

THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT

Family Tree

Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

Matthew 1:17

With the advent of DNA tests and internet databases of historical records, it's never been easier to put together the stories of your family tree.

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Some people uncovered surprising results, discovering some of their bloodline came from places they didn't expect, or that their relatives were not who they seemed.

In the ancient near east, family groups stayed together as tribes, and marriages were almost always arranged. Thus, oral histories of genealogies passed on from generation to generation. Those histories were received as treasured inheritances.

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It may be tempting to zap past the places in the Bible that contain lists of genealogies like the one that opens up the Gospel of Matthew. The sometimes-unusual names like Jehoshaphat and Zerubbabel can be true tongue-twisters.

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But it is worth contemplating with wonder that each of those names-the unfamiliar ones as well as some of the people like Ruth, Rahab, David and Josiah whose stories are shared in some detail in the Old Testament-all played an essential role in our salvation story.

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**Author of history, I thank you for
the way in which you have been at
work from generation to
generation to seek and save
those who've wandered
from you.
Amen**

***FOR FURTHER REFLECTION READ
MATTHEW 1:1-17***