

## SHADY FAMILY TREE

The Bible traces the redemption of God's people throughout history, beginning in the garden of Eden and ending in the heavenly garden at the beginning of the new heavens and earth. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture traces the storyline of redemption, with Jesus Christ as the central figure.

God promised a deliverer in Genesis 3:15, right after the disobedience that brought sin and death into the world (Romans 5:12). God renewed His promise throughout Old Testament history. We trace the lineage from Adam to Jesus, the first Adam to the last Adam, as 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 says, *"it is written that the first man Adam became a living being, the last Adam (Christ) became a life-giving spirit."* And *"just as we have borne the image of the man dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven."*

**1- From Adam to Christ.** Luke 3 traces the genealogy of the first Adam to the last Adam, with the genetic and legal claims of Jesus Christ. He especially highlights His relationship to Adam, Abraham, and David. These are three of the most important people in the Old Testament, and each were given remarkable prophecies concerning the promised Messiah. To Abraham God said in Genesis 22:18, *"in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."* And to David God said in 2 Samuel 7:12-16, *"I will raise up your offspring, who shall come from your body, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever."*

Isaiah 11:3 predicts, *"there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him."* Romans 5:12 quotes this and affirms Jesus Christ as the one promised to come, *"to show God's truthfulness, to confirm the promises given."* All this traces to the lineages in Luke 3 and Matthew 1. And Hebrews 2 says Jesus Christ identifies with sinners, as He *"partook of flesh and blood"* in order to redeem us from sin, as the offspring of Abraham.

**2- Dysfunctional Families.** The ancestors of Jesus Christ show that He comes through ordinary people and dysfunctional families. Matthew 1 records five women in His lineage, very unusual for a Jewish genealogy. Jews always traced their lineage through paternity, until the destruction of the temple in AD70 when they switched to maternity. The five women listed highlight the shady history of Jesus' family tree, which includes the black sheep. This is another strong evidence of the authenticity of Scripture.

Tamar relates to the failure of Judah. Rahab was a harlot. Ruth was a cursed Moabite. Bathsheba was the downfall of David. Mary was an unwed mother, and yet, the prophesied virgin who would conceive. But not just women were black sheep. The list of men includes heroes and hucksters, kings and scoundrels. Dysfunctional people and fractured families. These are ordinary people, born as sinners, the progeny of Adam and Eve. All needing a perfect Savior, which God promised from the beginning.

**3- Promised Descendant.** The coming of the Christ is the reason these family histories were kept. Only God knows who is coming and when, because He is forming His forever family tree. Even that popular TV show which traces the roots of famous people would affirm that no one in your past ever predicted you in advance. Rather, you look backward to discover your ancestors. The opposite is true for Jesus Christ.

In His case, people had always looked forward to this One promised descendant. Jesus Christ is the most unique person in all of human history. Canon D. Hague has well said, "Jesus Christ is the only person ever born into this world whose ancestry, birth-time, fore-runner, birth-place, birth-manner, infancy, manhood, teaching, character, career, preaching, reception, rejection, death, burial, resurrection and ascension, were all pre-written, hundreds and thousands of years before He was born." We rightly marvel at God's providence in producing the person of Jesus Christ, who came to change your life! ☐