What's in a Name? Part 2

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[0:00] Good morning. Thank you for sticking with us through a little bit of a technical snafu. So please again open up your Bibles to Matthew chapter 1.

Today I want to conclude what I began last Sunday with my circle entitled, What's in a Name? Now I know most of you have probably heard or seen or watched some type of video on Jesus at some point in your life.

And I'm not talking about a, like the Passion of Christ type of movie. But on one of those type of videos, we see them on Netflix and some of the other distributors.

It's kind of like the quest for the historical Jesus or a study of where Jesus came from. And these documentaries are kind of like going into what it would have been like to be here in the first century, you know, not really first century, first year A.D.

trying to understand Jesus in light of the culture which he lived in.

So you see them going through trying to, what would a person at this time mean when he did that and this and all these type of things.

And what's interesting to me is I believe almost everyone that I have seen misses the point of Jesus completely because they do not attach Jesus to the Old Testament.

They believe that if we can study what happened in 0 A.D. to 33 A.D. by understanding the government or the culture that we can understand Jesus.

That's not the way to understand Jesus. The way to understand Jesus is to understand the Old Testament. This is one of my professors.

He actually refuses to call it the Old Testament. He calls it the First Testament. And if you understand the First Testament, you will see that it perfectly comes to a point, which is Jesus Christ.

[2:33] It's as if all of the history of mankind runs into Jesus at this point. And none of these videos talk about this. They might mention a few of the prophecies, but there's very little understanding as to who Jesus is and what is so important to him.

So this is why Matthew, when he begins, his gospel begins with this genealogy. You need to understand him in light of his past. So if you were with us last week, I introduced you when we looked at the three titles of Jesus.

Jesus the Christ, which is known as Jesus the Messiah, or Jesus the Anointed One. We looked at Jesus the Son of Abraham, and Jesus the Son of David.

This Jesus, which we read in verse 21 of Matthew 1, simply states, this is an angel speaking to Joseph.

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

[3:49] So even the idea of his people, we need to understand who they are, who, what people is Jesus coming to save.

And this is where history comes into play. If you understand the gospels, they have different targets in mind when we look at Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

And Matthew is predominantly written to the Jewish audience. And in this story that we read in Matthew, we hear about this baby Jesus being born in Bethlehem to a specific couple named Mary and Joseph.

Jesus, to be Jesus Christ the Messiah, has to be connected to the promises of the Old Testament to be the Messiah.

And the two most prominent people in the life of the Jewish faith, there's Moses, of course, but there's Abraham and David.

[4:58] Abraham identifies the people, and David is the promise. He was their greatest king, their most renowned king.

So we see that in the first third of the genealogy that is described, it's Abraham. Right? It was a connection to Abraham. The Messiah had to be connected to this Abrahamic covenant that all the future blessings, which we read in Genesis 12.

It's in different parts of Genesis as well. That's the predominant speaking that the Messiah will be from the seed of Abraham.

The second part, and remember we talked about the genealogy, it's divided into thirds. So the first part is Abraham, and it connects it to David.

So in here, David is kind of the realization of the promises that were made to Abraham.

You would have your own land, you will have a kingdom, and that is David. And then David was also prophesied over. His covenant, we can read in 2 Samuel 7.12, but I'll read the repetition of it, which we find in Psalm 89.

It said, You have said, I have made a covenant with my chosen one. This is God. I have sworn to David my servant.

I will establish your offspring forever and build your throne for all generations. So now we see that Jesus isn't not only attached to the lineage of Abraham, he needs to be attached to David, where the promises from his line will sit the king for all generations.

The first part of the genealogy, I see it as a hope of what can be. The second part of the genealogy of what it is.

It's exciting, right? We're a new nation, a new people, a new kingdom, a new temple. So we see that as hope realized. And then we take a look at the third, and this is where I ended the sermon last week.

[7:30] The third part of the genealogy actually is kind of tragic. Take a look at verse 11, Matthew 1, verse 11.

It reads, And Josiah, the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And then we pick it up in verse 12, after the deportation to Babylon. So all of a sudden, Babylon becomes a major event in the understanding of the genealogy.

Babylon signifies God's judgment on Israel. God used this foreign, pagan, godless king to bring punishment to God's people.

It was the death of the royal line. There is no crown. There is no throne. In fact, when they went back, there was rubbles of a city, no walls, and no temple.

[8:55] And not only that, the land that was promised them is now inhabited by a whole other group of people. So we see this hope, the realization of the hope, hope.

And then, which we could aptly call the destruction of hope. And we see this when we look through the genealogy.

Look, the first third, we read the names. We recognize some of those names from the stories of the Bible. Right? Isaac, Jacob, Boaz.

Some of their stories we're familiar with. The second third, we recognize the names. They're recorded in here. The book of Kings and Chronicles tells us the stories of these kings.

And then the last third of the genealogy, you might recognize Zerubbabel. After that, the only time these people's names are ever recorded is in Matthew.

[10:13] For lack of a better word, they're nobodies. There was nothing to write about them. God was silent for 400 years.

And then, at the end of this genealogy, is this name Joseph.

Joseph, the father, well actually it says, Jacob, the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

It's interesting, and we alluded to this last week, under the law, Jesus Christ is regarded as Joseph's son.

He's Mary's son, and as he marries her, that's him. And Jesus is entitled to all the benefits that exist under Joseph.

[11:28] And the one thing that is important for all of history for us to know, he's entitled to be a part of the legal line to the throne of David.

This is the genealogy which attaches Jesus Christ to the legal line. That is the legal right to sit on the throne of David.

What's interesting about this, and I'm hoping to put a brighter light on these genealogies today, is that Joseph, in fact, did absolutely nothing to be one of that line.

He had no effect on Jacob, his father. There was nothing he did. It's not like all of a sudden the angel appeared because Joseph had done something that was really regal or magnificent or noble, and all right, I'm gonna, now, this guy's acting like a king, let's bring him his son.

No, nothing. In fact, it's almost as if the Bible goes to painstakingly, painstaking ways to not augment Joseph.

[12:54] The only thing we know is he listened to the angel, married Mary, and raised Jesus.

And in fact, we do not even know how long he was even involved in Jesus' life. The one thing he was, though, was obedient.

He was obedient to this angel. And he received an incredible measure of God's grace.

What I want us to understand this morning is the incredible grace of God that is poured out on this line of Jesus. In fact, I can surmise that it's pretty much all about God's grace.

Like I said, a third are relatively unknown. Only here are they mentioned. You would think that Jesus, the Messiah, the one who would sit on the kingly line, would have an incredible heritage heritage of the very best people.

[14:10] Well, we know they are of a noble line, but are they really that noble? We can look at some of these kings.

When you read the kings in the genealogy, you'll recognize David, Hezekiah, Josiah. these men weren't exactly pillars of obedience to God.

We understand that Scripture says that David was a man after God's own heart, but he was a murderer, an adulterer, a liar, and you'll never see in any type of Christian books David's tips on parenting.

horrible parent. He's the best. Then we have Jehoshaphat is mentioned in there, and he's a man who entered into alliances with evil kings against God's wishes.

We read Hezekiah. He's held up by some virtuous man, but he was actually also a very foolish man. If you don't know the story, he actually showed the treasures of Israel to his powerful enemies, thus inciting them to attack.

[15:40] We read a king named Uzziah. He was a good man, but he actually went into the temple, usurped the priests, and entered to burn incense on the altar.

Peter. Okay? These are the good kings that are mentioned in this genealogy. Then we have a list of what we can say are wicked, evil kings.

You'll notice there's a king listed there after David named King Ahaz. King Ahaz worshipped the pagan gods of Assyria. He killed one of his own sons, stripped the gold and silver from the temple to give to other kings, and he actually defied the Lord's altar and installed other altars in God's temple.

That's bad stuff. Then you look at Rohoboam. Then we read the names Jeconiah and Manasseh. Jeconiah was so bad that he was cursed and the curse was that his blood would never sit on the throne again.

How does that fit in the genealogy? We're going to get to it in a second. Then there's this man named Manasseh. the Bible states that he did more evil than the evil of all the pagan nations around him.

[17:31] He promoted false idols. He murdered innocent people. Let me tell you what God has to say. In 2 Kings 21 is his story. It says, but they did not listen and Manasseh led them astray to do more evil than the nations had done whom the Lord destroyed before the people of Israel.

And the Lord said by his servants the prophets because Manasseh king of Judah has committed these abominations sins and has done things more evil than all that the Amorites did who were before him and he made Judah also to sin with his idols.

Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, behold, I am bringing upon Jerusalem and Judah such disaster that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle.

and I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plumb line of the house of Ahab and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.

And I will forsake the remnant of my heritage and give them into the hands of their enemies and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies.

[18:55] Because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.

There's not a lot of praise for these people. What's interesting is this genealogy, it doesn't really call out anybody as being more important than the next.

it certainly doesn't praise someone as the faithful or the faithless. They're just names. But what's interesting in the genealogy of Matthew, he actually provides the names of some very significant women.

women. Now you'd think if he's putting together a genealogy of significant women, there must be something really good about them, right?

There's got to be something there that somehow redeems them. Well, not so. Take a look at Matthew 1.3. Matthew 1.3, it says, Judah, the father of Perez, and Zerah by Tamar.

[20:18] All right, in this story, and I'll give you a bit of the story. So you have Jacob, Isaac, right? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. He has a son named Judah.

Judah is Joseph's brother. After Joseph is taken away and a captive to Egypt, Judah decides to go live with the Canaanites. So while he's with the Canaanites, he has three sons and he decides to marry off one of his sons, whose name is Er, to this woman named Tamar.

We don't know much about Er, but the Bible says that he was evil and wicked and God killed him. So Tamar is now left without a husband and who did not give him a son.

So what's so important is she wanted to have a son so she can continue to be a part of the inheritance. So the laws of that time said that she was supposed to marry the brother.

The brother who would be unmarried would take his brother's place, give her a child so she would have an inheritance. So his name was Onan. So Onan goes in with Tamar, has conjugal visit with her, but he purposely doesn't impregnate her.

[21:43] God kills him. God stated it was wicked. And Judah had a third son, but he was considered much too young. So they decided, you know, you're going to have to wait, Tamar, till the younger son grows up.

However, Tamar found out that they were lying to him and they would never let it happen. So the woman disguises herself at a temple prostitute.

Remember, they're living in the land of Canaan, a common thing, and she seduces Judah, her father-in-law, to get her pregnant.

that child is a part of this Davidic line. Conceived through treachery, lies, sexual sin, and here it is mentioned right in the middle.

Now, go to verse 5. It says, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab.

[22:58] Remember who Rahab is? When Joshua was going to go into the promised land, or Moses, they were at the promised land, they sent in two spies, they sent Joshua and Caleb, and they went in, and they were being, they're in the land, in their city of Jericho, and they're being made aware they need to hide.

And this prostitute, who happened to have a home at the wall, gives them safe hiding. And the woman asked, can I be your people?

They said yes, and she leaves a sign for when Israel comes against that city, she's able to escape. Rahab, the prostitute, becomes the mother of Boaz.

And we know Boaz because there's a book of Ruth that's written about him, and the woman he will eventually marry, named Ruth.

Now, Ruth is a foreign woman. She's a Moabite. married. And at the time, she's married to a Jewish man, a father and two brothers, and the mother leave Israel.

[24:21] They go to do their own thing. It doesn't work out. The father, the two brothers die. The mother, Naomi, is left with these two daughter-in-laws that she has to care for, and she has no idea how to do it.

She's going to go back home to her hometown. One daughter decides to go back home, and Ruth pledges her life to Naomi. Your people will be my people.

And they accept her, and she's working, and then there's this beautiful story of Boaz, theologians. We call him the kinsman redeemer. He ends up redeeming this woman Ruth, and by doing so, he marries her, and he brings her into the covenant family.

So you have Tamar, a Canaanite, should not have gone there, should have Judah, who did some things that were accepted by cultural law, but they did not honor her.

She was a spurned woman, child, part of the line. Rahab, a prostitute, who becomes the mother father of one of the most celebrated men in the Old Testament, the kinsman redeemer, Boaz, who ends up marrying Ruth, the outsider.

[25:47] By the way, they become the grandfather. They go, Obed, Jesse, and David is in that line. And of course, just before David, you read, then of course, we have the wife of Uriah.

That's Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. She marries David after David has her husband killed because she was a part of the seduction of David, committed adultery, knew she was pregnant, tried to sell her husband on the idea that the baby was hers, but her husband, Uriah, was such a noble man, he would not sleep with her because his men were in battle, and he did not believe that he should enjoy the fruits of marriage if all his other soldiers were in war.

mother. So we have three outside foreign women. We have a Canaanite, a Moabite, and a Hittite.

We have a prostitute, an adulteress, meet the family of Jesus. And of course, there's an unknown bunch who are there in that third element of the genealogy, who are suffering because of the sins of their fathers, the sins committed by the noble line who defied God.

What a mess, eh? the line of Jesus lost their throne, lost their land, lost their place.

[27:56] And here they are 400 years later in a land where they are about to lose their identity. They're not Israel, an independent nation. They are a part of the Roman Empire.

And some of us come from pretty much messed up backgrounds, don't we?

There's pain, there's suffering, there's hurt. People have made decisions in our own families that have grieved us, hurt us, perhaps robbed us of opportunities, robbed us of future financial security.

Some people in our past have done such horrible things that it's as if you want to change your last name. If you ever have a thought, can Jesus relate?

Can he ever? Jesus gets it. He gets it.

[29:13] He knows what it is to have sin in the background influence your family so much. One person wrote on the genealogy, he says, Jesus just didn't come to save the whole world.

Jesus had to first come and save his family. That they were so messed up that he had to come here to save them first. So here we are, let's just say Jesus is born on 1 A.D.

How bad was it for the Jews? Well, we understand through various means that Zerubbabel at the beginning of that last third of the genealogy, Ezra counts 43,000 people in the land of Israel.

400 years later, we estimate that there's between 3 and 4 million Jews. Now, sometimes the numbers are hard to figure out because during celebrations, people come from outside of Israel to celebrate, but we know there was times when Jerusalem was packed with millions of people.

So the time that Jesus was born, things have changed. one, Abraham isn't even their real language anymore. They speak Aramaic. The written language is Greek.

[30:38] The philosophy of the land is Greek. When you went to Roman cities, you saw Roman soldiers which told you that you were an occupied land.

You would have heard Latin. In the quick history, we know Persia, and then Greek took over, and then 60 B.C.

was Rome. Now what was really interesting is now they have this new rebuilt temple built by Herod, by a foreigner, even though he tried to pretend he was a Jew. So now this temple is big again.

So there is this life that's very Jewish that exists in a very non-Jewish time. In fact, one scholar says Jesus probably grew up in an exceptionally Jewish culture, and there would have been like this sliver of people who held to many of the Jewish things.

But then you have this Pharisee caste, there's synagogues, which would be like our free church. People would come, read the scriptures, have fellowship. That didn't exist 400 years before.

[31:46] They believe that grew up out of the exile because people did not have access to the temple. But here we see grace again.

Even after all that time, there are people still hoping on the promises that were made to Abraham.

There's people still hoping on the promises that were made to David. There were people waiting for this Messiah to come.

In the prayer, we talked about Simeon. Simeon was a man who went to the temple waiting to see the Messiah. He just believed it would happen in his time.

They believed that God is still good to his promises to Abraham and David no matter what our present situation looks like.

[32:57] They were still waiting for the one who would save them from their sins. What about you?

Do you still hold to the promises of God that he will save you if you call on his name?

Do you believe when you read these Bibles that he will hold you for eternity? Do you believe that? Do you ever have your thoughts that your family is incapable of being saved?

Do you feel that you have messed up so much there is no way that God could ever accept you? do you think that your skeletons in your closet are so big that God can't even see you because he just sees the skeleton?

The fact is most of us don't have these genealogies to trace back to them. But we can hold to these promises.

[34:14] Can Jesus save me? Well, when we read this story, are we Jesus' people?

Well, our freedom in Christ doesn't necessarily come from the Gospel of Matthew. As you know, there's four other Gospels. the Gospel of John does not present a genealogy of Jesus, nor does it even talk about Jesus' birth.

John connects Jesus to the father of eternity past. That's his big argument. Mark, writing to an audience in Rome, presents Jesus as God through his actions.

Very little teaching, a lot of actions. Because in Rome, that's what would have mattered. The God who has the most power to do what he says he's going to do has got to be the real power.

And then there's this fourth Gospel, which is written by Luke, who's an educated man, and he writes this so that you may believe.

[35:27] And he also has a genealogy in it. So please turn with me to Luke chapter three, and you're going to begin at verse 23.

Now there's a couple of things that are going to stand out from Luke's genealogy compared to Matthew's genealogy. One, it's bigger. It's ordered differently.

It doesn't have the rhyme of 14, 14, 14 names. And Luke gives it to us just after Jesus is, he's been kind of living his life, and now Jesus is called to his public ministry, and this is where Luke inserts this genealogy.

Now remember, Matthew's genealogy is about Jesus' legal right to the throne and to the name of Abraham. This genealogy is actually Mary's genealogy.

This is the Mary his mother. This is the one he's born from. This is his bloodline. Alright? So let's take a look at verse 23.

[36:40] It says, Jesus, when he began his ministry, he was about 30 years of age, being the son, and he puts in brackets, as was supposed, people would look and assume that Joseph was his son.

It goes, of Joseph, the son of Heli. Now if you're sharp here, you're remembering in Matthew, it says Jacob was the father of Joseph.

What gives? In fact, there's actually books written on this subject, trying to figure out what's going on here. Some people have stipulated that, yeah, yeah, yeah, Jacob was the first son, and then he died, then Heli adopted Joseph when he was a kid, so therefore there's all this kind of stuff.

But the problem with all these speculations, we have to take the entire Bible into consideration in order to understand that.

And we know without a fact that Mary has to be related to David. Why? I'll give you a couple of verses. Romans 1, 3, it says, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Spirit, concerning his son who is descended from David according to the flesh.

Okay? So what he's doing there, he has to be talking about not Joseph's legal line, but he's attaching Jesus to the blood line. And that has to come through Mary.

Acts 2, 30, brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried and his tomb was with us in this day, being therefore a prophet, knowing that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne.

All right? There's another, there's a descendant blood line. 1 Timothy 2, 8, it says, remembering Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, offspring of David, blood line.

And Hebrews 7, 1 says, for it is evident that our Lord was descendant from Judah, and in connection with the tribe, Moses said nothing about priests.

So there's another blood line. So the answer is actually quite simple. Healy, Hallie, is Mary's father.

[39:11] If you notice in Luke's genealogy, if you go through writing to a Greek audience, he doesn't mention any names. For whatever cultural reason, he's not mentioning names. But what was appropriate during this time is to put the man as he would have represented the household, even though he's speaking about Mary.

So we're looking at Mary. Hallie is Mary's family line. It's kind of simple, really. Now, so I don't think there is a contradiction.

I don't believe there is a contradiction. I think it quite logically follows. One is legal, one is bloodline. Now, what's really interesting is if you notice in verse 31, how Mary is connected to David.

So take a look at verse 31. It says, the son of Malia, the son of Mena, the son of Matata, the son of Nathan, the son of David.

The bloodline that Jesus comes from is actually connected to Nathan, a later son of David, not Solomon.

[40:41] Now, why is this important? Remember, I had mentioned that name Jeconiah, who was cursed by God.

Matthew 1.11 says, and Josiah, the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon. it is impossible to be of Joseph because Jeconiah was cursed by God.

Jeremiah 22, 80, 30 says, in this man, Jeconiah, a despised broken pot, a vessel no one cares for, why are he and his children hurled and cast into the land that they do not know?

O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord. Thus sayeth the Lord, write this down, as childless a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring will succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.

In fact, his grandfather Jehoiakim had another curse placed on him in Jeremiah 36. It says, therefore says the Lord concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah.

[42:03] He shall have none to sit on the throne of David and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night. And I will punish him and his offspring and his servants for their iniquity.

I will bring upon them and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and upon the people of Judah all the disaster that I have pronounced against them. But they would not hear.

So when you go back to Nathan you're going to start recognizing some of the same names that you saw in Matthew's genealogy.

But here is the good news. This is the good news for you and me.

If you are not of Jewish descent this is where we kind of come in on this. Look at Luke 3 34.

[43:06] The son of Jacob the son of Isaac the son of Abraham the son of Terah the son of Nahor the son of Suru the son of Rue the son of Peleg the son of Eber the son of Shelah the son of Canaan the son of Aphraxad the son of Shem the son of Noah the son of Lebeck the son of Methuselah the son of Enoch the son of Jared the son of Mahalihi the son of Canaan the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Luke pulls all of humanity into the genealogy of Jesus.

So when the angel says, I will save his people, we are his people.

Jesus, the son of Adam, is the second Adam. Adam failed, Jesus succeeded. And because of that, the free offer of grace and salvation that Jesus came on Christmas Day to offer mankind is ours to.

In Jesus Christ, he is full humanity and fully God.

[44:59] We read the testimony that when he walked on this earth, he did amazing things. He healed limbs and eyes and ears, hands that could not work.

But the greatest thing that he could do was save people from their sin. And the reality is, today, Jesus still does great miracles.

He forgives you and me just as freely as he did then. And the healing that he brings is he brings healing to our guilt.

He brings healing to our shame. The Tamars, the Rahabs. Bathsheba. Bathsheba. Bathsheba. Bathsheba. Bathsheba.

God responds to those who respond to him. God responds to the ones who admit that they are prisoners of their own sin.

[46:05] God came at a time in the form of baby Jesus when his people desperately needed a Savior.

To be honest with you, I cannot think of a better time for us to claim Jesus Christ as our Savior than today of all days.

Confusion, we don't know what's going on tomorrow. But we know right here, right now, all we need to do is confess with our lips and call on the name of Jesus Christ and we will be saved.

Just like we read in the Gospels of those who heard the message and came to Jesus and he forgave them.

The same power of forgiveness exists today. Paul, the book of Galatians 4-4 writes, But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

[47:37] And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So you are no longer a slave, but a son.

And if a son, then an heir of Christ. This Christmas, my friends, is the fullness of time.

And for those of you who do not know Jesus Christ or recognize Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, today can be your fullness of time.

Let Jesus do what Jesus came to do, which is to save your soul. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we give you thanks of the great mysteries that you teach us in your Word.

How you connect this life of Jesus through incredible broken people, which is exactly who we are. To think that we are any better or any more than someone else speaks to our ignorance.

[48:51] Under this law, which curses us, we are all equally guilty. There is no door which reads saint in order to enter heaven.

The only door that's open are for those who are sinners to enter the gates of heaven. To those who realize that there is only one hope and that hope is found in the name of Jesus.

So Father, with the challenges that you have before us, I just pray that we would see Christmas for what it is. The hope of all man, of all mankind.

That there is only one way to heaven. And it begins with an understanding of who baby Jesus is and how in the fullness of time he accomplished what no one else in the Old Testament could accomplish.

He did. And he did it for us. We ask these things in your gracious, powerful, and holy name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[49:57] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.