

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

Week 4 – God the Son's Birth

February 16, 2021

Jesus' genealogy is through Joseph in Matthew. Matthew presents Jesus as the legal heir to the throne of David and gives the genealogy from Abraham to Joseph. Matthew reveals the promised Messiah, the coming King, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

Jesus' genealogy is through Mary in Luke. Luke records the genealogy of Joseph all the way back to the first man Adam to demonstrate the humanity of Jesus.

Do we find Jesus' genealogy in Mark and John?

John presents Jesus as the Son of God; He is God! The genealogy of Jesus in the book of John is presented in the first verse.

John 1:1 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* John begins with Jesus, the Word, and traces his lineage all the way back ETERNITY PAST. Jesus' genealogy in John is of the pre-existent GOD THE SON!

There is no genealogy for Jesus recorded in the book of Mark!

Why would a record of Jesus' lineage be omitted in Mark when the other three gospels record Jesus' rights?

- His legal right to the throne as Messiah in Matthew.
- His birthright to the throne in Luke as the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13-14)
- His DIVINE right as the Son of God in John.

Mark presents Jesus as the Suffering Servant. He reveals Him in complete humbleness and total obedience. The genealogy of a servant or slave was not noteworthy of record in ancient times. Therefore, no genealogy is recorded in Mark.

Jesus' humble origin is recorded in...

Isa. 11:1 - *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.* Rod speaks of the Messiah. Branch is a Messianic title (Jer. 23:5-6). The Branch speaks to new life!

WHY did Jesus take on human flesh? WHY was Jesus Emmanuel, God in the flesh? To identify with man. MORE IMPORTANTLY Jesus came to DIE. He HAD to come in the flesh. He came to shed His blood – His PRECIOUS blood that redeems us from sin! Jesus purchases us out of bondage to sin! Jesus is our sinless sacrifice. And, Jesus, the perfect lamb of God, died the death of a CRIMINAL. Criminals were crucified.

How did Jesus humble Himself? What did that entail?

Philippians 2:5-8 - *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And*

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being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

He made Himself of no reputation. Greek word for “no reputation” is *kenoo* which means to empty, to make of Himself nothing. We need to understand that, because Jesus is God, at His incarnation (coming in the flesh), Jesus did NOT empty Himself of His divine attributes. Jesus NEVER emptied Himself of His deity. Jesus is ETERNALLY GOD! Col. 2:9 – *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily....* Jesus is GOD – He is sinless.

We first read in Philippians 2:5-8 that Jesus is God. How wonderful to have that truth stated first. God the Son, even in His incarnation, possessed ALL His divine attributes. Col. 2:9 - *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily....*

We are then told in Philippians 2:7 that Jesus made Himself of no reputation. We also need to understand that at His incarnation, Jesus took on flesh. Jesus entered into a state of humiliation – *He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant* (devoted to another to the disregard of his own interests) (Phil. 2:7). In understanding Jesus entering a state of humiliation as Emmanuel, God in the flesh, consider two aspects: self-sacrificing love and obedience. He served others; He didn’t seek to serve Himself. He always obeyed God the Father’s will...*Not My will but Yours be done.*

While ministering on earth, Jesus made Himself of no reputation which means Jesus did set aside the independent exercise/us of His divine attributes which He fully possessed, as He humbled Himself for us. At times in the gospels we see Jesus’ omnipotence/His power displayed. He stilled the storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:23). He raised the ruler’s daughter (Matt. 9:18, 23). He healed lepers, He exorcised demons. He fed 5,000. And, there were times that He did not exercise His omnipotence...HE REMAINED ON THE CROSS!!!!

Jesus emptied Himself of His glory that He shared with the Father. Before His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, *I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was* (John 17:4-5).

Jesus lived in complete dependence upon God the Father for everything. How should we live?

Heb. 12:1-2 – We’re told that we need to run the race (Gk. word – *agon* from which we get the word *agony*) with endurance *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Let’s continue in Matthew 1 and consider more so Jesus humble birth...for us.

Matthew 1:18-25 – READ

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Luke, with his emphasis on Jesus as the Son of Man recorded the birth events involving Mary.

Matthew, with his emphasis on the royal rights of Jesus as King of the Jews presented the birth through Joseph’s eyes, from the viewpoint of Joseph.

We read in Matthew that Mary had been betrothed, she had been pledged to Joseph. The betrothal was formally made. In the Jewish culture, the betrothal was called “making sacred” – as the bride-to-be committed herself as being set apart – as being - sacred to her husband.

JEWISH WEDDING FEAST:

- The Father of the bridegroom negotiates a price for the bride.
- The bridegroom travels to the bride’s house.
- Betrothal symbol – drink from a cup of wine.
- From that moment the bride was declared sanctified or set apart
- Bridegroom would leave the bride’s home and return to his father’s home. The Bridegroom would speak these words to the bride before his departure: “Let not your heart be troubled. . . I go to prepare a place for you. . .and. . .I will come again”. We note two comings on the part of the bridegroom.
- The bride did not know the exact day or hour the bridegroom would return. She needed to be prepared at all times.
- Bridegroom would add onto his father’s home – bridal chamber.
- At the father’s command, the Bridegroom and the groomsmen (Judges 14; John 3) would travel to the bride’s home. The Bridegroom himself didn’t know the exact time. Note Matt. 24:36.
- The bride would be beckoned from the street by a shout.
- The entire bridal party traveled to the father’s home for a marriage feast (Mat. 25:1-6).
- The Bridegroom and bride went into the bridal chamber to consummate the marriage (Judges 14:12).
- When the marriage was consummated, there was a seven day marriage celebration during which time the bride remained hidden in the bridal chamber
- At the end of the seven days, the Bridegroom brought his bride out for all to see.

The betrothal within the Jewish culture was essentially marriage, though it was not consummated. Betrothal could only be broken off by a formal “bill of divorcement.” Mary and Joseph were betrothed.

ENTER the angel Gabriel who told Mary that she *The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.* Did Mary totally comprehend?

AND, the Angel Gabriel informed Mary that Elizabeth, wife of Zacharias, Mary’s relative, had conceived a son “in her old age” – beyond child-bearing years – and having been called barren. HOW? ...*with God nothing will be impossible.* AND, we see in this

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visit between Elizabeth and Mary God’s love and care. God provided each with comfort and encouragement from the other. Esp. for Mary, the experience of being pregnant outside of wedlock was shocking.

How was it shocking when Isaiah the Prophet speaks of a virgin conceiving and bearing a son? We’re told in many passages of the OT that the Jewish people veered from the word of God: Judges 2:10; Daniel 9:4-6; Nehemiah 1:7.

Why did Mary visit Elizabeth? Mary knew that Elizabeth was experiencing a miraculous conception...of course, not as miraculous as Mary’s – but Elizabeth’s conception through relations with her husband required a miraculous work of God to remove the barrenness from Elizabeth and overcome the obstacles of age for both Zacharias and Elizabeth. Elizabeth was BEYOND child-bearing capability.

And, as soon as Mary arrived at Elizabeth’s home and Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, “the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: *Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!* (Luke 1:41–45). The Holy Spirit told Elizabeth of Mary’s condition even before Mary could say a word. Is that not significant for us to read – to know more about God the Holy Spirit’s work?

AND, we then read of Mary’s Song when she magnified the LORD (Luke 1:46-55). Mary did NOT magnify herself!

Luke 1:46-48 - *My soul magnifies the Lord,* ⁴⁷ *And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.* ⁴⁸ *For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;* Significant words for us to read from Scripture!

Matt. 1:18 - *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.* Matthew the tax collector PLAINLY announces the virginal conception. Here, in

the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew set the story straight – both then and now. Mary was *found with child of the Holy Spirit*.

Pregnancy outside of wedlock was perhaps more shocking to Joseph. Joseph knew that he was not the father which meant, in Joseph's mind, that Mary committed adultery. Since Joseph was a righteous/a just man, it was inconceivable to him that he would marry Mary who was carrying what he presumed to be another man's child. Joseph had two options – he could accuse her publicly of immorality and have her stoned (Deut. 22:20-21). Her death would have broken the marriage contract. The second option was to divorce her. Joseph did not wish to expose Mary to public disgrace/ridicule. Joseph preferred to divorce her quietly (Matt. 1:19).

While he was thinking about the course of action he would pursue, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and gave him a revelation concerning the circumstances of Mary's pregnancy.

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Matt. 1:20 - *while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.'*

Matt. 1:21 - *And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.* The phrase, "his people" must refer to the nation Israel. WHY?

God had given Israel promises in Jer. 31:31-34 that the Messiah would come to grant forgiveness of sin. The name that had been revealed to Mary was now repeated to Joseph. Jesus means God is salvation!

Matthew the tax collector called to our attention the fact that this miracle which had been announced to him had been promised to Israel in Isa. 7:14 – the great prophecy of the virgin birth. The Hebrew word for "virgin" was *almah* which means a young woman of marriageable age. In that culture, in that time, an *almah* would be pure. And, because the definite article "the" is used with virgin in Isaiah, the Prophet Isaiah, inspired by God, had one virgin in mind – Mary. He would be called Immanuel, meaning, "God with us." The One Who by His power had created the universe would come in human flesh through Mary's womb.

Joseph's response was one of implicit faith and obedience. He did not ask for confirmation. He did not ask for explanation.

Joseph accepted the fact that Isaiah's prophecy concerning the virgin birth was the true explanation of Mary's pregnancy. Joseph obeyed the command of the angel. Joseph *took Mary home as his wife* (Matt. 1:24). And, Joseph demonstrated remarkable restraint in that *he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son* (Matt. 1:25).

QUESTIONS:

How did this lesson impact you?

Any V8 moments?

Any questions?

How will the passages we read change your heart, your life?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 4's handout with the Biblical references.

Jot down observations when you read Matthew 1:18-25. Ask questions. Begin to find answers.

Share what you have learned with at least one person.

Read Week 5's handout when you receive it.

WHY IS THE ACCOUNT OF THE MAGI IN MATTHEW 2?