

THE CHAPTER NO ONE EVER READS!

Genealogy of Jesus Christ

Matthew 1

Introduction

- A. Daily Bible readers usually skip over most of Matthew 1.
 - 1. Too many strange names, hard to pronounce and spell, are here.
 - 2. Most do not know these men and their history.
 - 3. Most folks are unaware of riches found here.
 - 4. Many feel this is an unnecessary chapter.
- B. Matthew and Luke are the only ones to record the genealogy.
 - 1. Matthew, a Jew, writes to the Jews from a Jewish viewpoint, and records the legal line of Jesus.
 - a. Jesus was looked upon as the son of Joseph, and was part of the family of Joseph, legally recorded as such (Luke 2:1-5).
 - b. Therefore Matthew follows the line of Joseph.
 - c. Joseph's family was the family into which Jesus was born.
 - 2. Luke, a Gentile, writes to the Gentiles.
 - a. He was the beloved physician (Col. 4:14).
 - b. Therefore Luke traces the blood line, so he records the line of Mary.
 - c. He also traces all the way back to Seth and Adam, so Jesus was a son of all mankind.
- C. It is interesting to note that no first century enemies of Christ and the Church offered any objections that the genealogies contradicted one another. They lived in the age when the genealogies were first published and understood the differences.
- D. Modern critics who say Matthew and Luke contradict each other think they have found something new.
 - 1. In reality all such critical arguments were made two hundred years ago by German and French rationalists.
 - 2. You can read all these same objections in works of earlier atheists and skeptics.
 - 3. You can also read the answers to all these scurrilous arguments!

I Matthew 1 Is A Record of Fulfilled Prophecy.

- A. Jesus was to be of the lineage of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3).
 - 1. This was repeatedly given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 22:18; 26:4; 28:14).
 - 2. It was narrowed down to Judah (Genesis 49:10).
 - 3. Later the promise was more specific to Jesse's family (Isaiah 11:1).
 - 4. Verses 1 and 2 of our text verify this lineage.
 - 5. How many Jews would have been baptized on Pentecost, accepted Jesus as the Christ, if they had not known him to be of the physical

descent of Abraham? (likely none!)

6. His descent from Abraham was crucial.

B. Jesus was to be of the family of David (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

1. God made a solemn promise to David (1 Chronicles 17:11-15) that one of his sons would be on the throne.

2. This was well-known in Israel (Psalms 132:10-12).

3. Peter preached this very thing (Acts 2:29-36).

4. How many Jews would have accepted Jesus as the Christ if he had not been known to descend from David? (again, likely none!)

5. If this prophecy had not been fulfilled in the first century, it could never be proven as fulfilled later!

a. All Hebrew genealogical records were destroyed in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (See McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Religious and Theological Knowledge, Vol. III, p. 771, article entitled "Genealogy.")

b. The Jews were unable to keep family records for hundreds of years, therefore a gap that cannot be crossed ensued in their history.

c. No Jewish persons since that time have been able to trace the tribe to which they belong.

d. If Jesus as Messiah had not come in the first century, there would be no way to prove him to be of the tribe of Judah, nor the family of David.

6. Shiloh must have come (Genesis 49:10)!

C. The Messiah was to be born of the virgin (Isaiah 7:14).

1. Matthew tenderly protects this in his record (vv. 18ff.).

2. There are unusual statements used by Matthew.

a. He used "begat" 39 times but quit in v. 16, refusing to use the term in describing Jesus' relationship to Joseph!

b. He used a prepositional phrase, "of whom," in v. 16 to describe the relation to Mary.

(1) "Whom" is a relative pronoun and has an antecedent.

(2) The nearest noun, proper name, or other pronoun previous in the sentence to which "whom" could refer is "Mary."

(3) Therefore Matthew uses "whom" to refer only to Mary; Joseph had nothing to do with the generation of this child Jesus.

(4) After all, who else in this immediate context could give birth?

c. "Whom" in the original language, Greek, is the feminine pronoun "a(hj)." (pronounced "haas")

(1) There is only one woman in that verse or the nearby previous ones to whom this could refer.

(2) Matthew could only be referring to Mary.

(3) She is the only blood-kin of the child!

d. Matthew records also that an angel told Joseph that Mary would

"bring forth a son," but an angel named Gabriel told Zacharias that Elizabeth would "bear thee a son" (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:13).

(1) There is a vast difference between "bring forth a son" and "bear thee a son."

(2) The angel was telling Zacharias he would be a daddy.

(3) The angel was telling Joseph he would not be the daddy of this child, but not to worry, for it was an event planned of God.

(4) If the birth of a virgin were not important why this difference and precision of language?

e. Isaiah used a Hebrew word "ALMAH" to predict a virgin birth, but Matthew uses a more precise word in the Greek language, "PARTHENOS" (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23).

(1) "ALMAH" can be used in the O.T. to refer to married and unmarried ladies, even mothers.

(2) "PARTHENOS" can only be used of a young woman with no sexual experience.

(3) Whatever Isaiah meant to say to King Ahaz, we know what he predicted would happen over 700 years later, for Matthew tells us what Isaiah meant!

(4) Matthew gives us an "inspired commentary" on the prediction of Isaiah: the Messiah was to be born of a virgin.

(5) Jesus' birth therefore fulfills the prediction of Isaiah.

3. Matthew is much more accurate and precise than a casual reader of the chapter might notice.

II Matthew 1 Is an Unusual Record of Women!

A. Jewish genealogies never recorded the names of the women.

B. Yet there are five women mentioned in this record, four of them are named: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, wife of Uriah (Bathsheba), and Mary (vv. 3, 5, 6, 16).

C. The O. T. culture did not treat women very well.

1. They could be bought and sold.

2. They were chattels in polygamous marriages.

3. They were not given the right of divorce.

4. They were really not treated as per the original design of the Garden of Eden.

D. Matthew breaks all tradition and culture and mentions these in the genealogy of Jesus.

E. We may not know the exact reason for this, but perhaps it is because Jesus particularly identifies with women and their original place in creation.

1. Jesus put women back on the pedestal of love and honor where they deserve to be.

2. There is no distinction in Christ (Galatians 3:28-29).

F. After all, where would we be today without the grace, beauty, virtues, femininity, etc. that women bring to our families, our schools, our

communities, our jobs, and our churches?

G. Matthew's unusual mentioning of these women might be highly indicative.

III Matthew 1 Is An Astounding Mention of Gentiles!

A. One must be reminded of the intense prejudice, even hatred between Jew and Gentile in Matthew's day.

B. Yet Matthew mentions at least two Gentiles in the blood line of Jesus: Rahab and Ruth.

C. Matthew records for eternity that Gentile blood, mixed racial blood, flowed through the veins of our Lord.

D. This would have been despicable to the mind of the average Jewish religious leader, yet Matthew records it.

E. Who would dare tell a Jew of that day that his King of Kings, the expected Messiah, would be of mixed blood?

F. Again, it may be that Jesus peculiarly identifies with Gentiles for he came for all mankind (Matthew 28:18; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Titus 2:11).

G. There is no racial distinction in Christ (Galatians 3:28).

H. Matthew again does something in his genealogy that other Jewish writers would never dare to do.

IV Matthew 1 Is A Peculiar Record of Mentioning Sinners.

A. Take the women mentioned, for example.

1. Mary and Ruth surely are known as virtuous.

2. Look further to Tamar, Rahab and Bathsheba.

B. Rahab is mentioned as a "harlot," (Joshua 2:1) and there is no reason to argue this does not refer to immorality.

C. Bathsheba's sin with David is well noted (2 Samuel 11).

1. David repented and it may be assumed safely that she was involved in repentance also.

2. She is not noted, however, as an example of virtue.

3. Most Jewish writers would have been too embarrassed to use this woman.

4. Matthew does not even mention her name; could it be that the later Jewish historians still showed reticence?

E. Tamar's story (Genesis 38) is even more degrading: she seduced her own father-in-law!

1. She lost her husband without bearing children and she appealed to the Levirate law to be given to a near kinsman.

2. Judah promised to do so, but he evidently forgot her.

3. She disguised herself and became pregnant by Judah. (It should be remembered that Tamar was dressed to signify she was a widow, but she changed her clothing and made a different statement that she was available for sexual immorality! - v. 14)

4. Why would Matthew include such a woman, mentioned by name, in his list of genealogy?

F. It should be noted also that nearly every other king listed after David was a gross

sinner, even idolaters.

1. Rehoboam (bad king) begat Abijah (good king).
2. Abijah (good) begat Asa (bad king).
3. Asa (bad) begat Jehoshaphat (good king).
4. Jehoshaphat (good) begat Joram (bad king), etc.

G. Who today does not have heinous sinners in their background, sometimes even a very near background?

H. One outstanding peculiarity: Why did not Matthew mention the wonderful worthy ladies of old, such as Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Rachel, etc. instead of these sinful women?

I. Again it may be because Jesus peculiarly identifies with sinners.

1. He received sinners (Luke 15:2).
2. He came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).
3. He was to save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).
4. He was gentle with sinners (John 8:11).

Conclusion

A. Too many skip across Matthew 1 because of the difficulty of reading.

B. Some may even think this chapter is superfluous.

C. Not one word of entire Bible is unnecessary.

D. There are riches unrealized in this little chapter.

E. If one does not read carefully and accurately, one will miss so much of the riches of truth.

F. Please do not skip over Matthew 1.

G. Great lessons are here in a seemingly boring and tiresome list of names.

H. Jesus fulfills all predictions about the Messiah.

I. His genealogy reveals him to be the son of Abraham and David; his birth of the virgin reveals him to be the Son of God.

J. You cannot be neutral toward him (Matthew 12:30).

K. Matthew challenges all the people in the world who have lived since the birth of Jesus the Christ by his record in Matthew 1.

L. Read it carefully; there is no other answer than Jesus is the Christ!

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