

## THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 3 – “Genealogy? WHY??”

February 9, 2021

*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham....*

The unfolding of God’s plan continues because all His unconditional promises God made to Israel have not yet been fulfilled. And, here we have that PROOF with the genealogy of the Messiah.

The genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:1-17 has been labeled as the “forgotten chapter of the Christmas story”!

Let’s put ourselves back in Jesus’ day...as a Jewish person! During Biblical times, the Jewish people were mad/wild/glued to genealogies – and for good reason.

“Genealogy” means origin. Genealogies were extremely important to the Jewish people. Genealogies among the Jewish people...

- Proved that the person was indeed a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – that they were physical Jews.
- Identified the tribe to which the individual belonged.
- Determined what land you received based on your tribe.
- Qualified certain Jews for religious duties.
  - Priests had to come through the priestly tribe, the tribe of Levi.
  - Kings had to come through the kingly tribe, the tribe of Judah.

Luke 2:1, 3 – *And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that ALL THE WORLD should be registered...So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.* That meant that each man must return to his ancestral hometown. But the only way you could be sure about your ancestral hometown was to know your genealogy. This is why Mary and Joseph had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem in the ninth month of her pregnancy. Both Joseph and Mary were of the house and lineage of King David (Lk. 3:23ff). This is not a tiny detail. Both HAD to be from the King David’s line. Jesus’ genealogy through Mary is found in Luke 3:23ff - *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli....* Heli was Mary’s father; Heli’s lineage is rooted in David’s line from the tribe of Judah!

Matthew – the first Gospel – beginning with a genealogy. Matthew was telling them in the first verse that Jesus is the King of the Jews and the Messiah/Deliverer of the world!

It's SIGNIFICANT that Matthew should mention the names of David and Abraham in his introduction. These were two to whom/through whom God had given unconditional, eternal covenants that determined the course of the history of the nation of Israel – INTO THE FUTURE! Through the Abrahamic Covenant God promised land, descendants, and a blessing for the world through the Messiah. Through the Davidic Covenant God had promised that David's house, kingdom, and throne would be established forever (II Sam. 7:16) through the Messiah. NOTE: Jesus' Messianic title, "Son of David" is mentioned

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first. Jesus is Jewish through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But through Matthew's genealogy the spotlight is on Jesus as the Son of David – the Messiah.

The book of Matthew focuses on Jesus as the King of the Jews. Was the Messiah to be the king of the Jews?

Psa. 2:6-7, 9 – we read the words of God the Father concerning God the Son as King: *Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The LORD (Jehovah/YHWH) has said to Me (Messiah), 'You (Messiah) are My Son... You shall rule with a rod of iron.'* Of course, this verse is speaking of the Millennial Kingdom – when Jesus will be ruling with a rod of iron (Psa. 2:7).

Psa. 45:6-7 – in speaking of the Messiah, *Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;* Psa. 110 – the Messiah will reign as king; Zech. 6:12-13; Zech. 14:9 – we see Jesus as King.

In order to qualify as the King of the Jews, Jesus had to be from the tribe of Judah in the kingly line going back to David. Many of the Jewish people were longing for the promised King. There was Messianic fervor!

After the "430 years of silence" during the intertestamental times between the OT and the NT, after Malachi's warning of God cursing the earth if Israel didn't repent and before JESUS comes the first time, Israel as a nation didn't repent. BUT GOD intervened. God had promised the Messiah. And, there had always been a remnant – Jewish believers – OT saints... (Isa. 1:9; Isa. 6:13; Rom. 11:5). The remnant:

Luke 2:25-26 – Simeon was *waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.* <sup>26</sup> *And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.* <sup>27</sup> *So he came by the Spirit into the temple* – at the time that Mary and Joseph brought Jesus into the Temple for purification rites. Luke 2:36-38 – *Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age...but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. Having seen JESUS brought into the Temple by Mary and Joseph, ...she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*

Matthew's gospel was written to a Jewish audience to prove that Jesus was the long-awaited Jewish Messiah, the King of Israel! Matthew links Jesus with King David at the VERY OUTSET of his Gospel. Immediately Jesus is ANNOUNCED in the Gospel of Matthew as the Messiah of Israel!

The opening words, *The book of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham* clearly demonstrate that Matthew's purpose in writing the gospel is to provide adequate proof that the claims of Jesus to be King and Messiah are justified. As the Son of David, Jesus is Messiah the King of Israel **AND** He is the Seed of Abraham Who would bless the world through His offer of salvation!

Within this genealogy, there are three divisions which correspond to three periods of history within the nation of Israel:

- From Abraham to David (Matt. 1:2-6a)
- From David to the Babylonian Exile (Matt. 1:6b-11)
- From Exile to Jesus' First Coming (Matt. 1:12-16)
- An unconditional covenant is referenced in each group/period.
  - Abrahamic Covenant (Matt. 1:1-6)
  - Davidic Covenant (Matt. 1:6-11)
  - New Covenant (Matt. 1:12-16)

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From David to the Babylonian exile (Matt. 1:6b-11), several kings of Judah are noted in this genealogy of Jesus until they were carried away to Babylon...when Babylon attacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple in 586 BC. The kingly line was deported – into captivity. Was the kingly line completely destroyed? We read of hope...

From exile to Jesus (Matt. 1:12-16) – He's arrived at His first coming. David's throne will be occupied but not until Jesus' Second Coming. To support the fact the genealogy concerns Jesus' first coming, from v. 18 we read of Jesus birth in Bethlehem.

When the Jews returned from exile in Babylon, who are all these people in vv. 12-15? Since this genealogy records the kingly tribe of Judah, are these people kings? NO! Haggai 1:1 and Haggai 2:2 record that upon Israel's return from exile, Zerubbabel was the Governor of Judea. Joseph is in this line of David – Joseph betrothed to Mary! Was Joseph a king? NO!

Hosea 3:4-5 - For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice... <sup>5</sup> Afterward the children of Israel shall **return and seek** the LORD their God and David their king (in the future). They shall fear the LORD and

His goodness in the latter days. While there were no kings from the Davidic line in place following the Babylonian captivity, this does not mean that there cannot be interruptions. What is guaranteed is the outcome – “forever” going forward into eternity future. The future throne is confirmed in the coming of the Messiah and it will be occupied by Him. The Messiah will be the ultimate Davidic King, Who will rule and reign on earth for 1,000 years. Jesus’ earthly reign will conclude human history! Jesus will return in His glory and reign for 1,000 years during the Millennial Kingdom on earth which will then transition into the Eternal State when the New Jerusalem will descend from heaven and will be illuminated by the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb (Rev. 21:22-23).

Jesus’ genealogy in Matthew lists fourteen names in each of the three groups. The names within Matthew’s genealogy seem to have been selected with a purpose! In the Hebrew language before Jesus’ time and in Jesus’ day, no vowels were written. David’s name would be written: DVD. Each letter had a numerical significance: D = 4 and V = 6. Thus DVD = 14. Matthew focuses attention on the Davidic descent of Jesus.

Matthew totally breaks with Jewish tradition in mentioning the names of women. Four women are included: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bath-sheba (tho’ not by name – v. 6b “of her that had been the wife of Uriah – the Hittite [Gentile]). Three are Gentiles (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth) and Bathsheba’s husband was a Gentile – and perhaps Bathsheba. Not only is it unconventional for Matthew to list females, but three of these women are associated with sexual sins!

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- Tamar was involved in a scandal with Judah her father-in-law!!!! Read Gen. 38.
- Rahab was not Jewish; probably an Amorite. Rahab is labeled as a harlot in Joshua 2:1 and in James 2:25.
- Ruth was a Moabite. Do you remember how the Moabites originated? Lot and his oldest daughter had sexual relations and a son was born who was named Moab from which the Moabites came. Ruth came to faith in the God of Israel through her in-laws who were Jewish. Ruth, however, was always known as a Moabite (Ruth 2:21). Boaz, a Jew, married a Moabite? Deut. 23:3 – Moabites were not allowed to enter the assembly/congregation of Israel. BUT GOD!!! What the law didn’t allow, God’s grace allowed.
  - And so Ruth wore the label of Moabite as a badge of claiming God’s GRACE.
  - Matthew the tax collector included Ruth the Moabite.
  - Ruth alone, of the three women, had an unspotted record.
- Bath-sheba had an affair with David (II Sam. 11).

These women in Jesus' genealogy foreshadowed Mary of whom Matthew wrote. Here at the outset of Matthew...at the outset of the NT...we see that God's grace forgives the darkest of sins and reaches beyond Israel to the world.

- God's plan of redemption extends beyond Israel to the Gentile nations.
  - Gen. 12:3 – this was God's plan – that the entire world would be blessed through the Jewish Messiah.
  - Isa. 49:16 – the Messiah would not only restore Israel (Jacob), He would also be a light to the Gentiles.
- God's plan of redemption is for sinners as noted by the sexually sinful backgrounds known about three of these women – and some of the wicked kings of Judah noted in Matthew's genealogy.
- God's plan of redemption includes even those not highly esteemed – those whom the religious leadership of that day – sinners themselves - would repudiate – reject, renounce, abandon! But not God.
- The Messiah embraces sinners. . .embraces Jews and Gentiles!
- The Jesus of Matthew's gospel is the King of the Jews and the Savior, Messiah, Deliverer of the world!

If the genealogies had been inaccurate or not verifiable, they would certainly have been attacked by first-century unbelievers who knew that if they could disprove Jesus' claim to Davidic and/or Abrahamic ancestry, they could discredit Him as a false messiah. There is no evidence that anyone ever disputed the accuracy of the genealogies.

CONSIDER: Matthew records Jesus' genealogy through Joseph. Joseph is not Jesus' biological father. Joseph is in King David's line through Solomon. Those in Solomon's line had the right to the throne. But Joseph wasn't a king. There was a roadblock: Jeconiah (Matt. 1:12). Jeconiah was such an evil king that God pronounced a curse on

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Jeconiah (Jer. 27:24-30): "None of his descendants shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David" (Jer. 27:30). BUT, Jesus is directly related to King David through Jeconiah in the genealogy that is recorded through Joseph! How, then, can Jesus occupy David's throne as the Jewish Messiah when the curse clearly prohibited Jeconiah's offspring from doing just that? THE VIRGIN BIRTH! Matt. 1:16 – *And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus Who is called Christ.* In verse 16 the pronoun "of whom" is feminine singular, referring to Mary. Jesus was not born of a man; He was born of a woman. This verse protects and proclaims the doctrine of the virgin birth. And, this is further evidenced by the fact that Matthew goes right into the virgin birth following the genealogy (Matt. 1:18).

How is the roadblock bypassed in Mary's genealogy in Luke? Mary is traced to David through Nathan not Solomon – totally apart from Jeconiah.

Matthew is careful not to identify Jesus as the physical son of Joseph. Matthew 1:16 - *And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus who is call Christ.* The Greek pronoun translated “of whom” is feminine and refers to Mary. He was born of a woman – not of a woman and a man.

- Gen. 3:15 – the Redeemer would come through the seed of a woman.
- Isa. 7:14 – a virgin would conceive and bring forth a Son and His name would be Emmanuel – God with us/God in the flesh.
- Gal. 4:4 – in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman. . . .

Jesus genealogies support the conclusion that Jesus is a genuine son of David and Abraham through Mary, a King with a right to rule due to His legal title through Joseph, and His deity supported by His supernatural conception without a human father!

CONSIDER: Within Matthew 1, we have two viewpoints to Jesus’ genealogy through Joseph. Matthew 1:1-17 gives us the human perspective. Matthew 1:18-25 gives us God’s perspective: the virgin birth...something only GOD can perform!

If Jesus only had the legal right to rule as King through Joseph, He could never redeem men...He could never pay the penalty for our sin...He could never buy us out of bondage to sin. He could never conquer death, Satan, and hell. He could never forgive sin. His blood would not be pure/perfect...and we would be ETERNALLY lost!! He had to come as Immanuel – God in the flesh – 100% God, 100% man.

The virgin birth isn’t only important, it’s CRUCIAL! Every aspect of it was prophesied in the OT. Jesus as God entered this world sinless. His perfect, precious blood satisfied God’s just demands for the payment of sin. And, He will take His rightful place on the throne of David in the future because He did not physically come through Joseph but physically came through Mary but claimed the right to the throne through Joseph.

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John MacArthur – “The virgin birth is an underlying assumption of everything the Bible says about Jesus. To throw out the virgin birth is to reject Jesus’ deity, the accuracy and authority of Scripture, and a host of other related doctrines that are at the heart of the Christian faith. No issue is more important than the virgin birth to our understanding of Who Jesus is. If we deny Jesus is God, we have denied the very essence of Christianity.” We have denied the message of the Messianic prophecies that proclaimed that the Messiah would be God (Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2; Jer. 23:5-6).

#### QUESTIONS:

Of what significance is this lesson?

Why is the virgin birth crucial?

What was new to you?

What helped you most in understanding Jesus' genealogy in Matthew?

What helped you most in understanding the virgin birth?

What are your questions?

How does this truth of the virgin birth impact you?

Do you have family members/friends with whom you can share the truth of the virgin birth?

**SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:**

Reread Week 3's handout with the Biblical references.

Jot down observations and ask questions. Begin discovering answers.

Share the truth of the virgin birth with at least one person.

Read Week 4's handout when you receive it.