

The year 2020 has brought many changes, one of which being that flying has lost some of its luster. Something that I've always appreciated about flying is the sense of perspective it tends to give. The world seems like a big place until the plane leaves the ground and buildings, cars, and roads all start to become so small. Quickly, entire cities become small and soon one can see for miles all around. Rolling hills, mountains, lakes, and rivers. For a contemplative guy like myself, this always causes me to pause and reflect. It seems to give one a sense of perspective.

Recently I have been preparing a sermon series on the Gospel of Matthew. This book opens up with the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Verses 2-16 record the lineage from Abraham to Joseph. As one reads this genealogy, we are reminded of how many sinful people, messy lives, and horrible situations God used in the past to accomplish His purposes. In fact, I'm not sure of anyone on that list who led a perfect and peaceful life. A quick reading (much less a thorough one) of this passage gives us perspective on God's plans and purposes in history.

When we are in the midst of the trials and challenges of this life, they seem so big, so great. It seems that there are mountains in front of us that will never be moved. We see the storms and waves in the ocean around us, and it seems simply a matter of time before we are overwhelmed. We wonder how God could ever use our circumstances to accomplish something good. As I reflect on the lives of the people in the genealogy of Matthew 1, I realize that these people felt that way as well.

When Abraham left the only home he knew to wander the desert, trusting simply in God's Word, there were some storms that came with that. When Judah left the Covenant people of God to sojourn amongst the Canaanites and married into them, that brought some trials. It brought the death of his sons and eventually led to grave sexual immorality on his part, producing Perez and Zerah. We can think of Naomi and her family who leave Israel during a time of famine, only to have all of her family die apart from her daughter in laws. One of which returns to Israel clueless as to what the future held.

We can think of Hezekiah! How thankful the people of God would have been when Hezekiah ascended to the throne. 2 Chronicles 29 records his glorious beginning as he ordered the priesthood to concentrate themselves and remove the filth from the house of the Lord. He restored Temple worship, celebrated the Passover, cut down the Asherim and broke down the High Places. Hezekiah was a great king of Judah. Yet what followed Hezekiah? Manasseh. The most wicked king to rule Judah. He restores the worship of Baal and burns his sons in sacrifice. What the people of Judah must have thought as God allowed evil Manasseh to rule 55 years.

As we look at the genealogy of Christ, it looks like a miracle. It's a miracle that anything good could come from those messy, wicked, and broken lives. But that's kind of the point isn't it? It is a miracle. It's a miracle that anything good happens in our broken and sinful world. God is working and moving in such a way that only He will get the glory. For there to be great victories, there must be great enemies. For God to get the glory there has to be battles won that we do not have the ability to fight. Take heart weary saint. Do your best with what's in front of you, and trust our great God with the rest.



Sincerely, A Plaid Pastor

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