

The Genealogy of the Messiah

Matthew 1:1-17

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Matthew's genealogy is proof of Jesus' right to permanently sit on the royal throne of David.

Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:7)

I. Jesus' name and title identify His unique mission as the "second Adam" who is to rescue mankind from the fall. (v. 1)

This is the account [generations of] of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens (Genesis 2:4)

This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. (Genesis 5:1)

So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. (1 Corinthians 15:45-49)

a. Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua meaning Yahweh saves.

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." (Luke 1:31-33)

b. The Christ is the Greek form of Messiah meaning anointed One.

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor. (Isaiah 61:1-3)

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

II. God inspires Matthew to break this genealogy into three sets of fourteen names. (v. 17)

- a. In Hebrew numerology, David's name adds up to fourteen.**
- b. To accomplish this, Matthew leaves some ancestors in the lineage unmentioned.**
- c. The three sets of names correspond to three eras in salvation history:**
 - 1. The Davidic throne is established under the Abrahamic Covenant. (v. 2-6a)**
 - 2. The Davidic throne is cast down and exiled under the Davidic Covenant. (v. 6b-11)**
 - 3. The Davidic throne is confirmed in the coming of the Messiah under the New Covenant. (v. 12-17)**

III. The genealogy of the Messiah contains many unlikely individuals.

- a. Tamar posed as a prostitute and seduced her father-in-law. (Genesis 38)**
- b. Rahab was a gentile prostitute who sheltered the Israelite spies as they scouted the Promised Land. (Joshua 2 & 6)**

In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? (James 2:25)

- c. Ruth was a Moabite who had worshiped their gods (although she became a worshiper of Yahweh).**

So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. The women said to Naomi: “Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.”

Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. The women living there said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. (Ruth 4:13-17)

- d. Bathsheba was married to a Hittite named Uriah and committed adultery with King David. (1 Samuel 11 & 12)**
- e. Many of the men listed were flawed and/or sinful as well.**

IV. God placed a curse on king Jeconiah (Jahoiachin) that should have kept any of his offspring from possessing David’s throne. (v. 11-12)

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother’s name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan; she was from Jerusalem. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father had done. (2 Kings 24:8-9)

“As surely as I live,” declares the Lord, “even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. I will deliver you into the hands of those who want to kill you, those you fear—Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Babylonians. I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die. You will never come back to the land you long to return to.”

Is this man Jehoiachin a despised, broken pot,
an object no one wants?
Why will he and his children be hurled out,
cast into a land they do not know?
O land, land, land,
hear the word of the Lord!
This is what the Lord says:
“Record this man as if childless,
a man who will not prosper in his lifetime,
for none of his offspring will prosper,
none will sit on the throne of David
or rule anymore in Judah.” (Jeremiah 22:24-30)

a. This is the most likely explanation for the differences between Matthew and Luke’s genealogies. (Luke 3:23-38)

1. Matthew covers the royal line.
2. Luke covers the blood line (possibly through Mary).

V. Remarkably, God inspires Matthew to conclude the list that leads to Joseph by explicitly denying his parentage. (v. 16)