

Lineage of Jesus

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[0:00] Matthew 1, verses 18-25. I'm going to be walking through the passage in the sermon, and so I'm going to hold off on reading it. We'll go through it together as I preach through it.

But you can see the title on the back of your bulletin. The title is The Birth of Our King. And the more I've thought about it, the title probably would be more accurate if it was The Naming of Our King.

And so what we see in Matthew 1, verses 18-25, it culminates in the naming of this little baby, born of a virgin, naming Him Jesus.

Now, as soon as you hear the word birth, though, you might go kind of in a genetic direction. We have great genetic variety among us. I mean, just look at each other's earlobes.

Can you roll your R? Can you do the little squishy thing with your tongue? You know, the clove thing?

[1:06] Some of us can, some of us can't. Skin, color, ethnicity, there is great genetic variation among us, is there not? There is. It's glorious. God wants to call to Himself from every tribe and nation and ethnicity of people for Himself.

Well, let me ask you this. What was the genetic code of Jesus? What were His genes? Well, according to Matthew 1, actually 16, we know whose genes He didn't have.

He had none of Joseph's genes. Look at 1.16, would you? And Jacob, the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, Matthew's very clear in saying He was not the genetic father of this Jesus.

If Joseph, if His genes weren't in Jesus, and it was through Joseph that would come the great title of a son of David, how is it that Jesus can claim that title?

If He has no genetics to David, at least on Joseph's side, some will make an argument that He did from Mary's side, but that's not Matthew's point.

[2:37] How can we be confident that Jesus is actually a son of David and therefore claim a right to the throne? That's what Matthew is getting at in this passage.

If Jesus didn't have any Joseph's genes, He didn't have any David's genes. Think about it as gene number 14, the number of David. How can He be a descendant of David?

So in 1.16, we're kind of left with that question. Okay, how does that work? If Jesus isn't physically related to Joseph, how can He be a son of David? And that's what Matthew answers here in this wonderful passage.

We're going to see how that works out. Who is this baby? Who is this baby born of a virgin? And how is He related to Joseph?

And how can He make a claim to be David's greater son? Well, this morning what I want to do is walk through the passage, give you some color on it, help you see some things, and then we're going to land by making a point, and then we're going to apply it in four ways.

[3:46] Four B's. B-E. Four B's. We'll get there in a little bit. But first, let's just jump right in. The birth of Jesus Christ.

Verse 18. Now, the birth of Jesus Christ took place this way. And so what Matthew is doing is going, okay, here's how it worked out. Now, if you are a fan of Luke's gospel, you may be a little disappointed.

Because Matthew doesn't get into the details. He doesn't talk to us about shepherds. He doesn't talk to us about mangers. He doesn't talk to us about swaddling clothes.

He doesn't go that direction. That's Luke, the good doctor who loves details. No. Matthew's going after something else.

And we learn very quickly that this birth of Jesus Christ was surrounded by controversy. The thing about us and who are very familiar with this story is we can be too familiar to it.

[4:49] There's something going on here that is very controversial. And we see it showing up in that start of the second sentence in verse 18. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

Controversy! Let me give you a little kind of background. When we think about engagement here in our culture, we think about it a certain way. You don't have to go to get an attorney and go down to a judge in order to get engaged.

It doesn't work that way. It's rather informal. And so if you get engaged to someone, you can break the engagement without having to go any kind of legal kind of direction. Not so in the first century. Not so for the Jew. What would happen? Betrothal was actually a legal event. And so getting married involved getting betrothed, which was the committing of one man to one woman.

And after they were betrothed, they could talk about each other as husband and wife, believe it or not. But they didn't come together until another year later. And that's why we see here in verse 18 when his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph before they came together, before they consummated their marriage, which would take a year after the betrothal.

[6:11] And so that whole year, the daughter, the wife, would be living with her father in her father's house. And so it's very different from our situation today, isn't it? And so we've got to remember there's something else kind of going on here.

And so what's shaken out is this. Mary was found to be pregnant after they were betrothed and before they came together.

Do you get what's going on? Very controversial. So here's this legally binding situation.

And by the way, if you read Deuteronomy 22, 13 through 24, there are some real consequences for one who's betrothed and is shown to be unfaithful.

Really serious. And so in verse 18, the controversy starts to swirl. She was found to be with a child, Mary.

[7:17] And we're not told how this conception takes place, only it's by the Holy Spirit. That's very significant. The third person of the Trinity has already shown up.

One other thing to note before we move on. Joseph must not have known about the angel Gabriel going to Mary.

I don't know how it works out. I don't know why he didn't know. But it's clear that Joseph is finding out about this after she is showing, after she is obviously pregnant.

And so there's a kind of like news to Joseph going on here. And so if you look at now, verse 19, we've seen the controversy. Now it moves to a quiet divorce.

Look at verse 19. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. Again, the divorce language is being used.

[8:20] It's kind of foreign to our ears when we talk about engagement. But back in the day, it was the legal way of undoing a betrothal. And so it had legal force to it.

And so that's the divorce language going on here. But what you need to see is that word just. And her husband Joseph, being a just man, a just man, we can move very quickly to thinking about how merciful Joseph was, how compassionate he was, how he dealt with this very controversial situation.

We can move too quick. Do you know what that word just is getting at? Joseph was looking to be faithful to God's word. Joseph was looking to be faithful to Deuteronomy 22.

Joseph was looking to walk according to God's word. And then deal mercifully and compassionately with the implications of that. Here his betrothed was shown to be pregnant.

And so now he has biblical precedent in order to divorce her. He's just, he's seeking to do the right thing.

[9:39] And you know what? Don't you just kind of wish like there was a little bit more detail here? We're not told about Joseph's wrestling with this.

Did he have sleepless nights? Was he feeling betrayed? How confused was he? Who did he talk to? How did he wrestle through it?

We're not told any of that. How much did he lose? Did he lose any? How did he reach the decision? Well, we know at least he was wrestling with God's word.

What we see here in Joseph is a man who is seeking to do the right thing the right way. And so when he eventually read there that he looked, he didn't want to shame her.

And so he wanted to divorce her quietly. Here we have a man who's wanting to have a clear conscience in God's word and yet being compassionate. He's looking to do the right thing.

[10:39] And in that, we learn something about this man. He's committed to obeying God's word and yet he's also going to do it with a heart of compassion.

Can you begin to see why God would choose this man to be the earthly father of Jesus? This is a godly man.

So there's controversy. There's a quiet divorce. And then we start to see in verse 20 an angelic caller.

But as he considered these things is what the ESV reads. The NIV is probably more accurate. It says, but after he had considered these things, it's past tense, which means he had already decided.

So in verse 20, but he already decided to divorce her. He had already made the decision. And so Joseph has already drawn the conclusion.

[11:48] Alright, okay, okay. This is wrong. I've got to take this step. And now it's just a matter of kind of arranging the details. And God does something.

God intervenes. The decision's been made, but God steps in. God says, uh, nope!

It's like God said, Joseph, you know, I really appreciate your commitment to obey my revealed word. I really appreciate it, but this situation with Mary is not what it looks like.

So he sends Joseph an angel of the Lord. And again, we're not giving the name, of the angel.

Again, detail left out. So it was Gabriel who talked to Mary and the folks in Luke, but we're not giving the name of the angel here.

You're left to kind of speculate. But he sends this angel of the Lord to intervene, to change Joseph's mind. To move him from divorcing Mary and abandoning the baby to marrying Mary and taking the baby as his own.

[13:12] And notice that in verse 20, but as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. This happened in a dream.

Again, this might be a little, little new for several of us, but you know what? When it boils down to it, God can do what he wants to do. He can intervene the way he wants to intervene.

He's God. He can do that. He's more than able. In fact, we're going to see God showing up to people in dreams later in Matthew.

Next week, he warns the Magi in a dream not to go back to Herod. Pilate's wife in chapter 27, she has a dream about this righteous man, Jesus.

I mean, I'm not sure if you're familiar with what's going on among the Middle East, but Jesus is showing up to people in dreams.

[14:15] Story after story of this person coming to Muslims in dreams. resulting in their conversion to Christ.

God uses dreams. Of course, dreams must be carefully weighed in light of Scripture. Subjective experience is submitted to the objective reality of God's Word.

And we're going to see Matthew do that for us in just a second. But let's look at this dream. Let's look at what this angel says.

And again, we're not given details. I mean, if you were in the room with Joseph as he was sleeping, what would he be doing? Was he like in the in-between dream state?

Kind of aware but not aware? Was he rolling over a lot? Was he mumbling? Was he just silent? We don't know.

[15:19] But what we do know is this. The angel, God, through the angel, addresses Joseph by name. Joseph, son of David.

God knows this man as he knows your name. And he says, Joseph, son of David. That rings a bell in us, doesn't it?

It shoots right back to the genealogy in chapter 1 verses 1 through 17. Son of David from the line of David. The one carrying the number 14 gene.

The number of David. You. Joseph, son of David. Do not fear to take Mary as your wife. God's saying, Joseph, you don't need to be fearful here, buddy.

You're not disobeying my word. There's something else going on. Do not fear to take Mary as your wife.

[16:21] Do not fear to come together with her. And then he gives a reason. See that word for in 20?

For that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. You're not disobeying my word, Joseph, because this is my son conceived in this woman by the Holy Spirit.

It's amazing. There's a miracle going on here. Two times now, Matthew has emphasized that this child in Mary's womb is conceived by the Holy Spirit.

This is not what it seems like, Joseph. Despite what it may look like, Joseph, this is actually me at work caring about my purposes. That's why the angel of the Lord is there.

There's something, there's a bigger plan going on here, Joseph. She will bear a son. The child is actually a son.

[17:34] And then he says to Joseph, and this is in the force of a command, you shall name him Jesus. That's from the angel of the Lord who is sent by God.

Do you know what that means? The naming of this boy originated in the mind of God. God wanted this boy named Jesus.

God wanted Joseph to name this boy Jesus. And what you must see is that the very fact that Joseph is going to name this boy, do you know what that means?

He's legally taking him as his own. He's saying you're going to be my son. And by him saying that, do you know what comes with that?

All the legal rights and privileges of his house. It's going to be a son of David legally. He's going to be legally. We'll talk about what the name of Jesus means a little later on.

[18:49] Oh, but God wanted this baby boy named Jesus. This boy conceived by the Holy Spirit, this God with us.

He wanted his name Jesus. Jesus. One more thing I want you to note.

Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. Notice verse 21. She will bear a son, and she shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

He's talking about the Messiah, talking about this baby boy is going to be the Christ, is the Christ, but he gets at the nature of his reign, what this king is going to deliver from.

And so a good Jew at this time would be thinking the Messiah is going to come and he's going to deliver us from the political oppression of Rome. And what the angel is saying here, no, this king is going to deliver sinners from the oppression of sin, the presence, power, and penalty of sin.

[20:14] This baby boy is going to be a deliverer king from that. Just to make you aware, Joseph, of what this baby boy is going to do.

Oh, it's so glorious. So in verses 20 and 21, God intervenes Joseph's plan. Isn't that so gracious of God? He's so sovereign.

He does what he wants to do. He interrupts and says, no, you're not going to divorce Mary. You're not going to abandon this child. That's not my plan. And so through this angel of the Lord, he says, no, no, you're going to take this young lady as your wife.

And not only that, you're going to name this baby that you didn't conceive, Joseph. You're going to name him Jesus and therefore give him all the rights and privileges of your house as your firstborn. God has a plan for Joseph. And this is the fulfillment of his glorious plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in Christ.

[21:30] Oh, it's so beautiful. As we move on in verses 22 and 23, we have Matthew now, the gospel writer, sharing some of his helpful thoughts with us.

He gives a prophetic confirmation of what this angel just said. God. We see that in verse 22. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet Isaiah. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. That's Matthew helping us understand what just happened between this angel of the Lord and Joseph. What he's saying is there is something of tremendous magnitude going on here. This is of such significance it's going to blow your mind. Matthew wants us to see that what is happening with Mary, Joseph, and this baby is the fulfillment of God's forever plan to save a people for himself.

[22:42] This quote is from Isaiah 7, verse 14. written 700 years earlier. It speaks of a virgin and a virgin conceiving and a virgin conceiving a boy and he's going to be named a certain name.

So what is Matthew doing? He's pointing us to the Bible to help explain this dream. He's helping us make sense, interpret what's going on here.

He's linking up this dream with Isaiah 7, 14 to say this is fulfillment of what God has said 700 years ago.

This is all part of God's glorious plan. Let me help you see it. Isaiah 7, 14 speaks of a virgin. Who's the virgin? Mary! Fulfillment! Isaiah 7, 14 points to a virgin conceiving. Matthew's saying, yes, conceived by the Holy Spirit.

[23:56] Isaiah 7, 14 says this virgin shall conceive and bear a son. Matthew is saying, yes! She's going to have a son, all right! God with us.

And that's where these accounts differ a little bit. Because in the interaction between the angel of the Lord with Joseph, he's to name him Jesus.

Do you know what Matthew's doing? He's creating a parallel and help us make a link. Jesus is Emmanuel.

Jesus, the incarnate God is salvation, is God with us. Now, what you need to understand, too, is that this Isaiah 7, 14, it's actually a double fulfillment.

It was fulfilled in the immediate context, way back in the 8th century, but its final and complete fulfillment was found in Jesus Christ.

[25:14] What starts in Isaiah 7 builds and builds through Isaiah 9 into Isaiah chapter 11. Isaiah 9, 6, and 7, do you remember that passage?

For unto us a child is born. Remember his name? He's a wonderful counselor. mighty God, everlasting father, speaking of an everlasting king, prince of peace, the government should be on his shoulders.

He's going to establish the throne of David and his kingdom forever. Isaiah 11 points to this shoot from the stump of Jesse.

Do you know what Matthew's doing? through Isaiah 17, he's like, do you remember the wonder child coming? Do you remember? This is him.

This baby in Mary's womb is that wonder child of Isaiah. This is the Messiah. The Christ.

[26:18] Christ. So by quoting Isaiah 7, 14, this prophetic confirmation, Matthew draws a parallel and helps us to realize what he wants us to realize.

Jesus is the Emmanuel, the Christ. This baby named Jesus is Christ the King. So in verses 24 and 25, we see Joseph's quick response.

Boy, is he quick to obey. When Joseph woke from sleep, he did. He did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.

His mind was changed. God had intervened. He gets up right away and obeys. He does what the angel of the Lord commanded him. He obeys God.

He obeys God. And what I want you to see is the significance of the last sentence in verse 25. This culminates in that sentence.

[27:23] And Joseph called his name Jesus. He's answering the question of Matthew 1.16. How can this boy, who's not genetically related to Joseph,

be a son of David and therefore the Christ?

How does that work out? Well, what Matthew is saying is he didn't need to be genetically related. By Joseph naming him his son, he was legally an heir with all the rights and privileges thereof. He was an heir to the house of David. He took on the number 14, the number of David. He's the Messiah.

humanly speaking, Joseph's obedience resulted in the legalizing of Jesus as an heir to David's throne. One day in heaven, I'm going to approach Joseph if I can, and I'll say, man, thank you so much.

Thank you so much. All right, so the point of this passage. At the beginning of the passage, Joseph was going to divorce his wife.

[28:38] God intervenes. And God intervenes in such a way that Joseph, instead of divorcing and abandoning, marries and takes to himself.

He names this baby Jesus. And what it shows us is that Jesus is a descendant of David. He is the Christ, the King from the house of promise.

In other words, he's legit. So let's ask this question. So what? What difference does it make?

This naming of a boy 2,000 years ago, what difference does that make for us today? Well, it changes the way we celebrate Christmas. So four B's, and I'll be really brief.

Maybe amazing. Nah. Four B's. First one is this. In light of this naming of Christ and having him, recognizing him as the son of David, be amazed.

[29:46] Be amazed. The conception of this baby boy was a miracle. It was a tri-supernatural miracle. The whole cast of the Trinity is there.

God the Father planned it. Isaiah 7, from long ago. God the Spirit conceived this baby in Mary's womb. And the one that was conceived was Emmanuel, the second person of the Trinity taking on human flesh.

The whole cast of the Trinity is there. Some may object, hey, babies aren't born that way. They're not conceived that way. Yes!

That's the point. This is a miracle. A glorious, glorious miracle. So when we celebrate Christmas, we're celebrating a miracle that God miraculously conceived a baby in this virgin's womb.

It was Emmanuel. So be amazed. But the amazingness doesn't stop there. This baby boy, conceived by the Holy Spirit, is God's son.

[31:02] It's not explicitly stated, but it is definitely implied. Twice, Matthew says, conceived by the Holy Spirit. This baby is conceived of God.

He is God. God in the flesh. The second person of the Trinity, the eternally existent second person of the Trinity took on human flesh.

Fully God, fully man, in one person. Two distinct natures, one person. That's stinking amazing.

Without ceasing to be God, he took on human flesh without any sin.

Is that not amazing? That's amazing. So be amazed. But also, be comforted.

Be comforted. As a result of the conception of this baby boy, miraculously. Fully God, fully man. Do you know what that means for us?

[32:14] Our God is able to identify with us in every way. He understands what it's like to walk in this tent.

We have a God who gets it. He gets what it's like to be human living in a fallen world. He gets it. He knows firsthand. Again, Hebrews says it this way.

He's a sympathetic high priest who can identify with all of our weaknesses. He's a sympathetic king. Sympathetic. He knows. He became one of us.

And he's promised to be with us. The Emmanuel. God with us. Matthew 18, 20.

Jesus says, where two or three are gathered in my name, there I'm among them. Matthew 28, 20 says, and behold, I'm with you always, even to the end of the age. Do you know what's interesting about the book of Matthew?

[33:17] It begins with Emmanuel, God with us, and ends with Emmanuel, God with us. I'm with you always, even to the end of the age. He's with us. It's a tremendous discomfort.

He's with us now. As a church. Walking through what we've been walking. He's with us. To comfort us. He's still present.

He's still with us. Be comforted. Be saved. Be saved by King Jesus. Be saved. Remember the name Jesus?

It means God is salvation. salvation. Jesus is our salvation. King Jesus came to save. That's his mission. That's why he came. He came to liberate those oppressed by the power, presence, and penalty of sin.

That's why he came. He didn't come for political liberation. Not yet, at least. Second coming. He came first time to liberate people from the oppression of sin.

[34:22] And his people, of course, for all who will, for all, for he will save his people from their sins. His people, of course, are all those who by faith have bowed the knee to him. And have experienced his forgiveness and liberation from sin.

And been welcomed into his kingdom. He did it by substituting himself. Emmanuel, the king, took the place of sinners on the cross.

Amazing. So that we can be liberated from sin. Have you bowed your knee to King Jesus? Have you received this forgiveness?

Have you received his gracious liberation from the power of sin? If you haven't, today's the day. Bow your knee.

Cry out to him. King Jesus saved me from my sin. He will. And if you do, let someone know. Let someone know. Because you now are part of the kingdom of the redeemed.

[35:31] Be amazed. Be comforted. Be saved. Be on the king's mission. King Jesus came to save sinners. It's in his name.

In our church, Christ the King Church is made up of the poor and powerless. Sinners who have been saved by King Jesus. We bowed our knee to him.

By his grace, he has saved us. And now he's called us to his mission. Go make disciples of the nations. Go make disciples of King Jesus.

Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born. The king has come. Our mission as a church is to glorify God by making known the life-transforming power of the gospel, the good news of King Jesus.

We call people to bow their knee, to submit to him, and experience his gracious reign in their lives. Jesus. Let's be on mission together.

[36:41] Let's do this together. By Joseph naming this baby boy Jesus, he legitimized that Jesus is the king from the house of David.

Be amazed, be comforted, be saved. Let's be on mission together. Father, rejoice, your king has come. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, our king, we bow our knee.

We are poor and powerless. We were lost and lonely, and you came for us. And you're coming back, and we rejoice. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.