

## A Mystery in Everyone

On a trip to Israel, a tourist was amazed to hear a young Jewish man recite his family lineage back 14 generations. She reflected upon her own family tree, and realized that she could only trace her own lineage about five generations. She concluded, "God is the only one Who knows *my* beginning from my ending."

Ultimately, that is true for each person. No one fully knows what another has experienced early in life, or what genetic influences may be brought to bear in a person's life because of the behavior of his or her parents and other ancestors. A part of each person will always remain a mystery, known to God alone. That truth reminds me of a poem, written by Paul Lee Tan, I read recently:

*Don't find fault with the man who limps  
Or stumbles along life's road,  
Unless you have worn the shoes he wears,  
Or struggled beneath his load.*

*There may be tacks in his shoes that hurt,  
Though hidden away from your view,  
The burdens he bears, if placed on your back  
Might cause you to stumble, too.*

*Don't be too hard on the man who errs,  
Or pelt him with wood or stone,  
Unless you are sure – yea, double sure,  
That you have no fault of your own.*

And that is advice for all time.

--Beecher Hunter