

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**6-7-23**

**Matthew 1**

**The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah – Verse 1**

**<sup>1</sup> This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:**

**1:1** Presenting this record of ancestors (called a genealogy) was one of the most interesting ways that Matthew could begin a book for a Jewish audience. Because a person's family line proved his or her standing as one of God's chosen people, Matthew began by showing that Jesus was a descendant of Abraham, the father of all Jews, and a direct descendant of David, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah's line. The facts of this ancestry were carefully preserved. This is the first of many proofs recorded by Matthew to show that Jesus is the true Messiah.

**1:1** More than 400 years had passed since the last Old Testament prophecies, and faithful Jews all over the world were still waiting for the Messiah (Luke 3:15). Matthew wrote this book to Jews to present Jesus as King and Messiah, the promised descendant of David who would reign forever (Isaiah 11:1-5). The Gospel of Matthew links the Old and New Testaments and contains many references that show how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy.

**1:1** Jesus entered human history when the land of Palestine was controlled by Rome and considered an insignificant outpost of the vast and mighty Roman Empire. The presence of Roman soldiers in Israel gave the Jews military peace, but at the price of oppression, slavery, injustice, and immorality. Into this kind of world came the promised Messiah.

**Jesus' Genealogy Through Joseph – Verses 2-6**

**<sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup> Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, <sup>4</sup> Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup> Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,**

**1:2-3** In the first 17 verses we meet 46 people whose lifetimes span 2,000 years. All were ancestors of Jesus, but they varied considerably in personality, spirituality, and experience. Some were heroes of faith—like Abraham, Isaac, Ruth, and David. Some had shady reputations—like Rahab and Tamar. Many were very ordinary—like Hezron, Ram, Nahshon, and Akim. And others were evil—like Manasseh and Abijah. God's work in history is not limited by human failures or sins, and he works through ordinary people. Just as God used all kinds of people to bring his Son into the world, he uses all kinds today to accomplish his will. And God wants to use you.

**1:3-6** Matthew's inclusion of four particular women (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba—here called "Uriah's wife") reveals his concern to do more than relay historical data. These women raise

both ethnic and ethical questions. At least two of them were not Israelites by birth and all four of them had reputations that could have made them unmentionable in an ancestral tree. Yet this was the line into which God's Son was born. Jesus' genealogy makes it clear, not that there were a few disreputable people in his family, but that all of them were sinners. God sent his Son as Savior of all people—Jews, Gentiles, men, and women. No matter what the sins of the people, God's plan was never thwarted. It continues to unfold. That plan includes you.

### **Jesus' Genealogy Through Joseph – Verses 7-11**

<sup>7</sup> Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, <sup>8</sup> Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram, Jehoram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup> Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup> Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup> and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

**1:11** The exile to Babylon occurred in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem, and took thousands of people captive.

### **Jesus' Genealogy Through Joseph – Verses 12-16**

<sup>12</sup> After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup> Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Elihud, <sup>15</sup> Elihud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

**1:12-16** Matthew traced the genealogy back to Abraham, while Luke traced it back to Adam. Matthew wrote to the Jews, so Jesus was shown as a descendant of their father, Abraham. Luke wrote to the Gentiles, so he emphasized Jesus as the Savior of all people.

**1:16** Because Mary was a virgin when she became pregnant, Matthew lists Joseph only as the husband of Mary, not the father of Jesus. Matthew's genealogy gives Jesus' legal (or royal) lineage through Joseph. Mary's ancestral line is recorded in Luke 3:23-38. Both Mary and Joseph were direct descendants of David.

### **Matthew's Organization Of The Genealogy – Verse 17**

<sup>17</sup> Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

**1:17** Matthew breaks Israel's history into three sets of 14 generations, but there were probably more generations than those listed here. Genealogies often compressed history, meaning that not every generation of ancestors was specifically listed. Thus, the phrase "the father of" can also be translated "the ancestor of."

### **Miraculous Conception By The Holy Spirit – Verse 18**

<sup>18</sup> 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, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

**1:18** Jewish marriage involved three basic steps. First, the two families agreed to the union. Second, a public announcement was made. At this point, the couple was “pledged.” This was similar to engagement today except that their relationship could be broken only through death or divorce (even though sexual relations were not yet permitted). Third, the couple was married and began living together. Because Mary and Joseph were engaged, Mary’s apparent unfaithfulness carried a severe social stigma. According to Jewish civil law, Joseph had a right to divorce her, and the Jewish authorities could have had her stoned to death (Deuteronomy 22:23-24).

**1:18** Why is the Virgin Birth important to the Christian faith? Jesus Christ, God’s Son, had to be free from the sinful nature passed on to all other human beings by Adam. Because Jesus was born of a woman, he was a human being; but as the Son of God, Jesus was born without any trace of human sin. Jesus is both fully human and fully divine.

**1:18** Because Jesus lived as a man, we know that he fully understands our experiences and struggles (Hebrews 4:15-16). Because he is God, he has the power and authority to deliver us from sin (Colossians 2:13-15). We can tell Jesus all our thoughts, feelings, and needs. He has been where we are now, and he has the ability to help.

### **Joseph Seeks A Quiet Divorce – Verse 19**

**19** Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

**1:19** Joseph was faced with a difficult choice after discovering that Mary was pregnant. Perhaps Joseph thought he had only two options: divorce Mary quietly or have her stoned. But God provided a third option—marry her (1:20-23). In view of the circumstances, this had not occurred to Joseph. But God often shows us that there are more options available than we think. Although Joseph seemed to be doing the right thing by breaking the engagement, only God’s guidance helped him make the best decision. But that did not make it an easy decision. Consenting to marry Mary surely cast doubt on his own innocence regarding the pregnancy, as well as leaving them both with a social stigma they would carry for the rest of their lives. Yet Joseph chose to obey the angel’s command (1:24). When our decisions affect the lives of others, we must always seek God’s wisdom and then be willing to follow through no matter how difficult it may be.

### **Angel Speaks To Joseph In A Dream, Convincing Him Not To Divorce Mary – Verses 20-21**

**20** But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

**1:20** The conception and birth of Jesus Christ are supernatural events beyond human logic or reasoning. Because of this, God sent angels to help certain people understand the significance of what was happening (see 2:13, 19; Luke 1:11, 26; 2:9). Angels are spiritual beings created by God who help carry out his work on earth. They bring God’s messages to people (Luke 1:26), protect God’s people (Daniel 6:22), offer encouragement (Genesis 16:7-16), give guidance (Exodus 14:19), carry out punishment (2 Samuel 24:16), patrol the earth (Zechariah 1:9-14), and fight the forces of evil (2 Kings 6:16-18; Revelation 20:1-2). There are both good and bad angels (Revelation 12:7), but because bad angels are allied with the devil, or Satan, they have considerably less power and

authority than good angels. Eventually the main role of angels will be to offer continuous praise to God (Revelation 7:11-12).

### **The Virgin Birth As The Fulfillment Of Prophecy – Verses 22-23**

**<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).**

**1:22-23** The angel declared to Joseph that Mary’s child was conceived by the Holy Spirit and would be a son. This reveals an important truth about Jesus—he is both God and human. The infinite, unlimited God took on the limitations of humanity so he could live and die for the salvation of all who would believe in him.

**1:22-23** Jesus means “the LORD saves.” Jesus came to earth to save us because we can’t save ourselves from sin and its consequences. No matter how good we are, we can’t eliminate the sinful nature present in all of us. Only Jesus can do that. Jesus didn’t come to help people save themselves; he came to be their Savior from the power and penalty of sin. Thank Christ for his death on the cross for your sin, and then ask him to take control of your life. Your new life begins at that moment.

**1:22-23** Jesus would fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah, for he would be “Immanuel” (“God with us”; see Isaiah 7:14). Jesus was God in the flesh; thus, God was literally among us, “with us.” Through the Holy Spirit, Christ is present today in the life of every believer. Perhaps not even Isaiah understood how far-reaching the meaning of Immanuel would be.

### **Joseph Marries Mary After The Angelic Announcement – Verses 24-25**

**<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup> But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.**

**1:24** Joseph changed his plans quickly after learning that Mary had not been unfaithful to him (1:19). He obeyed God and proceeded with the marriage plans. Although others may have disapproved of his decision, Joseph went ahead with what he knew was right. Sometimes we avoid doing what is right because of what others might think. Like Joseph, we must choose to obey God rather than seek the approval of others.