

# Beauty from the Ashes: The Grace of God in the Genealogies

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**References:** **1 Chronicles 3**, Matthew 1; Jeremiah 22; Luke 3; Psalm 32; Psalm 51; Jeremiah 36; Revelation 22; Matthew 19; Philippians 3; 1 John 3

## The Difficulty of Divine Detail

I'd like to turn to 1 Chronicles 3. I think we can agree together this morning that there are vast tracts, **large sections of the Bible**, large sections of the Bible that are difficult to understand. As I think of personally the portions of the Word of God that I do understand, it's difficult. Quite a small list, actually. I mean, most of it I read through, and I know it's divine. I know it's inspired. I'm convinced of that. I believe that. I believe that because the Bible says that of itself.

I also believe it's important because God chose to inspire it. He chose to write it. He chose to tell me these things. So I know it's important; I'm just not sure why. I don't doubt you don't agree with that—that as you read through these sections of Scripture, it's made it speak and come alive and say to us or prove to us what the spiritual significance or value is. And I think that the Chronicles would be that. All these names—that not only are they hard to pronounce, we're unsure of why they're even here sometimes, but they are inspired by God, and he chose to tell us this, so we agree, I think, together that it's important. So we say, how?

## The Family of David

So in 1 Chronicles 3, we have the family of David. That's the first paragraph. And in there, it says in verse 5—these were born to David, it says "him," but it's David, in Jerusalem:

[1 Chronicles 3:5 NKJV]

And these were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon--four by Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel.

Now, that may seem like an insignificant verse. In fact, I don't even know, except for maybe the last couple of weeks, if I even knew that it existed. I mean, I'd read through it many times, but I never realized the significance of this, nor did I realize that this emphasizes—with a little research—emphasizes the grace of God. And so anytime that we can read through and see the grace of God emphasized in Scripture, grace greater than all our sin, well, we want to see that.

And so what's the significance of this? Well, this is the event, the only event in David's life, which Scripture seems to paint negatively. You know that David, we know, was a man after God's own heart, says the Bible, except in one area: the sin of Bathsheba. That's what the Bible says. That's what God says of David.

Now, hey, as we were reminded this morning, we know David had lots of sin and shortcomings. David was a type of, a picture, a reminder of the Lord Jesus, but he wasn't the Lord Jesus. And so this one event, entailed right here, tells us that David and Bathsheba actually had four children. It's not just here; they're named actually. Well, these two of them. And so they had had four children.

Bathsheba's dad's named here. His name is **Ammiel**. He's the son of Ahithophel. That's actually significant. Ahithophel—you know who he is. Ahithophel is the man who plays a real key role in the life of David with regards to Absalom. Well, you kind of read through that and you read through that story of Absalom, and you come to this part of the story where David's advisor, you know, his close confidant, Ahithophel, that he—thank you—you know, betrays David and joins Absalom. And so you wonder, well, why would he do that? Well, it turns out that he was Bathsheba's grandfather. He was the father of Ammiel. And so he had a vested interest, you know, in David's sin. David's sin destroyed his family's life.

And so you wouldn't know that just by reading the story, but when you start to put the names together, these things take on a life. It's this idea of we need to compare Scripture with Scripture. Right? It's not just the New Testament we read. We start at the beginning at Genesis, and we read right through to the end. Right? We study the life of Josiah in Kings because Josiah is extremely important in all of Scripture. I mean, he's tied to lots of different things. It's not just in Kings; the story of Jeremiah is around Josiah. You know, even he's tied to these names here.

## **The Sovereignty of Grace and Judgment**

And so the Scriptures here give us the names of the four children born to David and Bathsheba. The event of, as we've said, the event of Bathsheba and David emphasizes the grace of God. That's part of what the genealogy in Matthew—we want to turn to that, the

genealogy of Matthew chapter 1—that's what Matthew is emphasizing in Matthew chapter 1. It says in verse 6:

[Matthew 1:6 NKJV]

and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.

And so that's one of the names that were mentioned in 1 Chronicles: Solomon. But when we read, like, say, the story of Josiah, now you're going to study it in Kings. But if you read the story of Josiah, say, for instance, in Jeremiah chapter 22, you read that because of the sin of Josiah's son, Jeconiah, because of the sin of Jeconiah, that a son of Solomon couldn't sit on the throne of Israel. Right? There's a curse. They call it **Jeconiah's curse**. And it was God at a long period of time. Many kings had come and gone, you know, from the days of Solomon onward. And so God was serious about his judgment. And so he said that there couldn't be a son of Solomon to sit on the throne of David. Jeconiah's curse.

And so then this becomes the difference, part of the difference that we see in the genealogy in Luke's gospel. Like people often ask, well, what's the difference between the two genealogies? Well, the scholars point out to us that, you know, that in Matthew, it's the genealogy of Joseph, but in Luke chapter 3, it's the genealogy of Mary. And so where are they the same? Where do they go back to that they're the same? Where do these two genealogies split? Like they're the same, obviously, all the way back to Adam, if you could go back to Adam, although this genealogy doesn't. But they move all the way forward. They're exactly the same. And this is surprising. So a lot of people, a lot of people say, "I didn't realize that." They're the same all the way to David. Because you remember it was David who was given the promise by God that he would have a son who would sit on the throne of Israel forever.

And so God's promises, although his judgment is serious and his grace is real and, you know, that our sin doesn't defeat his purposes. So although this event that we read about here and that we read about in 1 Chronicles—the sin of Bathsheba—it's serious and David paid the price for his sin. It didn't change God's eternal promises. And so the two genealogies are the same all the way up to David, and then that's where they split.

And so the genealogy of Matthew chapter 1, the genealogy of Joseph, comes through Solomon and then connected with Solomon is a little bit further down the sin of Jeconiah, the curse of Jeconiah. And we say, well, what about Mary's genealogy? Who did it come through?

Do you know who it came through? It came through **Nathan**. That's what it says. It says that it was David, it was Nathan. Do you know who Nathan was? Nathan was Solomon's brother. So this event, this tragic event in David's life, God, in his grace, was able to make something beautiful out of it, to bring beauty from the ashes of David's sin.

And actually, it makes sense, you know, even if this thing was the son Nathan, Solomon's brother—think, well, what has that got to do with any of this story? Well, you remember that when the prophet came to David to see him restored to fellowship—restore the fellowship with the Lord—do you remember what that prophet's name was? That prophet's name was Nathan. Nathan spoke truth into David's life. It was the truth that Nathan spoke into David's life that saw him restored. It was that restoration which caused David to write Psalm 32 and Psalm 51—two great psalms on the forgiveness of sin and how appreciative David was of the grace of God. And so it's evidenced right here in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **The Disregard of Jehoiakim**

And as we take and compare the genealogies and we read through Chronicles, all those lists of names and say, "well, I don't understand how they fit together," say, that's fine, but they do. They do fit. And God is serious about them. And we see that even a little bit further down. In verse 11 of the genealogy of Matthew chapter 1, it says:

[Matthew 1:11 NKJV]

Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

But you know, when you turn back—Jeremiah, we should. I mean, let's turn back and just have a look. We'll turn to chapter 36. Thanks. The curses are in chapter 22, but in chapter 36 is another one of those stories that stand out because of its strangeness. When you read something strange in the Word of God, you say, "well, I'm not sure why it's there, but it's for a purpose." And so you say, well, what is the purpose?

Well, the story of the account of chapter 36 of Jeremiah is Jehoiakim. And so we find from verse 1 of chapter 36:

[Jeremiah 36:1 NKJV]

Now it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying:

And so we put together chapter 22 and various parts between chapter 22 and chapter 36, we find out that there were really four sons. You know, Jeconiah was one of them; there were other boys too. But this is **Jehoiakim** we're reading about here. He's now king of Israel. He's Josiah's son. And he's a man who, as we put his story together, we find out he has no fear of the Lord. He's not serious about the Word of God. In fact, he's the opposite of serious about the Word of God. He's very nonchalant and actually disrespectful. You know, he's had plenty of opportunities for warning. The prophet has warned him. People have warned him. God himself has warned him through his prophets. You know, his ministers have challenged him in his thinking.

We find out as we put his story together that although Israel was in dire straits—they were experiencing famine and oppression from other nations, heavy taxation—Jehoiakim didn't feel the pressure of any of that. I mean, he was sitting in his winter house. He was on vacation, if you will. It was like the equivalent of his summer home. You know, he has a cabin by the lake; this is his winter house. From chapter 22, we learn that he didn't use slave labor. He forced Israel—Jews—to build his winter house. He didn't even pay them for it. You know when other kings were oppressed, heavy taxation, they often out of their own coffers paid for the taxation. But that's not how Jehoiakim worked. He actually upped the taxes on the nation of Israel to pay the Egyptians, the Medes, and the Persians.

So he was in every way a wicked individual. And so then the Lord, still in his grace and his kindness, his mercy, is still trying to restore him, trying to bring him back to the truth, to restoration, to repentance. And so Jeremiah himself has written a word, a scroll. He doesn't come himself because he knows Jehoiakim would kill him. And so it's sent, and now this word is being written. And so that's what we have in chapter 36. It's the scroll read. It's read first in the temple, and then it's read in the palace. And so we just break in the story at verse 20:

[Jeremiah 36:20-23 NKJV]

<sup>20</sup> And they went to the king, into the court; but they stored the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the hearing of the king.

<sup>21</sup> So the king sent Jehudi to bring the scroll, and he took it from Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the hearing of the king and in the hearing

of all the princes who stood beside the king. <sup>22</sup> Now the king was sitting in the winter house in the ninth month, with a fire burning on the hearth before him. <sup>23</sup> And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, that the king cut it with the scribe's knife and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.

He burnt the whole thing.

## **Accountability and Final Hope**

So as we think about names in the Word of God and how names can remind us of the immeasurable grace of God—grace as it is manifested in the life of David, grace that was greater than David's greatest sin—the other side of the coin is equally true. Though God is serious about his grace, he's serious about judgment. I mean, as a New Testament Christian, we're not called to condemn, to judge. We're not called to vengeance. Vengeance is the Lord's, but he will repay.

And so we often emphasize that this is the day of grace that we live in. And so we're encouraged to see grace as it's evidenced in Scripture in the life of David, his shortcomings and his sin. But, you know, here in this story, God is serious about his Word. Jehoiakim's not, but God is. When actually the very last chapter of the Bible, John the Apostle, in writing the Revelation, quotes the Lord himself. And the Lord says this:

[Revelation 22:19 NKJV]

and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

And so now I'll turn back to Matthew chapter 1. Thank you. In Matthew chapter 1, verse 11, Josiah—who again, you can read about him in the Kings, you can read about him in the Chronicles, you can read about him in Jeremiah—it says, verse 11, "Josiah begot Jeconiah." But it should have said Jehoiakim. That's the name that should be there. Because that's what we read in Jeremiah chapter 36, that Josiah the king begot Jehoiakim. But he's not there. Well, it's a direct fulfillment of what the Lord said in Revelation. That those who are not serious about God's Word, you know, that would disrespect the Word of God as Jehoiakim did

as he sat in his winter house—all those people watching take a penknife and cut the scroll and burn it to ashes—there's a day of accountability coming.

And so as we work through the Word of God and study it, we can see evidences of the grace of God. Again, as we say, grace greater than all our sin. Grace as it is manifested and shown in the life of David, as it's manifested in how the Lord was able to work through David's sin and his shortcomings. But not to be fooled that this life does matter, that there is judgment coming, that the message of the Word of God is also "flee from the wrath that's to come." You know, it is important what we do with our lives.

If this life makes a difference in the next life—I'm not telling you how exactly that works, but the Lord Jesus emphasized this to his disciples. They caught the gist of what he was saying. As he talked about that next life and what it would be, you remember they said, "Lord, well, we've lived lives of sacrifice. We've given up for you here in this life. What about us?" He said, well, there'll be rewards in the next life. He said:

[Matthew 19:28 NKJV]

So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And so we see plenty of evidence as we read through the Scriptures that God keeps accurate track. He doesn't write anything vain—meaning without purpose—in his Scriptures.

Cheers. Continually emphasizing his grace, his mercy, his kindness, but that there is real judgment coming. And remember, this is how the Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray: that there would be a day coming that his will that was done in heaven would be done on earth. And we do long toward that day. The Lord Jesus will make everything right, and he will. He does, and he will make everything right.

And so we do, as we remember the Lord this morning and remember the grace that was manifested towards us at Calvary—that even this simple supper of remembrance is only until the Lord Jesus comes. He is coming back to fix everything. And he's God coming back to fix us. Amen. Our **lowly, vile bodies**—one day we'll be like his glorious body. That's the hope of the Christian:

[Philippians 3:21 NKJV]

who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

That when we see him, we'll be like him, for we'll see him as he is.

[1 John 3:2 NKJV]

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.