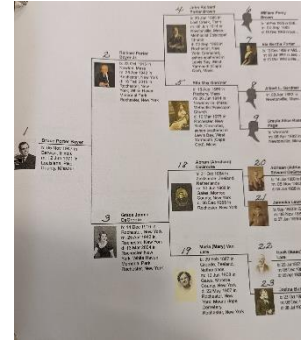


Ancestry

My sister has done extensive research into our family ancestry. She assembled several notebooks outlining key dates, photographs, and documents from the lives of our family members. The earliest birthdate in the family genealogy chart is 1719 before distant relatives immigrated to the United States. The genealogy charts contain names of people I had never heard of before and who lived generations ago. Some of the research includes descriptions, copies of birth certificates, newspaper articles, Certificates of Citizenship, and photos of the lives of our ancestors. What a gold mine!



The Gospel of Matthew (Matt 1:13-16) outlines the lineage of Jesus. Many names are challenging to pronounce and unfamiliar to me. There are no photos; the Bible is the only record of their existence. It is a gold mine of information, too. Their lives are a mystery to me but not to God. God knows their names and everything about them.

God knows you, too. He knows everything about you. I laugh when I think of the bible passage that says the Lord knows the number of hairs on my head. It is a declining number. But, His love and understanding of me aren't in decline. God knows my lineage because He planned our family tree before we were born. Thankfully, we are all members of the Family of God.

Jesus' family tree lineage includes shepherds, farmers, and carpenters. All people are important in the eyes of God. Nobody is a "nobody" to God.

Jesus came to live among us so we can live with Him again – in Heaven. Jesus told us that He has prepared a place for us and will come back to take us there (read John 14:3). Let this Christmas season be a time of strengthening our faith with the knowledge that God knows us, sacrificed Himself for us, and, despite our many faults, He loves us. We are important to God. He is coming again so that we can live with Him in eternity. We are fortunate to be in the lineage of God.

The Bible says:

- *These three were the sons of Noah, and from these, the whole earth was populated (Genesis 9:19).*
- *I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the dream of the king (Daniel 2:23).*

Closing Prayer: Most gracious, Heavenly Father. We are so thankful that you know and love us despite our shortcomings. Because of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have the opportunity to be with You in eternity. Amen.