

Jesus The Messiah

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- [0 : 00] Matthew's Gospel, the first gospel in the New Testament. Of course, we shouldn't divide our Bibles up, but yet, anyway, Matthew chapter 1.
- Matthew chapter 1, starting at verse 1.
- So please follow along with me for the reading. This is the genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
- Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac, the father of Jacob. Jacob, the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah, the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar.
- Perez, the father of Hezron. Hezron, the father of Ram. Ram, the father of Aminadab. Aminadab, the father of Nashon. Nashon, the father of Salmon.
- [1 : 23] Salmon, the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab. Boaz, the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed, the father of Jesse. And Jesse, the father of King David.
- David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife. Solomon, the father of Rehoboam. And Rehoboam, the father of Abijah.
- Abijah, the father of Asa. Asa, the father of Jehoshaphat. And Jehoshaphat, the father of Jehoram. Jehoram, the father of Uzziah. And Uzziah, the father of Jotham.
- Jotham, the father of Ahaz. Ahaz, the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah, the father of Manasseh. Manasseh, the father of Amon. Amon, the father of Josiah.
- And Josiah, the father of Jeconiah. And his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon. After the exile to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel.
- [2 : 26] Shealtiel, the father of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel, the father of Abinuhd. Abinuhd, the father of Eliakim. Eliakim, the father of Azor.
- Azor, the father of Zadok. Zadok, the father of Achem. Achem, the father of Elihud. Elihud, the father of Eleazar. Eleazar, the father of Matan.
- Matan, the father of Jacob. And Jacob, the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. And Mary was the mother of Jesus, who is called the Messiah. Thus there were 14 generations in all, from Abraham to David.
- 14 from David to the exile to Babylon. And 14 from the exile to the Messiah. Let's pray. Father, thank you for your word.
- Thank you for prophets like Isaiah that we read from earlier, written hundreds of years ago, to tell us the truth of one to come.
- [3 : 40] Thank you for Matthew's gospel, written to show us who that is. Father, we pray that as we look at Jesus, the Messiah, you would give us fresh eyes and fresh hearts to see who Jesus is.
- That we may wonder in amazement and worship him with all of our lives. We ask for your Holy Spirit to help us.
- In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. So who is Jesus?

How would you answer that question? If somebody came to you and said, who is Jesus? What would you say? Well, Matthew answers that question by starting with a great long list of names.

Most of them we've never heard of. And because we can't even pronounce them, as you discovered as I read through some of them, no matter how much I practice, I still messed up.

[4 : 56] What are all these names about? We look at them and we think, not very interesting. Let's move on to verse 18. This is how the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, came about.

But if we believe that God's word is written for our good, then there must be good reason for Matthew writing all of these names at the beginning of his gospel.

So this morning we want to take a fresh look by looking at all of these names to discover who Jesus is.

Four things we're going to look at together. First, Jesus is true. Matthew begins his gospel like this, verse 1.

This is the genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Recently I was filling in some forms and they were asking for proof of identity that Johnny Grant actually exists.

[6 : 06] And the proof that they were after was my birth certificate. And if you open up my birth certificate, printed on the page in one section, says Michael David Grant, father of Jonathan Mark Grant.

It was evidence that I was a real person, not a made-up person, like my family think I am sometimes. I'm actually real and alive. Well, here at the beginning of Matthew's gospel is the proof, the evidence.

It's a historical record of the family line of Jesus. And with great detail, Matthew traces Jesus all the way back to Abraham.

So verse 17, he says there were 14 generations in all from Abraham to David, 14 from David to the exile to Babylon, and 14 from the exile to the Messiah.

That's 42 generations of historical fact. Hundreds upon hundreds of years. Well, you say, Matthew could write anything.

[7 : 18] Anybody could just write a list of names. He might have made all of this up. Well, recently, I discovered just this week that the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin have put online, so you can go and check it out for yourself.

It's quite fascinating. They've put online their collection of ancient manuscripts of Jesus Christ. And they have some of the earliest surviving manuscripts that are available to us.

Gospels like Matthew, written within a hundred years of Jesus' life. And what's important is there are actually no first century documents that ever say Jesus did not exist.

Of all similar documents written at the same time, not one of them say Jesus did not exist. All the early records say he existed.

No one disputes it. And that's what Matthew wants us to know. Right at the very start of his Gospel. He starts with a genealogy.

[8 : 28] Here is a true record. This is the true account, the evidence, proof that Jesus is a real person. He is not made up.

But Jesus is more than just a person. Second, Jesus is God. Look at how Matthew starts. Verse 2.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers and so on as we read one after the other. The father of, the father of, the father of.

Pick it up in verse 15. Elihood the father of Eleazar. Eleazar the father of Matan. Matan the father of Jacob. And Jacob the father of Joseph.

And Joseph the father of Jesus. Is that what it says? It's what we think it should say. But it doesn't.

[9 : 30] Suddenly, but yet quite naturally without any kind of awkwardness or any kind of like, oh now let me tell you this. It's all quite natural.

Matthew highlights the divinity of Jesus. The God nature of Jesus. Look at what it says in verse 16. And Jacob the father of Joseph.

Joseph the husband of Mary. And Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah. He wants us to know that Jesus is not the biological father of Jesus.

Mary is the biological mother of Jesus because she became pregnant supernaturally. Matthew will tell us a bit further on in verse 18. Have a look there.

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph. But before they came together, before they were married, before there was a sexual union, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

[10 : 41] Now we've got to be clear, it wasn't a supernatural birth. Mary went through the same physical pain of having her child as every other mother would.

Probably more. She didn't have gas and air and she didn't have an epidural. But it was a supernatural conception. And Matthew's point in bringing us to this is to show us that Jesus is none other than God in human form.

Jesus is the God-man. He tells us that. Alex actually referred to it in the prophecy of Isaiah. But here we have it in Matthew 1, verse 23.

Quoting from Isaiah 7. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, which means God with us.

So in one sense, Jesus has a very human account. We can trace his family line all the way back to Abraham. He's a real person, a historical figure.

[11 : 50] But yet the supernatural conception shows us that Jesus is God come to the world. Now no other person can claim this.

Jesus is utterly and completely unique. As the Christmas carol puts it as we sing, Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity, pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

Jesus is true. He's real. He's a person. But he's much more than that. Jesus is God in human flesh. So, Jesus is true.

Jesus is God. Jesus is the Messiah. Now we're going to spend a little bit longer looking at this. He wants us, Matthew wants us to know who Jesus is.

So verse 1, this is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. Now what does it mean Jesus is the Messiah? We hear that word a lot at this time of year.

[13 : 01] Well, I expect you probably have a little note at the bottom of your Bible. You might have a little letter beside Messiah and then down at the very bottom of the page you've probably got a little note where it tells us that Messiah, Messiah is simply a Hebrew word and the Greek corresponding word is Christ.

So Hebrew was, the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the New Testament written in Greek. Greek and they both mean anointed one. It's simply, Messiah is simply a title.

Sometimes we see in the New Testament Jesus Christ. It means Jesus the Messiah, the anointed one. But more specifically, Messiah is a king who is chosen, specially chosen by God, set apart by God, for God.

and all the way through the Old Testament, God had promised that a king would come chosen by God to bring salvation.

And Matthew is claiming at the beginning of his gospel that Jesus is the Messiah. Messiah, if you like, with a capital M, the ultimate and final Messiah.

[14 : 20] Messiah. And to help us grasp this, Matthew orders his genealogy very carefully. So he tells us in verse 17, there were 14 generations from Abraham to David, 14 from David to the exile to Babylon, and 14 from exile to the Messiah.

He divides it up intentionally, and the beginning of each section, Abraham, David, and the exile are all significant.

So let's have a look at them in turn to help us understand who Jesus is as the Messiah. So first, we have Abraham in verse 2.

Abraham was the father of Isaac and Isaac the father of Jacob. Now why Abraham? Well, remember God's promise to Abraham. We're going to do a bit of flicking back and forth here, so keep your finger in Matthew chapter 1 and go back to Genesis chapter 12.

So Genesis chapter 12, God's promise here he was called Abraham, later changed to Abraham. So let's read verse 1, chapter 12.

[15 : 53] The Lord had said to Abraham, go from your country, your people, and your house, father's household, to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you.

I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

It's hard to miss it, isn't it? God is going to bless. It's the opposite of the curse. Instead of death and disorder, there will be joy and beauty and that blessing is going to come, have a look at verse 3 again, to all peoples or to all the nations on the earth and all the nations, all the people on the earth will be blessed through you.

God is promising that he is going to raise up someone, one specific person from the family of Abraham who is going to reverse the curse and bring blessing to the nations.

So when we are back in Matthew chapter 1, we see that Matthew starts his genealogy of Jesus with Abraham to show us, to trace all the way back, to show us that Jesus is the promised one from Abraham's family line who is going to bring the blessing to reverse the curse.

[17 : 27] Jesus. And then we have in the next section David. David, the king. We have been learning about him from one king.

So let's pick it up at the beginning of verse 6, Matthew chapter 1. And Jesse, the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon.

Well, why has he included David? Well, God also promised something to David. Remember what God had said to David. Have a look back in 2 Samuel chapter 7.

It's on page 310. 2 Samuel chapter 7, which is on page 310. So we're building a picture here to understand what it means that Jesus is the Messiah.

He's the promised one to bring blessing from Abraham's family line. And now we have something God said to David.

[18 : 36] 2 Samuel chapter 7 verse 12. God's speaking to David. He says, when your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, in other words, when you die, I will raise up from your offspring to succeed you your own flesh and blood and I will establish his kingdom.

Verse 16. Your house, your family and your kingdom shall endure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.

God is promising to David he is going to raise up a king from the line of David but an eternal king. Now this isn't different to the promise to Abraham.

It's a continuation and an extension of the promise to Abraham. From the line of King David will come a king and that king is going to bring blessing to all the nations.

a king will come who is going to reverse the curse and bring blessing. So as Matthew continues his genealogy of Jesus from Abraham down to David he does so to show us that Jesus is this promised king to bring blessing.

[20 : 00] The third division is the exile. Have a look at Matthew chapter 1 verse 11 we have Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

After the exile to Babylon Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel. Now it might seem strange Matthew doesn't use a name here.

He had Abraham he had David why didn't he use another name? Instead Matthew has chosen to use an event. He says after the exile.

Now the exile was a major event in the history of God's people Israel. Because the people had disobeyed God and failed God they were whipped off into exile by the Babylonians.

And for those who were put in exile it seemed like everything was over. It had all finished. The promises that God had made in the past of a king who was going to come and bring blessing was all over.

[21 : 08] It was finished. Any chance of things being put right was all gone because they were now in exile. Everything had been destroyed. But God spoke into that situation to the people when they were in exile with a promise.

Not a new promise but a reminder of the same promises he'd been making all the way along. A continuation of the very first promise.

Let's see what God spoke to those people. Have a look back at Jeremiah chapter 29 which is on page 790.

Jeremiah 29 and verse 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10. 10.

10. 11. 10. 11. 10. 11. 11. 11. 10. 20.

[22 : 14] 10. 20. 20.

11. 21. the Lord says, verse 10, when 70 years are completed for Babylon, after 70 years of being in exile, God says, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place.

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me and when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and will bring you back from captivity. Literally, I am going to restore you. I will gather you from all the nations and the places where I have banished you, declares the Lord, and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.

What a promise! God will keep his promise to raise up a king to bring blessing of restoration and of hope. And the plans, verse 11, the plans God has for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, are not just good things happening in your life and wealth and money and pleasure and all these sorts of things. The plans to prosper you is a person. The person of Jesus, the King, the Messiah. So Matthew carefully orders his genealogy to show us that Jesus is the Messiah.

Jesus is the promised one from the line of Abraham. Jesus is the King who's come to bless. Jesus is the one to restore us from exile. Because in a sense, we are all in exile from God because of our sin.

[24 : 25] And Jesus is the Messiah come to restore us. The chosen one set apart by God to bring salvation. So Matthew works his way through his genealogy. And he shows us he's from Abraham, David, from the exile to the Messiah, Jesus himself. So in summary, with all of this, we could say Jesus is the Messiah to bring about a new beginning, a fresh start. Look again at how Matthew starts his genealogy, verse 1.

This is the genealogy of Jesus. Literally, it says, this is the book of genealogy. This is the book of genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah.

Now Matthew chooses his words very carefully. Because there are only two other times we actually get this introduction in the whole Bible, and they both come in Genesis. I want us to see a connection here.

Go back to Genesis chapter 2, at the beginning of your Bible. So keep in mind how Matthew is introducing it. This is the book of genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah.

And then we go to Genesis 2. So chapter 1 of Genesis is all about God's creation, and how God began everything, how everything was good and beautiful.

[26 : 02] And then we read in chapter 2, verse 4, this is the account of the heavens and the earth. Now I'm not a Hebrew scholar. I trust the experts on this.

But they tell us that it is exactly the same as how Matthew starts his gospel. This is the book of the genealogy of the heavens and the earth. You might be saying, well, what's so interesting about that?

Well, Matthew picks up the same phrase and applies it to Jesus. Just as there was a genealogy, just as there was a beginning to the heavens and the earth, the creation, Jesus, the Messiah, is the one who's going to come and bring about a new creation.

Jesus is the Messiah, God's King, who's going to bring blessing and restoration. He's going to reverse the curse. He's going to make everything new.

He's going to bring a fresh start to all those who have been broken by sin. Just as God spoke into creation and brought everything new and beautiful, so God has brought his Son into the world to bring about a new beginning, a fresh start.

[27 : 21] So can we see what Matthew is introducing us to? Jesus is true. But he's not just a person. He is God.

The promised Messiah come to put everything right and make everything new. Which means that Jesus is our Saviour, which is good news for everyone.

Early genealogies that we have, looking at Matthew chapter 1, were written not only to identify a person, but it was also written to highlight your status or your pedigree.

So if you could find somebody important in your family line, well, then it gave you extra clout and kudos. You know, people looked up to you. If you could find royalty in your line, well, you are somebody great.

In fact, historians tell us that Herod the Great, king at the time of Jesus, actually changed his genealogy. He took all the bad names out, all the people he didn't like, who had bad character, to make sure he just had a nice family line.

[28 : 40] The kind of people you don't want in your family, he removed. He cut them out. Now look at the genealogy of Jesus. We've got some really important names.

We've looked at them. Abraham and David. But look who else turns up in this big long list of names. Look at verse 3. Judah, the father of Perez, and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar.

Matthew includes a whole load of mothers, women. So we have Tamar. And then verse 5. We have Salmon, the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab.

And Boaz, the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. And then in verse 6, we have Jesse, the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife.

Do you remember Uriah's wife was Bathsheba? So we've got Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Uriah's wife. Not only are they all women, which was completely unheard of.

[29 : 52] You didn't find women written in genealogies. They were considered unimportant back then. But each one of them is written in, specifically and intentionally, because each one is a story of brokenness and sin.

Tamar, that we read about in verse 3, was she was the daughter-in-law of Judah. And if we read the account in Genesis, it tells us that Tamar tricked her father-in-law into sleeping with her by dressing up as a prostitute.

The whole family was about deceiving and deception and lies. Their whole family was an utter mess. And then we read about Rahab in verse 5.

Rahab, do you remember her? She was the one who let the spies in when they went to explore the land. But she was a prostitute. Now there's nothing glamorous about that.

In those times, as is mostly the case today, it wasn't by choice. It was something done as a last resort. You lived your life in danger, used and abused.

[31 : 06] You tried to trick people. You were responsible for breaking up families. And yet Rahab is here. Ruth, verse 5, where she was a foreigner and an outsider.

People who came from her country, the country of Moab, were despised. They were the enemy. You kicked people like that out. And then in verse 6, we have Uriah's wife.

We know her as Bathsheba. In verse 6. She was involved in one of the greatest scandals in the whole Bible. We know the story, don't we? David used his power as king and her vulnerability and went off and had an affair with her.

And everything was all fine. It was all nice and secretive until she became pregnant. Now what was he going to do? Well, David arranged to have her husband knocked off in battle.

Get him out the way. Kings could do that, you know. So in this story of Jesus' family line, we have incest. We have outsiders.

[32 : 18] We have prostitutes. We have adultery. We have murder. They're all sinful, broken people. They're the kind of people who you kind of don't want in your family history.

You don't like to talk about it. You don't mention it. You get a big black pen and you cover over their names. You don't want their shame hanging over you.

Well, we might write them off. But God writes them in. They're all included into the family of Jesus.

You see, Jesus is good news. Can you see what Matthew is telling us about Jesus? Jesus is true.

Jesus is God. The promised King to bring the blessing of restoration, to make everything new. I'm the Messiah who's come to bring a new beginning, a fresh start in the lives of those broken by sin.

[33 : 25] You see, sin exiles us from God. But God has promised us through Jesus to bring us back. Jesus came for us to die for us, to take the blame for our past and to restore us to Himself.

Jesus came not to exclude people, but He came to welcome people into His family. There is no person that is so far outside of God, their past so broken and so messy that He cannot bring them in.

No matter what your gender identity, no matter what your nationality or your culture, no matter what your life's experience, no matter what your past is, no matter your private and secret sins that weigh you down and keep you awake at night, Jesus welcomes you.

And it's the same today. Jesus the Messiah has come to give people like us a new beginning, to be a new creation.

When we repent of our sin, when we entrust our life to Jesus, we receive a new beginning. The past, all of it, is covered over.

[34 : 46] The shame is removed. We are given a new record. Our names are now written in bold into the family line of Jesus. We belong to Him.

And here's even greater news. Even when we sin now. Even as people who may belong to Jesus and part of His family.

Even when we mess up today, tomorrow, our names remain in His family. It's like they have been written down with permanent ink.

No sin, no doubt, no failure can rub our names out of God's family. As we sometimes sing, my name is graven on His hands.

My name is written on His heart. I know that while in heaven He stands, no tongue can bid me thence depart.

[35 : 47] Nobody can tell me I'm out. Nothing. Not even my sin. No one. Not even Satan himself. Not even death can take you out of God's family.

Why? Because Jesus is the Messiah. God's promised King who has come to bring the blessing of restoration to people like us.

To give us a new beginning, a fresh start, a new creation to live life for Him in the new world. world. As we said earlier, one day we will see our brother Jesus face to face in the eternal kingdom.

kingdom. We will be with Him. We will talk to His Father and the nations that have come to Jesus from all history and all time and all places.

Those who have trusted in Jesus the Messiah will be with Him, His eternal family, forever and forever in His eternal kingdom.

[37 : 06] So who is Jesus? Well, let's not ignore these wonderful names that God has put intentionally and deliberately at the start of Matthew's Gospel to tell us that Jesus is true, a real person, not made up.

He's God, the Messiah. He is good news for people like us. Good news for the world.

Good news to tell people about Jesus. Let's pray. Good news to tell people that God can zob on through.

Good news.