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The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life from the week ending 01/06/08
The Davidic Covenant

Rom 9:1-5, *“I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.”*

This isn't only Paul's heart alone, this is the Lord's heart for His people being communicating through Paul. Mat 23:37 *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.”* Our Lord desired to gather them under His wings in every letter of the Law, in every unconditional covenant, in every phrase uttered by the prophets. For thousands of years the Lord has desired them. Upon His last entrance into Jerusalem, upon the colt, He looked upon the city and as He approached He saw it and wept over it. The Lord didn't smash the city with His raw power; rather He wept over it. The Lord has wept over some of you as well. He has given you much more than the Jews, and still some of you reject Him as well. He weeps and prays for you at the right hand of God the Father.

Some of you may not think that gifts come from God, but rather think that gifts are in and come from the system, and by the way, there are gifts in the system. Yet unlike God's gifts, there are conditions attached to those gifts. To get the gifts of the system you have to buy into the system, you have to bow to it. It's not like the movies where you sign a contract with the Devil. Rather it is a very simple principle: You will bow to what you love. If you love the promises of the cosmic system, then you will bow down to them and you will sell out for them. If you love the Lord who purchased your life you will bow to Him. It is then that you will see the great life that the system cannot give. This is a life with great capacity for life, love, and happiness, that is not borrowed from anything else, it is truly your own, and you live it. Joh 10:10 *“The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.”*

So, in Romans 9 Paul is asking his countrymen if they are still looking for the Messiah that has already come. As we are noting in this study, Paul lists eight things that have been given to Israel, and in each, God has communicated to them exactly who the Messiah would be.

As a part of the gracious unconditional covenants that were given to Israel, let's look at the Davidic Covenant. Remember that there are five covenants given to Israel; four unconditional and one conditional. 1) The Abrahamic covenant defines the race for client nation Israel. Abraham became a Jew at age 99; and circumcision was the sign (Gen 12:1-3, 13:15-16, 15:18, 22:15-18, 26:3-4; Exo 6:2-8). 2) The Palestinian covenant defines the land for client nation Israel (Gen 15:18; Num 34:1-12; Deu 30:1-9; Jos 1:3-4). This is the real estate of the client nation. 3). The Mosaic Law defines the policy for client nation Israel (both spiritual and temporal policy). This is the one conditional covenant. 4). The Davidic covenant defines the dynasty for client nation Israel (2 Sam 7:8-16; Psa 89:20-37). 5). The New covenant defines the restoration of the client nation Israel at the Second Advent and its millennial modus operandi (Jer 31:31-34). This part of the contract is not operational until the Second Advent.

The Davidic Covenant says that the seed of the woman, the humanity of Christ, will descend from the tribe of Judah through the family of David (2Sa 7:8-17; Psa 89:20-37). The Gospel of Matthew conveys the story of salvation. Here the book demonstrates the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the predicted Messiah, the King of the Jews Who was rejected by His own people, Who was accepted by the Gentiles, and Who some day will return to reign as the King of kings and the Lord of Lords. In fact, the message of the book of Matthew is the story of the King *revealed*, the King who was *rejected*, and the King who will *return*.

The first thing you notice in Matthew's Gospel is the King revealed. Matthew does this by presenting the person of Jesus in Royal colors. His ancestry is traced from the Royal line (Mat 1:1-17). His birth was dreaded by a king named Herod (Mat 2:1-16). Wise men who were known as the magi and were known for recognizing when a king was born offered their royal gifts (Mat 2:11). His herald, John the Baptist, declares that His kingdom is at hand (Mat 3:1). Even in His temptation in chapter four, you see the Royalty of the Person of Christ. The temptation itself reaches a climax when Satan offers Him all the kingdoms of the world, an acknowledgment that He has a right to rule (Mat 4:9). His great message, the sermon on the Mount was the manifesto of the King setting forth the laws of the kingdom. His miracles were His Royal credentials (Mat 11:20). His parables were called the mysteries of the kingdom (Mat 13:11). He was hailed as the son of David (Mat 15:22). He makes a royal entry into Jerusalem and claims sovereignty and tells concerning Himself the story of the marriage of a King's son (Mat 22). While facing the Cross, He predicted His future reign (Mat 26:29). He claimed to have dominion over the angels and that He could call a legion of them to His defense (Mat 26:53). The point is that Matthew presents our Lord as a King. A king revealed.

However, the Gospel of Matthew also presents the King rejected. Matthew reveals the fact that the people to whom He came to, and who owed Him submission, never gave it. He was a King rejected. No other Gospel has as much to say about His kingliness, or has as much to say about His rejection as King. The shadow of the rejection of the Lord is never lifted from the Gospel of Matthew. For example, before He was born, His mother was in danger of being rejected by Joseph (Mat 1:18-19). At His birth Jerusalem was

troubled and Herod killed an untold number of children two years and under because Herod sought the life of baby Jesus (Mat 2:16). On the plains of Bethlehem there were no angelic choir sings, but instead mothers are weeping in anguish as their babies are being slaughtered (Mat 2:18). In fact, our Lord was hurried away, running for His life and living in the obscurity of a little no account village called Nazareth (Mat 2:23). His forerunner was thrown in a dungeon and finally beheaded (Mat 14:10). He had no where to lay His own head and His parables indicated that His kingdom would not be accepted in this age (Mat 8:20). Even in His death, He said “My God, My God, why hast Thou *forsaken Me,*” (Mat 27:46). Those who passed by the Cross reviled and marked Him and they hired soldiers to lie even after He was dead about His resurrection (Mat 27-28). In no other Gospel is the attack upon Christ as bitter as it is in Matthew. Matthew also presents the fact that the King is returning, so in a sense it is a gospel of triumph. When you get to chapters 24 -26 you hear the fact that they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. So it's the Gospel of the revelation of the King, the rejection of the King, and finally the return of the King.

In chapter one, Matthew begins by presenting the King, the King revealed, and it all begins with the family tree of Jesus. If the King is to be herald as a King, and to be believed to be a King, if He is to have any credibility at all, and if anyone is to accept the fact that He is a King, then you must start with the proof that He came from a Royal line. There was a Royal line in Israel and it came through David. In 2Sa 7, God said through the prophet Nathan to David that it would be through the loins of David that the King would come, and Who would ultimately reign in Israel and set up an eternal kingdom. That was never fulfilled in Solomon, and so they waited for one to be born of the seed of David to fulfill the prophecy. If Jesus is to be that King, it must first of all be established that He has the right to reign because He ascends from the genealogy of Royalty.

The two lines of our Lord originated from David and Bathsheba. Their son Solomon's line, given in Matthew, ends with Joseph, the legal, but not real father of our Lord's humanity. That's because Solomon's line had the Coniah Curse, and so was cut off from being the source of the Messiah. Nathan's line, recorded for us in Luke, ends with Mary, the source of the true humanity of Christ.

In Mat:1:11-12, *To Josiah were born Jeconiah [Coniah] and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon [the Babylonian captivity]. And after the deportation to Babylon, to Jeconiah [Coniah] was born She-al-tiel; and to She-al-tiel, Zerubbabel;* Now, this line in Matthew is Joseph's! Jer 22:28-30, *“Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar? Or is he an undesirable vessel? Why have he and his descendants been hurled out And cast into a land that they had not known? O land, land, land, Hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord, ‘Write this man down childless [this means none of Coniah's sons will ever sit on the Davidic throne], A man who will not prosper in his days; For no man of his descendants will prosper Sitting on the throne of David Or ruling again in Judah.’”* This is Jeconiah, the same man, so Jer 22:28-30 declares the curse on Coniah.

First of all, Josiah was king; his second son, Jehoiakim, was made what they called a vassal to Nebuchadnezzar after the fourth cycle of discipline at the battle of Carchemish.

A vassal was a person who held land for a dominating lord and received protection in return for homage and allegiance. Now, as a reversionist, Jehoiakim destroyed copies of Scripture, and in Jer 36:29-31 his death was prophesied. His son was Coniah, who in 597 B.C. ruled for three months and ten days. He was made a prisoner for thirty-six years. So the curse of Coniah ensured that Coniah would never have a son to sit on David's throne in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, yet he was in the line of David. This curse was fulfilled with the virgin birth, when Joseph (from Solomon and Coniah's line) became the legal, but not the real, father of Jesus Christ. That's another reason that Matthew traces Solomon's line of the genealogy of Christ through Joseph, and Luke traces Nathan's line of genealogy of Christ through Mary (1Ch 3:5; Luk 3:23-38).

So the Coniah curse, which said that he would never have a son that will be the Messiah, was fulfilled in the virgin birth, in that Joseph was not the real father of the Messiah. These are a few of the remarkable stories of how God's grace provided for us a Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord. This is why two genealogies are listed in the New Testament. If Jesus had been the real son of Joseph, He never could have sat on the throne of David. He would be under the curse, and yet He had to be the legal son of Joseph to have the right. God had to devise a plan by which He would be the legal heir of the throne, but He would not be in the line of David descending through Jeconiah or Coniah. Another *fascinating principle* concerning the birth of Christ. So you see one of the main reasons for the genealogy is to present the fact that this is the One who had the right to reign. It may take us a long time to unscramble the significance of the genealogy found in Matthew chapter 1, but rest assured that all the Jewish people had to do was read it, and they got the message. They knew their Old Testament. They knew the curse on Jeconiah. So Matthew is establishing that our Lord Jesus Christ had the right to be King.

Mat 1:1-17, *The book [the list of names] of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. To Abraham was born Isaac; and to Isaac, Jacob; and to Jacob, Judah and his brothers; and to Judah were born Perez and Zerah by Tamar; and to Perez was born Hezron; and to Hezron, Ram; and to Ram was born Amminadab; and to Amminadab, Nahshon; and to Nahshon, Salmon; and to Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab; and to Boaz was born Obed by Ruth; and to Obed, Jesse; and to Jesse was born David the king. And to David was born Solomon by her {who had been the wife} of Uriah; and to Solomon was born Rehoboam; and to Rehoboam, Abijah; and to Abijah, Asa; and to Asa was born Jehoshaphat; and to Jehoshaphat, Joram; and to Joram, Uzziah; and to Uzziah was born Jotham; and to Jotham, Ahaz; and to Ahaz, Hezekiah; and to Hezekiah was born Manasseh; and to Manasseh, Amon; and to Amon, Josiah; and to Josiah were born Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon, to Jeconiah was born Shealtiel; and to Shealtiel, Zerubbabel; and to Zerubbabel was born Abihud; and to Abihud, Eliakim; and to Eliakim, Azor; and to Azor was born Zadok; and to Zadok, Achim; and to Achim, Eliud; and to Eliud was born Eleazar; and to Eleazar, Matthan; and to Matthan, Jacob; and to Jacob was born Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. Therefore all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to {the time of} Christ fourteen generations.*

Now, there's an emphasis in this genealogy. Think of the fact that Jesus Christ was a King. That's why we read in Mat 2:2 that the magi from the east said "*Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him.*" However, the Lord wasn't a king like any other king. He was a King who ruled by grace. If you search this genealogy that we have been noting, you find grace leaking out everywhere. For example, there is grace to Mary who had the privilege of becoming the mother of the Messiah (Luk 1:30). No one knew about Mary before this. She was a sinner like all of us! She was a wonderful woman, devout, a virgin, but she was a sinner who needed a Savior. We also see the grace of the King not only in the choice of one woman, but in the seed of two men. Look at Mat 1:1 *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.* He is called the son of David, the son of Abraham, both sinners. David was an adulterer, a polygamist, a murderer. Abraham who lies about his wife in Egypt and brought them both into shame, who wouldn't fight for the woman he loved. Abraham who disbelieved God and committed adultery with Hagar. Abraham lied about Sarah his wife and gave her to the king saying that she was just his sister. Two sinners, yet their seed was the Son of God! Now, that's grace!

What about their seed? What about Solomon and Isaac. Solomon, the son of David to whom David looked for the next step in this marvelous fulfillment turned out to be a tragedy. We're familiar with Solomon so very little has to be said. He destroyed the unity of Israel. He had over 300 wives and 700 concubines, but God didn't cancel His promise. His story is one of a disastrous failure, one of foolishness and folly! However, one day there came a greater son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham Who came to overcome the failures of both of those lines and their seeds and to accomplish what they could never accomplish. He came through the line of two sinners, that's grace!

Notice next, we see the grace of God in the history of three eras. In Mat 1:17 *Therefore all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to {the time of} Christ fourteen generations.*

Now, the first period that Matthew mentions is the period from Abraham to David. That's the period of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of Moses and Joshua. It was that great period of heroism when Israel was made famous. It was a period of greatness. The second period, *and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations;* This is a period of decline. The first was a period of ascendancy, as Israel goes from non-existence in Abraham's time to fame because of it's great heroism as the judges lead the Jewish people to victory after victory. However the second period is the period of the monarchy. As soon as the monarchy came with Saul, you know what happened, things started to do down hill.

So after the glory days of David, followed by the glory days of Solomon, which led into apostasy, we have tragedy upon tragedy upon tragedy. Every once in a while you get a glimpse of a winner believer, but what dominates the landscape are the Rehoboam's and

Ahaz's and Manasseh's, the Coniah's, all evil men. So its' a period of apostasy, and it's a period of degeneracy that ultimately ends up in the devastation and the destruction of Israel, and the inevitable captivity in Babylon.

The third period is strange in the that it is a period we know little about. It's a period shrouded in darkness, 600 years of dateless ness. Names we don't even know! You see, the story of Israel is the story of three era's. The genealogy of Jesus is one of glory and shame, of heroism and disgrace, of renown and obscurity. All along the way, even though the whole nation is going down the tubes until finally they curse and spit on their own Messiah, it is nevertheless, through that nation that the Messiah comes. That is grace. He is the King of grace!