



MESSAGE GUIDE

FEBRUARY 23, 2025

EVERY NAME HAS A STORY - 8: RAHAB GOD BRINGS YOU INTO HIS STORY



MATTHEW 1:5; JOSHUA 2:1-24

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We are in the eighth week of our series Every Name Has a Story, and we are taking a look at names included in Jesus' family tree in Matthew 1, and how they all have a story, and we all do as well. Quick recap: the genealogy of Jesus is broken down into three sections, and that's what we're using as the overall grid for our preaching and teaching this year:

Family stories #1—Abraham to David (Matthew 1:1-6a)

Family stories #2—David to Babylonian exile (Matthew 1:6b-11)

Family stories #3—Babylonian exile to Jesus (Matthew 1:12-16)

We're breaking down these family stories to see how God used them, and how God can use our family stories, and our stories, as well. What we're discovering is that Jesus' family tree isn't like other family trees depicted in literature from first-century Judaism. It includes women, Gentiles (non-Jews), and people whose stories are, let's just say, less than desirable. But each of the names in Jesus's genealogy has a story, and each story indicates that God can bring us—and our story—into His story.

1. WHAT ABOUT YOUR PAST OR STATUS THAT OTHERS MAY VIEW TO BE “LESS THAN DESIRABLE”?

No matter who you are, or what you've done, your status, your ethnicity, your background—the good, the bad, the ugly—God can bring you into His story through Jesus Christ, and He will write some amazing new chapters in your life.

We see this in the incredible story of one of the names listed in Jesus' family tree from Matthew 1. The name Rahab- "And Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse." (Matthew 1:5, ESV)

We're first introduced to Rahab in Joshua 2.

Background: The Jews were enslaved in Egypt for over 400 years, and God used Moses to deliver them out of slavery and out of Egypt. They wandered through the wilderness for 40 years and came to the land of Canaan, which is the land God promised to Abraham centuries before, and now they are “coming home” so to speak, but there's a problem. The Canaanites have settled in the land, and what follows is battle after battle of the Jewish



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people reclaiming the land God had given them. Wow, there's so much we could unpack with that, especially in light of more recent events in Israel and Palestine. So, the Israelite army came to the city of Jericho to overthrow it and reclaim it. This is where we pick up the story in Joshua 2.

Read Joshua, chapter 2.

What do we learn about Rahab?

- Rahab is a prostitute in Jericho, and for whatever reason, the two spies Joshua sent into Jericho hide at her house.
- Somehow Rahab became a believer in the one, true God, YHWH. In verse 11, Rahab says, *"For the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath"* (**Joshua 2:11, ESV**).
- Rahab negotiates the safety of her family with the two spies, so that when Joshua's army attacks Jericho, they would not attack her or her family (**vs. 18 and 21**).

2. CONSIDERING RAHAB'S PAST AND STATUS, HOW MIGHT HAVE SOME PEOPLE THOUGHT OF HER?

Now, we don't find out what happened until four chapters later, in Joshua 6: "So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel... *And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho*" (Joshua 6:23, 25, ESV).

Sometime later, Rahab, who has left her life of prostitution, marries Salmon, and they have a son they named Boaz who marries Ruth, who gives birth to Obed, who becomes the father of Jesse, who becomes the father of David, on down the line to: *"Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ"* (Matthew 1:16, ESV).

Of all the people in Jesus' family tree, why does Rahab make the cut?

Matthew is selective with his genealogy of Jesus. He doesn't list every single name included in the line from Abraham to Jesus. Most likely, Matthew is presenting a royal or legal genealogy, where he lists the official line of Davidic kings, not Jesus' actual ancestors. His point is to show that Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, is related to that line. BUT... If Matthew is wanting to prove that Joseph is in the line of David, and thus Jesus is the Messiah from the line of David, MATTHEW DOESN'T NEED TO INCLUDE SOME OF THE NAMES LIKE RAHAB OR RUTH TO PROVE THAT POINT.



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Here's how Matthew 1:5-6 would be a more typical genealogical record: "And Salmon the father of Boaz, and Boaz the father of Obed, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king."

But that's not what Matthew does. He writes, "*And Salmon the father of Boaz BY RAHAB, and Boaz the father of Obed BY RUTH, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king*" (**Matthew 1:5-6, ESV**).

So, back to the question. Why does Rahab make the cut? Because God is making it extremely clear that His story of redemption is for EVERYONE! Including the prostitutes, the forgotten, the overlooked, the marginalized, the haves and the have nots, the rich and the poor, men, women, the Jew and the non-Jew, the Black and the White and every color in between. By including Rahab and Ruth, what do you think this genealogy would do to elevate women, non-Jews, and people with a "past"? It was remarkable!!

No one is ever beyond the grace of God. No one has ever stooped so low that God can't reach down and lift up. Sometimes we feel like our stories are so bad that there could never be a good conclusion. But we see this happen time and time again where someone was a Rahab, and that person was redeemed.

The very first introduction we have of Rahab is by her less-than-desirable occupation:

- "And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there." (Joshua 2:1, ESV).
- "Only Rahab the prostitute, and all who are with her in her house shall live." (Joshua 6:17, ESV).
- "Rahab the prostitute..." (Joshua 6:25, ESV).

3. READ AGAIN MATTHEW 1:5. WHAT DO YOU NOTICE IS MISSING?

Matthew leaves out the description because it is not necessary anymore. She's no longer defined by her sin. She's redeemed by Jesus, the very One who came through her family tree and brought her into His story. God redeems your story by His story, regardless of how bleak, bad, or barren your story may be.

Redemption through the Gospel of Jesus

Did you notice how Rahab and her family saved? She tied a scarlet cord in the window as a sign that death was to pass over her house. In this act a subtle allusion, could this be a signpost pointing to the Gospel of Jesus?

When the Jews were enslaved in Egypt, and God was delivering them, the 10th plague was the killing of the firstborn male of the Egyptians. The Jews were instructed to sacrifice a lamb and put the blood on the doorposts of their house. "*The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt*" (**Exodus 12:13, ESV**).



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And then the Jews were instructed to remember the “passing over” by having this memorial meal they called the “Passover” to remind them of God’s deliverance from slavery in Egypt. And then in the New Testament, we learn that this Passover lamb was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus who became our Passover Lamb, that by His blood shed on the Christ, the judgment against our sins was “passed over,” and we have been redeemed. The Apostle Paul wrote, *“For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.”* (**1 Corinthians 5:7, ESV**).

So, why was Rahab instructed to tie a red/scarlet cord in her window? Maybe, it was to point back to God passing over the homes of the Jews, but also to point forward to the very One who would come through the line of Rahab who would be the Passover Lamb, not just for the Jews, but for all people—people like Rahab who desperately needed forgiveness and redemption—people just like you and me.

Somehow Rahab heard about the God of grace who can “pass over” all of the sins, the shame, the emptiness and brokenness of her life and set her free. And so, Rahab stepped out in faith, tied that scarlet cord to her window, and from that point forward, God “passed over” her past, the brokenness in her story and brought her story into His own. If God can do that with someone as desperate and broken as Rahab, He can do that for you as well!

4. JUST AS WE ARE ALL LEARNING MORE ABOUT HOW GOD IS BRINGING THE STORIES OF OUR LIVES INTO HIS STORY, HE ALSO CALLS US TO REACH BEHIND US AND BRING OTHERS WITH US. WHO IS ONE PERSON IN YOUR LIFE WHO NEEDS TO HEAR ABOUT GOD'S REDEEMING LOVE? COMMIT TO PRAYING FOR THEM DAILY AND LOOK FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE YOUR OWN STORY OF REDEMPTION WITH THEM THIS WEEK.

NEXT STEPS:

- At the end of the service, we invite you to go to the “family tree” in the atrium and write down the name of your “one”—one person this year you are inviting into God’s story of grace and redemption.
- If you’re ready to learn more about what it means to take your next step with Jesus, text **“FOLLOW”** to 317-707-6462, and we’ll reach out to you.

