no exceptional circumstances that would remove them from approaching Jehovah as the one true God. The same can be said for ourselves. People will come to have our ear, grab our attention, influence our lives, coddling and coercing us into either faithfulness or faithlessness with regard to Jehovah. This is a truth that all people must face, as these two young men did. Now to

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the difficult choice – do I hold fast to those truths given by God, or do I relinquish that hold on my life. Do I discount the providence of God shown through these people of old in an eager rush to discount the promises made by a true and living God? The final question, I wonder what Josiah and Joash think of their decisions now and how will we view our decisions and actions when we are asked to give account?

Zerubbabel Aaron Lumpkin

Son of David, prince of the Jews, chosen by God Himself to restore proper worship and to bring His people home. While these powerful phrases all describe our Lord Jesus, they also all pertain to one, and only one, of Jesus earthly ancestors – Zerubbabel. Although there are a couple of dozen references to this mysterious figure, what we know about Zerubbabel is limited and, at times, confusing. But we also can see glimpses of a prominent, righteous leader whom God used to lead His people at a crucial juncture in God's plan of saving man through His Son.

Outside of a few genealogical lists, Zerubbabel appears in Scripture only in Ezra and Nehemiah, and in the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah. Zerubbabel's exact lineage is slightly perplexing, but it's clear that he is the grandson and heir of Judah's final king, Jehoiachin (Jeconiah). Born in Babylonian captivity, his given name appropriately means "seed of Babylon." We can deduce that he was likely also called Sheshbazzar, as Ezra sometimes records (Ez 1:8; 5:14).

Although born in Babylon, that is not where Zerubbabel's destiny lies. At the end of the promised 70 years of punishment (Jer 25:11), God raises up Cyrus of Persia to defeat the Babylonian Empire and free His captive people (Ezr 1:1-4). Zerubbabel, as the legitimate successor to David's throne, is apparently recognized both by the Jews and by the Persian authorities as the logical choice to shoulder the enormous task of leading almost 50,000 refugees home to Judah, some 500 miles away (Ezr 2:1f). Ezra, who almost 80 years later would himself lead a second, smaller wave of Jews home to Judah, catalogs the family names and numbers of everyone who followed Zerubbabel, but of the actual journey nothing is recorded. The kingdom of Judah no longer exists, but is now a part of the vast Persian Empire, and Zerubbabel is appointed the territorial governor (Hag 1:1).

His primary task as governor, as charged both by God and king Cyrus of Persia, is to lead the Jews in rebuilding the temple of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed 50 years before. As Zerubbabel is soon to discover, this is no small task. King David had stockpiled a massive amount of resources for his son to use in the construction of the first temple (1 Chr 22:14) and Solomon, who ruled Israel at the zenith of its power, had an enormous labor pool at his disposal, and enjoyed "peace on all sides" as he built that magnificent sanctuary (1 Kgs 4:24). In contrast, Zerubbabel is given some limited funding from the Persian treasury to finance the temple project, his labor force is confined to the remnant who have returned

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to Judah, and the local people who have settled in the area greatly resist Zerubbabel's efforts (Ezr 3:1-4:5). Nevertheless, the sacrificial altar is built first so that the required sacrifices can resume, then the foundation of the temple is laid. But the bullying of local people succeeds in stalling any further progress on the construction and the zeal of Zerubbabel and the Jews wanes. Our God, in His great patience, then sends the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to rekindle the construction, and after 16 years, the work resumes. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house and his hands will finish it," God says through Zechariah (4:9), and over the next 4 years the work is completed!

In addition to rebuilding the temple, Zerubbabel was instrumental in restoring worship to the LORD, as Moses had commanded it. Together with Joshua the High Priest, Zerubbabel reorganized and restored the priests and Levites to their required duties. The required festivals, which were commanded to be held at certain times each year, were reinstated. Great emphasis was placed on separating themselves from the people of the land and on serving the Lord their God.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Zerubbabel, in my mind, is God's use of one specific phrase, recorded in Hag 2:23: "*My servant*." Many in Scripture are said to have served God and were acknowledged as servants, but only a few - a very elite few - are ever referred to by God Himself using this unique title "*My servant*." God possessively describes Job this way to Satan ("Have you considered *My servant* Job?" Job 1:8), and

twice uses the terminology in rebuking Aaron and Miriam, who dared to correct "*Moses, My servant*" (Num 12:7-8). When we search Matthew's genealogy of Jesus in reference to this particular phrase, only 3 other individuals in the list are ever called "*My servant*" by the One whom we all serve: Abraham, David, and Jesus. For God to place Zerubbabel in such company is not a detail that we should take lightly, and adds volumes to the scant details we have regarding the moral character of Zerubbabel.

Zerubbabel's legacy is not in his character or in any of his accomplishments, however. Zerubbabel presides over God's people at critical turning point in the history not just of Abraham's descendants, but of all of mankind. It is during Zerubbabel's tenure that God begins the process of bringing His people back to Him. Not just physically bringing Jews home to Jerusalem, but the first step is taken in rebuilding the true dwelling place of God among those who would seek Him. The physical temple is never again to achieve the glory of the one Solomon built, and yet God tells Zerubbabel that "*The later glory of this house will be greater than the former*" Hag 2:9. It is through the Messiah, some 500 years later, that God gloriously makes His home among man, and it is in the Messiah that Zerubbabel's true legacy lies.

North Beach church of Christ

7025 N. Beach St.

Ft Worth, TX 76137

www.nbecoc.org