

What's in a Name?

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[0 : 00] Please take your Bibles out and turn to Matthew chapter 1, Matthew chapter 1, just to give you guys a little bit of an update as we move into the Christmas season.

We're going to pause our series Family Matters and we'll be picking that up in the new year. But for the next couple of weeks heading into Christmas, we thought it'd be important to target in on the name and person of Jesus Christ.

So if you are in your book of Matthews and one other announcement that I forgot to mention is on our Facebook group posting, there's the Gingerbread House Challenge.

All the information's there. It looks like it's going to be some heated competition. So we know that Cam is a stickler for rules.

So I hope you guys do your best, get that best homemade gingerbread house made and ready to go for the competition. So going back now to Matthew chapter 1, I want you to look at verse 18, verse 18.

[1 : 18] Now, the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother married, had been betrothed to Joseph before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 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. Verse 21. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

For he will save his people from their sins. Let me ask you a question.

[2 : 30] How important is your name? What does your name tell others about you?

What's the meaning? Is it a true meaning? Does it indicate who you are and what you are meant to be?

The truth of the matter is, for many of us, our names are just names. They're identifiers. They don't really mean much except us.

Meaning, they don't have a title or importance to them. The only titles that I really know of significance today in our day and age is perhaps junior or senior.

My last name is Smith. The only significance to this last name is that it was my father's last name. It was my father's father's last name.

[3 : 41] And my father's father's father's last name. It really doesn't mean much except when you hear the word Smith, there is a lot of Smiths.

Now, what's interesting, when I was in university, I met some people that had some very special names. Recognizable names.

Known names. One of the names was Mahavlitch. And if you are an NHL fan, it was the son or the grandson of the great Frank Mahavlitch.

The other important name that I met was Rogers, who would eventually go on to own Sportsnet, the Toronto Blue Jays. He was a relative in that family.

But it was interesting, there was two names of even more famous people, of people that I was even friends with, that I did not know the significance of their names.

[4 : 38] In fact, I knew these people well. I either lived with them in residence or hosted them at my home for barbecues. But it wasn't until my friend from business school notified me that the names, that they were in fact daughters of industry titans, and that they were in fact the daughters of billionaires.

They were known for shipping companies and massive research and development. So they had these names that meant something.

And while they were at university, they were just one of us. But they had a role to play beyond our university times. They were to follow in their father's footsteps and instead carry on that family business.

Many of us don't have those kind of names. We have names that we want to bring honor to our parents and our grandparents. But beyond that, there's not much significance.

However, a name to a first century Jew means something. It means that you are not only attached to a family, but you are attached to a tribe, and that tribe has responsibilities.

[6 : 01] There were property and duties that were associated with that last name. In fact, the temple in Jerusalem housed everybody's name.

That you could go and search your own lineage to discover what you were about, what tribe you were from, what town you came from.

It went way back hundreds and hundreds, generations and generations of years. I think one of my family members actually was able to go back in our family and find out that we were actually a part of the American Revolution.

And my family was captured by the Americans, brought over and imprisoned in Nova Scotia. And then after the war, we're released, and they met some East Coast girl, and that is where my family hails from, the East Coast of Canada.

So there's stories behind some of these names. Now, I tell you all this because I want you to sit back and imagine a story.

[7 : 19] It's a story. It's a story you're using a newspaper if you're old school, or you're just checking your tablet or your phone, and you're looking for headlines of interest to you.

You come across a headline that states, Young Jewish Virgin Teen Gives Birth to a Child.

Now, this isn't the sort of headline that kind of graphs your attention, but there's something about it that you want to be able to read the story.

You want to hear it disproved. There's no way that a virgin gave birth to a child, but you want to know what the story is behind it. So you start reading the story, and like any other journalist article, it has the who, what, where, when, why, and how, and you're actually getting drawn into the story.

You learn that the mother's name is Mary, and who was engaged to a young carpenter named Joseph. So she was actually engaged to Joseph, and then the news came that she was impregnated by the Holy Spirit.

[8 : 36] Now, you might be thinking, you know what, this is just a young couple trying to avoid some sort of scandal. But as you continue to read, you find yourself believing this narrative that this is indeed a special occasion.

There's witnesses called the shepherds who talk about an angel that showed up and informed them and led them to see this baby.

You read that men of royal lineage from the Far East came bearing gifts.

And you knew as you were sitting or reclining in your home in Bethlehem, you knew some of these people.

You heard about your neighbors talking about the royal members appearing in the market that day. And what was interesting is they all talked about a star, a bright star overhead.

[9 : 48] And you remember that one night, you and your wife were on the roof of your house, and you saw a star that you had never seen before. It was bigger and brighter than all the rest.

And then you look at this newspaper, and you see that it says the Bethlehem Times, which is a known, respected newspaper.

It's not like that Roman rag, the Caesarean Inquirer, which is only known for fake news. The Bethlehem Times is known for legit news coverage.

Then you remember that your friend Phil was talking about his young brother, who is the shepherd of the family, was talking about how he was a part of this event, which he heard the angel.

He saw the angel. Then you recall the name of this man named Joseph, who's a part of the Carpenters Union in that part of Israel.

[10 : 51] And he's got a stellar reputation. And then you find yourself believing this story, that this virgin teen gave birth to this baby boy named Jesus.

You believe, and then you read at the bottom of the article, there's this quote by Jesus. And the journalist is essentially asking Joseph, what do you think is so significant about this birth that you were told about from this angel?

Joseph said, Joseph said, Joseph had this simple reply. He will save his people from their sin. He will save his people from their sin. You're believing this story.

Now, what is the next question that you would have? The biggest question that if this story is true, who are his people?

[12:26] Which people did Jesus come to save? Who are his people? Take a look at verse 21.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sin.

Now, let's pretend for a moment that you are a faithful Jew.

You know your Bible. You have spent time in the law, and you spend time in the Psalms. And this one Psalm comes to mind.

It's Psalm 130, 7 and 8. The psalmist writes, Another way to say that is he will save Israel from all his sins.

Who is the he? Who is the people? Israel. Who are the people? Those from God. So the first thing you are going to do as a Jew, that if this is the promised Messiah, is you're going to go to the temple.

[14:08] And you're going to look up the records. Because you are going to try to chase, trace this man, Joseph. And there's simple conditions that Joseph needs to have in order for the son Jesus to be this one.

Now, you need to understand, at that time, many people came claiming to be the Messiah. Messiah. And they were all failures.

And Jewish prophecy is not an inexact thing, which says that if some person can come and live a certain perfect life, then they can become the Messiah.

A lot of people would sell themselves as these things, whether they had prophecies, or they could do miraculous things, or quote-unquote, live a perfect life.

Perhaps they could indeed be the Messiah. or be one who was strong, agile, virtuous, and could overthrow the foreign occupiers.

[15:28] But that's not how the pages of Scripture spoke. The Old Testament speaks of one perfect person who could perform one perfect act and is only that one person, perfect person, capable of bringing about perfect salvation.

There was only one person that could do that. Let's take a look at verse 1. Verse 1 of Matthew. Matthew, the writer of this gospel, begins, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

All right. Let's be honest. We don't always get genealogies. Let's be honest. They kind of bore us. When we read them, we kind of glaze over them. But sometimes we fail to realize there is a richness of resources and teachings of God's promises in those genealogies.

Who here hasn't said to themselves, all right, January's coming up. I'm going to read the whole Bible in one year. That's going to be my goal, right? You start off in Genesis. This is a great, riveting story.

[16:53] You rip through those 50-some chapters. You've done it, no problem. Then you're moving to, what? Genesis, Exodus. So you're in Exodus. And you start reading. And wow, this is another really great, riveting story.

Then you get to Leviticus. Whoa. All right. Leviticus. Not so riveting. Wow. I'm going to slog through this one.

But you make it. And you say, you know what? It's got to get better, right? Then you get to numbers. Oh. Genealogies and laws that make no sense.

So at this time, it's like October. And you haven't even made it through numbers yet because you have been so unenthused about reading these genealogies.

But in all genealogies, there's the greatest of importance of information that is given.

[17:51] Perhaps none more so important than the genealogy that we read right here in Matthew. You see, for a Jew, if you are to claim that you are the one to save the people from their sins, there is actually only one person can be this individual.

And he has to come from a certain family line. So you go to the temple and you start to trace the lineage. So this morning, I want you to see, if you notice, in book verse one, this is the book of the

genealogy of Jesus.

And three titles are given to Jesus. One, Jesus Christ. Two, Son of David. And three, the Son of Abraham. I want us to spend some time so you can see the significance of how important that in this very first verse, we find the key to who is to be the Messiah.

So let's work with the first one, Jesus. Now, many of our names are selected because they are popular names.

My first name, Brian, actually one of the first, most popular names of 1968. It was a fashionable name. May not be the most manly of names, but it's okay, right?

[19 : 22] Brian. But often, we like to think we are choosing names because there's a significance. Brian means strong and virtuous, which I would like to think that that is something I would like to live up to.

But here, there is a level of depth that comes from the name. So we begin by understanding that Jesus' name, Jesus, is actually the Greek rendering of the Jewish name of Yeshua, which we also call Joshua.

Joshua would be an honorable name, and it would be a very wonderful name to name your child, for it means the Lord is salvation.

As you, as I do, I know a lot of Joshua's. It is a good name to have. It means the Lord Yahweh saves.

And if you go back to Judges, and into the first five books, you see this young man grow up to become a leader of Israel.

[20 : 38] And after a time, the people are wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. God chooses Joshua to lead his people into the promised land.

What a wonderful picture. And next week, we're going to get into a little bit more of the background of the Middle East. But let's just say the Jews don't exactly rank on a high level of importance in the history of that time.

They're in this nice little sliver of the world on the Mediterranean, and that's pretty much the significance of them. But Joshua was the one that led them to that land.

As I said, it was an honor name and a popular name. But it has to be more than just that. Matthew then gives Jesus the title.

Christ. Jesus Christ. The word Christ means is the anointed one. The one who God not only selects for a holy work, but empowers for a holy work.

[22 : 04] In the Old Testament, we see time and time again God will anoint high priests for their work, or just even priests for their work in the temple.

He would anoint kings. At first, Saul was anointing that blessing, and that blessing was removed and then placed on David. And then we would see in the, some prophets were anointed as well.

So what is he being anointed to? It also means the Messiah. He is to be the Redeemer. He is to be the promised one who the Jews of old would understand would be the future king of Israel.

We're going to get to that in a moment. He is the one who will save his people from their sins.

In fact, we only need to look to Acts. When Peter, prophesying in Acts 2.28, as he's preaching, he declares, repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

[23 : 20] So that Messiah would become true as that baby grew up into our Lord and Savior. But that's the name you were to call on for salvation.

So that is the first title, the promised Redeemer, the Messiah, the one to come, Jesus Christ. Now we're going to look at the title called Son of Abraham.

Let's take a look at verse 2. Take a look at verse 2. And here's this genealogy that begins. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

And Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar. And Perez the father of Ezron and Ezron, Hezron the father of Ram. And Ram the father of Amminadab.

And Amminadab the father of Nashon. And Nashon the father of Salmon. And Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab. And Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth.

[24 : 26] And Obed the father of Jesse. And Jesse the father of David the king. You see, Abraham was called out of a land called Ur.

And God called Abraham to come, believe in me. I will be your God. I will go before you.

And if you do this, Abraham, if you obey here, I will make a covenant with you. This covenant that we read in scripture is called the Abrahamic covenant.

And it's actually covered in many different chapters of the book of Genesis. It's in the book of Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17. And they're all different, varying details of this covenant.

But the primary one found in Genesis 12, 1 to 3, is the foundation upon which all, upon which all other covenants come from.

[25 : 34] So flip over with me if you care to listen to me. We're going to read from Genesis 12. And it's verses 1 to 3. Genesis 12. So this is the first time God is giving these instructions to Abraham.

And I want you to pay attention to the promises that he's going to make to him. So this is God speaking to Abraham. He says, Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

I want you to take a look and note several of the promises that God makes here. There's actually five I'm going to look at. So the first one is that God promises to make Abraham a great nation.

[26 : 50] This nation will become Israel composed of the descendants from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The second thing that God promises Abraham that he will be blessed in his name great.

Thousands upon thousands of years we still know who Abraham is. For many of us our names will pass in a generation or two.

But Abraham's name has been honored and revered. We read it in Hebrews chapter 11 in the great hall of fame of faith. Third promise is that Abraham will be a blessing for others.

Fourthly, God will treat others based on how they treat Abraham and that whether it's a blessing or a curse. And the fifth promise is Abraham and the nation to come will come from him.

And this nation will be a blessing to all families of the earth. Thus, Abraham and Israel will be used by God as a means by bringing blessings to the world including us, Gentiles.

[28 : 09] With the Abrahamic covenant, God's plans include the whole world. But specifically, there's blessings for Israel.

And ultimately, we will see ultimate salvation comes through Abraham. So here, in this gospel of Matthew, Matthew is introducing us to the seed of Abraham who will save his people.

So secondly, take a look at Matthew 1.20 for a second. Notice what the angel calls Joseph.

He calls Joseph son of David. The angel is acknowledging that Joseph, who would become the legal earthly father of Jesus, is actually descended from the legal line of Israel's great kings.

So that is the third title. First, we have Jesus the Christ, Jesus the son of Abraham, and now we're looking at Jesus the son of David.

[29 : 46] Jewish understanding, David was the greatest Jewish king. And we see in this genealogy that Jesus is descended from these kings, which means that Joseph, and we will read from Joseph, and I'm going to get into this a little bit next week because a lot of people are going to try to argue that because Jesus is adopted by Joseph, he does not have legal rights to the throne of David, but in fact, as we're going to see in Jewish law, because he's adopted by Joseph, he is entitled to every legal right according to Levitical law that he can sit on the throne.

So through Joseph, Jesus is now part of the legal line of David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

and Solomon the father of Rehoboam and Rehoboam the father of Abijah and Abijah the father of Asaph. In verse 8 we read, Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram and Joram the father of Uzziah and Uzziah the father of Jotham and Jotham the father of Ahaz and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh and Manasseh the father of Amos and Amos the father of Josiah and Josiah the father of Jekoniah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

That is the end of the earthly Jewish kings. But it's tracing the lineage from the beginning of the Jewish earthly kings to the last Jewish earthly kings and they are all connected to David and as we're going to see are connected to Joseph and connected to Jesus.

So what we see is that Matthew traces Jesus through 15 different kings. What he's doing here he's demonstrating that Jesus is of noble blood.

[32 : 16] And this was a promise made by God to David that was unconditional. And it's interesting how this covenant came about because David at the end of his days wanted to build a permanent temple for worship to the Lord.

But God didn't want him to do that. simply because David was a man of war. So God makes this promise to David and we read this promise in 2 Samuel chapter 7.

2 Samuel chapter 7 and I'll be reading from verse 12. So if you have an opportunity I'd love for you to turn to this section and this is what we call as theologians call the Davidic covenant.

This is the promise that God is making to David. So the earlier one was the Abrahamic covenant. The promise that God promised Abraham that he would fulfill and here's the one that he is telling David.

It's 2 Samuel 7 starting in verse 12. He says when your days are fulfilled filled and you lie down with your fathers I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom he shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

[34 : 01] forever. So he's letting David know that one of his sons when he's dying one of his sons will come after him which we know to be Solomon and Solomon will establish and upon will build this temple and God says I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Now look at verse 14. Now he's kind of he's switching to the earthly line here he goes I will not take the throne away. I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son.

When he commits iniquity I will discipline him with the rod of men with the stripes of the sons of men. And then he gets to verse 15.

And we know what happened to Solomon. He swayed he sinned then he comes back but at verse 15 but my steadfast love will not depart from him as I took it from Saul whom I put away from before you.

And as you all know just earlier before David there was Saul and Saul was anointed that king. the people chose Saul.

[35 : 24] And there was a time where the Holy Spirit was with Saul. He did good but then he turned. He turned from God and then God put his blessing on David.

And God is making a promise to David that he is not going to remove that blessing from Solomon. That anointing.

He's going to keep it there regardless how Solomon acts. And verse 16 and your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.

Your throne shall be established forever. So this is a passage that is loaded with promises. promises. The first promise is that God promises to make David's name great just like Abraham's. It will be known. Second promise that Israel will be given undisturbed rest from their enemies. There will come a time of peace. Third, a house or dynasty in the line of David will forever endure.

[36 : 40] There will be no breaking of that line. Fourth, a common son will establish this kingdom which we know to be Solomon.

Solomon will build the temple. Solomon's kingdom will be established forever. And God will be a father to Solomon and when Solomon disobeys, God will not take the kingdom away from him as he did with Saul.

And David's dynasty and kingdom will endure forever. And the throne of David will be established forever. This covenant is repeated again in Psalm 89.

You have said, I have made a covenant with my chosen one. I have sworn to David my servant. I will establish your offspring forever and build your throne for all generations.

So any person who understands Jewish history understands that there is a Messiah that is going to come. But that Messiah will have to fulfill certain conditions.

[37 : 54] One is going to have to come from the seed of Abraham and will have to come from David's Davidic line. God is going to be to God.

So when we get to this genealogy, this is what Matthew is establishing for us. If you understand the Gospels and who they were written to, Matthew's primary target is to a Jewish audience.

So a Jewish audience that has been waiting forever for the Messiah knows that these certain conditions have to happen. Ezekiel 34 says, And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them.

He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God. And my servant David shall be prince among them.

I am the Lord, I have spoken. That is kind of a vision. It's the new covenant that the David, from the throne of David, will sit, be the shepherd.

[39 : 13] So when you read these things, this is exciting stuff. Who doesn't want to be a part of this? So when we understand where the Messiah is to come from, the promised Messiah needs to come through the line of Abraham, to the line of David, to the Christ, to be the Messiah, to be the one who will save his people.

Now, I want you to just take a step back from chapter one. And you're going to notice that there's actually three sections to this genealogy.

And Matthew is divided each section into 14 names. The first section I call, it is the hope section. It is the beginning section. It is the beginning of the Jewish people. He's calling this man Abraham, who will only have one son. And God, out of that one son, a new nation, a new people, from which covenants and promises will come from.

It's exciting because by the time you get to the second section, it's been realized in many ways. They're a great nation.

[40 : 38] The kings David and Solomon did great and mighty things. They were known throughout the land. So what we see is the first section is the promise.

And then David is the realization of that promise. There was great people, great riches, great lands. So it's kind of all that excitement that is realized. And then verse 12 begins in such an ominous way. And after the deportation to Babylon. So the nation that had all this hope, the nation that is now realized with the kingship and land and army and power and riches, is now defeated.

Babylon has defeated them. Babylon. And he gives us these names.

[42 : 09] Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel. And Shealtiel, the father of Zerubbabel. And Zerubbabel, the father of Abiud. And Abiud, the father of Elykium.

And Elykium, the father of Azor. And Azor, the father of Zadok. And Zadok, the father of Achim. And Achim, the father of Eliud. And Eliud, the father of Eleazar. And Eleazar, the father of Matan. And Matan, the father of Jacob. Jacob, the father of Joseph. The husband of Mary. Of whom Jesus was born.

Who is called Christ. The genealogy. The genealogy. The genealogy.

Plists a group of defeated people. Devastated people. Devastated people. People who have been devastated by the sins of their forefathers.

[43 : 18] Because of their forefathers' sins. Because they did not follow after God's own way. Lost the promises. That were promised to Abraham.

And lost the promises that were fulfilled in David. There is no great people. There are no great riches.

There are no great people. And the land they now live in. Is nothing like the land. That was given to them.

Flowing. With milk and honey. So where, oh where. Does a people group.

That is so broken. So devastated. So. Lost. Do. They pray.

[44 : 21] And they pray for a Messiah. Who will come. And save them. And that's what we will talk about.

Next week. In the second part of this genealogy. Sermon. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father. This history that you unfold before us.

Just even in these genealogies. Is an incredible history. Next week. We're going to learn a little bit more about. The craziness.

The sin. The messed up. Genealogy that it truly is. But it had a purpose.

It had a purpose. That no matter what we did. You were going to fulfill. Your promises. You are. The steadfast one. You are the resolute.

[45 : 23] One. You are the tender one. You are. The one who. Is faithful. Even to the faithless.

So Father. As we move to Christmas. And we move to this. Promise of a child.

May we. May it not be lost on us. What this child means. To a lost. Devastated. Broken.

People. Salvation. Salvation. Salvation. Salvation. May we give thanks.

That you are true to your promises. That you are right to your promises. And as next week. We will even see ourselves.

[46 : 22] In this genealogy story. We will see clearly. That we.
Can be your. People. And that you have indeed. Come. To save us too.
We give you praise. For this. And may our time of worship. May not end. During this. Online.
Sermon. Or service. I pray that it would go beyond. This hour. Into this day. And into this week. As
we set apart.
Our bodies. And our minds. For a sacrifice. Sacrifice. That is only due to you. May we be holy. In
what we see.
[47 : 22] What we do. And how we act. We ask these. Great things. In your name. Amen. Amen.
And you're.
Hope.