

Matthew Chapter 1

Matthew 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ":

This phrase is viewed by some as Matthew's title for the entire gospel.

The Greek phrase translated "book of the generation" is exactly the same phrase used in (Gen. 5:1 in the LXX).

The genealogy of Christ opens by connecting Jesus to the family line of the promised Messiah.

"Jesus" (Greek Iesous; in Hebrew Yehoshua) is His earthly name, and its meaning is, "the Lord is salvation."

Christ is the title most often linked to His name in the New Testament.

So it is technically, "Jesus the Christ."

By tracing Jesus' ancestry back to King David, through the line of Davidic kings, Matthew connects Jesus with His royal heritage.

"Son of David":

A messianic title used as such in only the synoptic gospels.

I believe here, that this generation of Jesus Christ begins with Abraham, because he is the father of all believers as we read in (Gal. 3:29).

"And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

"Son of Abraham":

Takes His royal lineage all the way back to the nation's inception in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3).

Remember, all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ make up spiritual Israel, the (spiritual), descendants of Abraham, because of their faith.

We read in the 17th chapter of Genesis that these spiritual descendants of Abraham would be so many, they will be impossible to number.

Genesis 17:5 "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."

Physical Israel is just one nation.

This is speaking of spiritual Israel (all believers in Christ).

Verse 7 of the same chapter of Genesis, it makes it clear that these are spiritual descendants.

Genesis 17:7 "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

This covenant was based on Abraham's faith and on the faith of his spiritual descendants.

Abram (high father), was changed to Abraham (father of a multitude).

Matthew 1:2 "Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;"

This genealogy starts with the three Old Testament patriarchs, whom the blessings were passed down through.

"Isaac" means laughter.

Jacob's name was changed to Israel.

"Jacob" meant trickster, and then God changed his name to "Israel", which means having power with God.

This Israel was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.

This Judas was the same as "Judah" (God be praised).

Jesus is shown as being the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

This first gospel (Matthew), shows Jesus as a Lion (which is the first of the 4 faces of the beast in Revelation).

Verses 3-8:

“Judas” is the Greek form of Judah, the father of the tribe so named.

The promise of Jacob was the leadership of the 12 tribes would come through Judah (Genesis 49:3-12).

“Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and wife of Uriah:

Four women of “questionable” qualifications appear in this genealogy in addition to Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus.

It was not customary to list the names of women in a genealogy; therefore, the inclusion of these names must be deliberate on the part of the author.

Tamar was the mother of two illegitimate sons (Pharez and Zerah) by her father-in-law, Judah.

Rahab was the converted prostitute of Jericho and the mother of Boaz.

Ruth, the wife of Boaz, was a godly foreigner (Moabitess).

The wife of Uriah is none other than Bathsheba, whose adultery with David is infamous.

However, she later became the legitimate wife of David and the mother of Solomon.

Matthew 1:3 "And Judas begat Pharez and Zera of Tamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Hezron begat Aram;"

“Judas”:

This is the Greek form of Judah, Jacob’s son, through whom it was promised that the leadership of the twelve tribes would come (Gen. 49:3-12).

“Thamar”:

It is unusual for women to be named in genealogies. Matthew names 5:

1. Thamar or Tamar was a Canaanite woman who posed as a prostitute to seduce Judah (Genesis 38:13-30).
2. “Rahab” (verse 5), was a Gentile and prostitute (Joshua 2:1).
3. “Ruth” (verse 5), was a Moabite woman (Ruth 1:3), and a worshipper of idols.
4. “Bathsheba” wife of Uriah (verse 6), committed adultery with David (2 Sam chapter 11).
5. “Mary” (verse 16), bore the stigma of pregnancy outside of wedlock. Each of these women is an object lesson about the workings of divine grace.

Matthew 1:4 "And Ram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naason; and Naason begat Salmon;"

Nahshon (Revised Version), begat Salmon.

This line of descent, from Nahshon to David, is also given by Luke (Luke 3:31, 32), and is derived from (Ruth 4:18-22).

Verses 5-6:

Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab ... Jesse was the father of David the king.

This is not an exhaustive genealogy.

Several additional generations must have elapsed between Rahab (in Joshua's time), and David (verse 6), nearly 4 centuries later.

Matthew's genealogy (like most of the biblical ones), sometimes skips over several generations between well-known characters in order to abbreviate the listing.

Matthew 1:5 "And Salmon begat Boaz of Racab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;"

We need to stop for a moment here and recognize that Jesus was descended in the flesh from Boaz (a Jewish man), and Ruth, a Moabite (a Gentile).

This actually makes Jesus both Jew and Gentile.

Rachab is Rahab the prostitute.

Matthew 1:6 "And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her [that had been the wife] of Uriah;"

"David" (the beloved of God) was in the ancestry of Jesus.

God promised David that his descendant would come and rule.

A very strange thing is that Jesus, through the flesh, was a descendant of David, but in the Spirit was David's God.

David called Him Lord.

We also see in the verse above; just how forgiving God really is.

David had Uriah killed so he (David), could have Bathsheba, Uriah's wife.

David's and Bathsheba's first child died, but God blessed them later with Solomon.

God's people are not perfect, just forgiven.

Matthew 1:7-8 "And Solomon begat Rehoboam; and Rehoboam begat Abijah; and Abijah begat Asa;" "And Asa begat Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat Jehoram; and Jehoram begat Uzziah;"

Matthew skips over Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, going directly from Jehoram to Uzziah (Ozias, a form of Uzziah).

Using a kind of genealogical shorthand, he seems to do this intentionally in order to make a symmetrical 3-fold division in verse 17.

Verses 9-10:

Uzziah is referred to as Uzziah (Isaiah 6:1), and Azariah (2 Kings 14:21).

Three generations are omitted at this point.

Matthew omits the names of Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, and then omits Jehoiakim after the name of Josiah.

The omissions are doubtless due to his arbitrary shortening of the list to give three groups of 14.

Matthew 1:9-10 "And Uzziah begat Jotham; and Jotham begat Ahaz; and Ahaz begat Hezekiah;" "And Hezekiah begat Manasseh; and Manasseh begat Amon; and Amon begat Josiah;"

These verses contain the genealogy of Jesus.

Luke also Luke 3 gives a genealogy of the Messiah.

No two passages of Scripture have caused more difficulty than these, and various attempts have been made to explain them.

Verses 11-15: Jeconiah is also called Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8), and Coniah (Jer. 22:24), and was cursed from having any descendant "upon the throne of David" according to (Jer. 22:30).

Notice that Jesus is not a natural descendant of his.

He was recognized by the Jews of the Exile as their last legitimate king.

“Carried away to Babylon” refers to the 70 years’ captivity of the Jews in Babylon during the days of Daniel the prophet.

Matthew 1:11 "And Josiah begat Jeconiah and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:"

Josiah became the father of Jeconiah.

Again, Matthew skips a generation between Josiah and Jeconiah (1 Chron. 3:14-16).

Jeconiah is also called Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:6; 2 Chron. 36:8), and sometimes Coniah (Jeremiah 22:24).

Jeconiah’s presence in the genealogy presents an interesting dilemma.

Jeconiah, called “Coniah” in (Jer. 22:24-30).

A curse on him forbade any of his descendants from the throne of David forever (Jer. 22:30).

Had Jesus been the “natural” son of Joseph, He could not have reigned on David’s throne.

However, since His natural lineage is through Mary, and His legal authority is granted through His adoptive relationship to Joseph’s line, this curse does not apply to Him.

Since Jesus was heir through Joseph to the royal line of descent, but not an actual son of Joseph and thus not a physical descendant through this line, the curse bypassed him.

Matthew 1:12 "And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zerubbabel;"

Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel (see 1 Chron. 3:17-19), where Zerubbabel is said to be the offspring of Pedaiah, Salathiel’s brother.

Elsewhere in the Old Testament, Zerubbabel is always called the son of Salathiel (e.g. Hag. 1:1; Ezra 3:2; Nehemiah 12:1).

Possibly Salathiel adopted his nephew.

Zerubbabel is the last character in Matthew’s list that appears in any of the Old Testament genealogies.

Matthew 1:13-15 "And Zerubbabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;" "And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;" "And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;"

I know that you have noticed the difference in the spelling of the names here and in the Old Testament.

Most of this is caused because of the difference in the Greek and Hebrew languages.

Matthew 1:16 "And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

“Joseph the husband of Mary”:

The wording carefully avoids giving the impression that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus.

As the husband of Mary, he was Jesus’ legal father and the one through whom He had a right to David’s throne.

Every emphasis of the text at this point reinforces the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ.

The pronoun “whom” is singular, referring to Mary alone.

The unusual way in which this final entry is phrased underscores the fact that Jesus was not Joseph’s literal offspring.

The genealogy nonetheless establishes His claim to the throne of David as Joseph’s legal heir.

Joseph was legally but not physically the father of Jesus (verses 18-25).

Though a carpenter in Nazareth (13:55), he was a legal heir of King David (verses 5:16, 20).

He was a just and God-fearing man who faithfully carried out God’s commands regarding Mary and the birth of Jesus (verses 19-25).

Joseph is mentioned in Scripture only in the Gospels and then only in relation to childhood of Jesus Christ.

The subsequent silence of Scripture suggests that Joseph had died before the time of Christ’s public ministry.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was a godly young woman (Luke 1:28), but not without sin, either original or actual sin, since she herself refers to her own need of a Savior (Luke 1:47).

She was betrothed (a Jewish custom legally equivalent to marriage), to Joseph of Nazareth.

During this time the Holy Spirit supernaturally caused her to conceive Jesus apart from any human fatherhood (verses 18, 20, 23; Luke 1:31-35), and she remained a virgin until after the birth of Jesus (verse 25).

Mary probably grew up in Nazareth.

Following her formal marriage to Joseph and awaiting the birth of Jesus, she and Joseph went to Bethlehem due to a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

Everyone had to go into their own city.

When they got to Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus, and then shortly moved into a house until they could travel.

It was there that the wise men came and visited from the east.

Soon an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, telling him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt, which they stayed there until the death of Herod.

After spending a short time in Egypt, they then returned to Nazareth. (See Matthew 13:54-56; Luke 2:51).

Except for the birth narratives, Mary is seldom mentioned in Scripture, even in the Gospels.

She is last mentioned shortly before the Day of Pentecost (in Acts 1:14).

This too is a large statement.

Jesus took on the form of flesh, so that He might be tempted in all ways as we are.

"Jesus" means Savior.

"Christ" means the Anointed One.

Matthew 1:17 "So all the generations from Abraham to David [are] fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon [are] fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ [are] fourteen generations."

"Fourteen generations":

Is the literary grouping used by Matthew to emphasize the three major periods of Israel's national history: theocracy, monarchy, hierarchy.

The significance of the number 14 is not clear, but Matthew's attention to numbers, a distinctly Hebrew characteristic, is evident throughout the gospel.

The systematic ordering may be an aid for memorization.

Note that Matthew counts Jeconiah in both the third and fourth groups, representing both the last generation before the Babylonian captivity and the first generation after.

This was the beginning of Jesus the Christ, the specially Anointed One of God.

All others who came, were leading up to the Messiah.

Matthew 1:18 "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."

“Espoused” means that Mary was already bound or betrothed to Joseph, although they were not yet actually married.

Jewish betrothal was as binding as modern marriage.

A divorce was necessary to terminate the betrothal (verse 19), and the betrothed couple were regarded legally as husband and wife (verse 19), although physical union had not yet taken place.

The custom of the day usually required an interval of one year of betrothal before the bride could actually take residence in her husband’s house and consummate their union.

During this interval “Mary was found with child”.

Her pregnancy naturally would have been assumed to be the result of an illegitimate union of adultery, a circumstance punishable by death (Deut. 22:23-24).

“With child of the Holy Ghost”:

Is the biblical explanation for the miraculous conception of Christ.

In this verse, we see that Mary was promised to Joseph.

Mary and Joseph had not slept together.

Her pregnancy was of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost's Spirit had hovered over Mary, and she had conceived.

Verses: 19-20:

Because Joseph was a “just man”, he decided to divorce Mary privately but while he considered what should be done “the angel of the Lord” spoke to him in a dream.

“The angel” is literally “an angel.”

“Put her away,” means to divorce her.

The Jewish betrothal had to be legally broken.

Joseph's merciful attitude gives an insight into his true nature as a man.

Matthew 1:19 "Then Joseph her husband, being a just [man], and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily."

"Joseph ... a just man ... was minded to put her away privily":

Stoning was the legal prescription for this sort of adultery (Deut. 22:23-24).

Joseph's righteousness meant he was also merciful; thus he did not intend to "disgrace" Mary.

The phrase "a just man" is a Hebraism suggesting that he was a true believer in God who had thereby been declared righteous, and who carefully obeyed the law (see Gen. 6:9).

To "send her away" would be to obtain a legal divorce (19:8-9; Deut. 24:1), which according to the Jewish custom was necessary in order to dissolve a betrothal.

Matthew 1:20 "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

"The angel of the Lord":

This is one of only a few such angelic visitations in the New Testament, most of which are associated with Christ's birth (for others, see 28:2; Acts 5:19; 8:26; 10:3; 12:7-10; 27:23; Rev. 1:1).

"In a dream":

As if to underscore the supernatural character of Christ's advent, Matthew's narrative of the event describes 5 such revelatory dreams: verses 20; 2:12, 13, 19, and 22.

Here the angel told Joseph he was to take Mary into his own home.

Verses 21-22:

"Call his name Jesus":

The name of the child Jesus (Hebrew Yehoshua), means "the Lord is Salvation".

Placed early in the New Testament, this statement becomes the foundational concept of the gospel.

Jesus, by His very name and nature, is the Savior.

The phrase “that it might be fulfilled” (Greek pleroo), indicates the inevitability of the fulfillment of the words of Isaiah the prophet (in Isaiah 7:14).

As well as the fact that Matthew saw the fulfillment in the birth of Christ.

This then points to the very purpose of Christ’s coming into the world, to save sinners.

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Jesus, by His very name and nature, is the Savior.

“That it might be fulfilled”:

This phrase indicates the inevitability of the fulfillment of the words of the prophet, as well as the fact that Matthew saw Isaiah’s statement as predictively fulfilled in the birth of Christ.

Matthew 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

“Jesus” (see verse 25; Luke 1:31).

The name actually means “Savior”.

You see in these Scriptures that Jesus is the Son of God.

He had no earthly father.

Joseph was not Jesus' father.

God was His Father.

Mary furnished the flesh, and God furnished the Spirit.

Even in the name that was chosen for the Son of God to use on this earth, there is a message.

All of this explanation here, of the birth of Jesus is startling to us, but can you imagine how startled, or surprised, Joseph was when an angel told him that Mary was carrying the Messiah.

His people had been looking for Messiah all of Joseph's life.

Messiah was to actually live in his home.

Matthew 1:22 "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,"

“Be fulfilled”: Matthew points out fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies no less than a dozen times (2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 26:54-56; 27:9, 35).

He quotes from the Old Testament more than 60 times, more frequently than any other New Testament writer, except Paul in Romans.

Verses 23-25:

“A virgin” relates to Mary, the mother of Jesus, to the prediction found (in Isaiah 7:14).

Matthew used the Greek word parthenos to translate the Hebrew word almah.

His contextual usage of “fulfill” is certainly indicative of his understanding the Isaiah passage to contain a definitely predictive element.

The quotation of Isaiah 7:14 follows the Septuagint (LXX), rendering where parthenos is also used to translate the Hebrew almah.

There can be no doubt that the Greek term parthenos is always to be translated “virgin.”

The Hebrew almah is the most accurate and precise term for virgin used in the Old Testament.

Therefore, Matthew is clearly correct in quoting (Isaiah 7:14), as being fulfilled in the virgin birth of Christ.

Matthew 1:23 "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

“Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us”:

This is a title describing the deity of the person of the Son of God rather than a name actually used by Him.

It implies God will come to dwell among His own people, which He did in the person of Christ.

“Virgin”:

Scholars sometimes dispute whether the Hebrew term (that we find in Isaiah 7:14), means “virgin” or “maiden”.

Matthew is quoting here from the LXX which uses the unambiguous Greek term for “virgin”.

Thus Matthew, writing under the Spirit's inspiration, ends all doubt about the meaning of the word in (Isaiah 7:14).

God took on the form of flesh and dwelt among us.

Jesus was, is, and always will be, God the Word, who became the Son housed in a body for His stay on the earth.

A virgin having a child is beyond the comprehension of worldly people even today, and many have decided that Jesus was not, in fact, born of a virgin.

How foolish it is not to believe that Jesus was, in fact, born of a virgin.

A God, so great that He could speak a world into existence, could certainly cause a virgin to have a child.

Abraham's wife, Sarah, thought it was impossible to have a child after she was 90 years old, but she did.

You see, with man it is an impossibility, but with God all things are possible.

Matthew 1:24 "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:"

When the angel told Joseph about Mary's pregnancy, he "took her as his wife", i.e. he took her into his home.

But they did not consummate their marriage until after the birth of Jesus.

Therefore, technically they were still betrothed.

Matthew 1:25 "And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."

In these verses, we see several things:

1. That God does truly speak to some people in dreams. Not all dreams are from God. When a dream is God speaking to you, there will be no doubt.
2. Joseph heeded God's message in marrying Mary.
3. Joseph's restraint from living with Mary until the Christ child was born. This took great discipline on his part.
4. His following instructions to the utmost in naming the baby JESUS as the angel had instructed him.

Matthew Chapter 1 Questions

1. Who wrote the Gospel of Matthew?
2. What is the key word in Matthew?
3. What was another name for Matthew?
4. Who do most people believe he worked for collecting taxes?
5. What did he do when Jesus called him?
6. "Gospel" means what?
7. In Matthew, we see Jesus as what?
8. What is the theme of Matthew?
9. Who is the book of generation of?
10. In Hebrew, Jeshua means what?
11. What does the name Abram mean?
12. Who were 4 women of questionable reputation in the genealogy of Jesus?
13. Who was the mother of Boaz?
14. Jewish _____ was as binding as modern marriage.
15. How did Joseph find out that Mary was carrying the Messiah?
16. What does Emmanuel mean?
17. To whom were the promises of blessings given?
18. What does Abraham mean?
19. For how long was the covenant with Abraham?
20. In Galatians 3:29, who are the spiritual descendants of Abraham?
21. Who were the three Old Testament patriarchs?
22. Ruth was a _____ woman?

23. What does David mean?
24. Even though Jesus was physically a descendent of David, what was He to David?
25. Why did Jesus take on the form of flesh?
26. What does "Jesus" mean?
27. What does "Christ" mean?
28. How many generations from Abraham to David?
29. How many generations from David to the carrying away into Babylon?
30. From carrying away into Babylon, how many generations to Christ?
31. In verses 18-25, what is the express purpose?
32. In verse 18, Mary, before she came together with Joseph, was found to be with child of whom?
33. What kind of man does verse 19 call Joseph?
34. What had Joseph planned to do with Mary before the angel appeared to him?
35. In verse 20, who appeared to Joseph?
36. How did he appear to Joseph?
37. Who did the angel call Joseph?
38. What instructions did the angel give Joseph on naming the child?
39. Why?
40. Who was Jesus' Father?
41. What did Mary furnish?
42. What causes worldly people to deny the virgin birth?
43. Why did Sarah believe she could not have a child?
44. Finish this statement. Some things are impossible with man, but with God _____.
_____.

- 45. Does God ever speak in dreams?
- 46. What was the second thing we saw in verses 24 and 25?
- 47. What was the third thing?
- 48. What was the fourth thing he heeded?