CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Matthew Chapter 1 — The Genealogy of Jesus Christ and the Birth of Immanuel

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Matthew Chapter 1 opens the New Testament.

And it begins in a way many modern readers find surprising.

It begins with a list of names.

But this is not an empty list.

It is the record of God keeping His promises across two thousand years of history.

Before Matthew tells us anything Jesus said or did, he tells us who Jesus is:

“Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

That one sentence connects Jesus to the two great covenant promises of the Old Testament.

God promised Abraham that through his offspring all nations would be blessed.

God promised David that one of his descendants would reign on his throne forever.

Matthew announces that both promises meet in one Person.

The genealogy moves through three great periods of Israel's history.

From Abraham to David.

From David to the exile in Babylon.

From the exile to the Messiah.

Along the way it includes patriarchs and kings, the faithful and the wicked, the famous and the forgotten.

It even includes four women whose stories involve foreigners, scandal, and suffering.

Then the chapter turns to the birth of Jesus.

Mary is found to be with child.

Joseph faces a painful decision.

An angel appears and gives him an extraordinary message:

The child is from the Holy Spirit.

His name will be Jesus.

He will save His people from their sins.

And He will be called Immanuel.

God with us.

Matthew 1 therefore stands at the meeting point of two testaments:

The promises of the Old Testament.

And:

Their fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

The long centuries of waiting are over.

The promised King has come.

The central truth of Matthew 1 is:

Jesus Christ is the promised Son of David and Son of Abraham, miraculously born of a virgin, who came as God with us to save His people from their sins.

I. THE RECORD OF JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 1:1 — “The Son of David, the Son of Abraham”

“This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

Matthew begins with a title.

The phrase **“record of the genealogy”** echoes the language of Genesis.

Genesis repeatedly says:

“These are the generations of...”

Matthew is signaling that a new beginning has arrived.

The name **Jesus** means **“The LORD saves.”**

The title **Christ** means **“Anointed One.”** It is the Greek form of the Hebrew word **Messiah.**

Matthew then gives Jesus two royal and covenant titles.

Son of David — the rightful King of Israel.

Son of Abraham — the promised offspring through whom the nations will be blessed.

Cross References

Genesis 12:3

> All the families of the earth will be blessed through you.

Genesis 22:18

> All the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring, because you have obeyed My voice.

2 Samuel 7:16

> Your house and your kingdom will endure before Me forever; your throne will be established forever.

Galatians 3:16

> The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his offspring. Scripture does not say “and to offsprings,” as of many, but “and to your offspring,” referring to one, who is Christ.

Spiritual Principle

God never forgets a promise.

Centuries passed between the promise to Abraham and the birth of Jesus.

But God was faithful through every generation.

Key Truth

Jesus is not a new idea added to the Old Testament.

Jesus is the fulfillment the Old Testament was pointing toward.

II. FROM ABRAHAM TO JUDAH

Matthew 1:2 — The Fathers of Israel

“Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.”

The genealogy begins with Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation.

It moves through Isaac, the son of promise.

Then through Jacob, whom God renamed Israel.

Then it highlights Judah.

Why Judah?

Because the royal line would come through Judah.

Jacob had prophesied that the scepter would not depart from Judah.

Notice also the phrase:

“And his brothers.”

Matthew reminds us that Jesus came from within the whole family of Israel, the twelve tribes God had chosen.

Cross References

Genesis 21:12

> Through Isaac your offspring will be traced.

Genesis 49:10

> The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until He comes to whom it belongs, and the obedience of the peoples will be His.

Hebrews 7:14

> For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah.

Spiritual Principle

God works through generations, not only through moments.

The faith of one generation prepares the way for the next.

Application

What you pass on matters.

Abraham never saw Jesus born.

But his faith was part of the story that led to Christ.

Faithful believers leave a legacy through:

- Their obedience.
- Their prayers.
- Their example.
- Their teaching.
- Their trust in God's promises.

III. TAMAR — GRACE IN A BROKEN FAMILY

Matthew 1:3 — “Perez and Zerah by Tamar”

“Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram.”

This verse contains the first woman in the genealogy.

Her name is Tamar.

Ancient genealogies usually listed only men.

So when Matthew includes a woman, he does it deliberately.

Tamar's story, found in Genesis 38, is one of the most troubling in the Old Testament.

Judah failed to keep his promise to her.

She disguised herself and conceived children by Judah.

It was a story of deception, sin, and family dysfunction.

Yet God did not erase the story.

He worked through it.

Perez became an ancestor of King David and of Jesus Christ.

Cross References

Genesis 38:26

> Judah recognized them and said, “She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.”

Ruth 4:12

> May your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.

Romans 5:20

> Where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more.

Spiritual Principle

God's grace is greater than our family history.

Jesus did not come from a spotless family tree.

He came into a line filled with real sinners who needed real grace.

Key Truth

The genealogy of Jesus tells us something about the purpose of Jesus.

He came for sinners.

IV. THE LINE CONTINUES THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

Matthew 1:4 — From Ram to Salmon

“Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon.”

These names are less familiar to most readers.

But they carry history with them.

Nahshon was the leader of the tribe of Judah during the wilderness years under Moses.

His sister Elisheba married Aaron, the first high priest.

These generations lived through slavery in Egypt, the Exodus, and the long journey toward the Promised Land.

Matthew does not stop to tell their stories.

But he includes their names.

Cross References

Numbers 1:7

> From Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab.

Numbers 7:12

> The one who presented his offering on the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah.

Exodus 6:23

> Aaron married Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon.

Spiritual Principle

No faithful life is wasted in God's plan.

Many names in this list are almost unknown today.

But God knew each one, and each one mattered to the story of redemption.

V. RAHAB AND RUTH

Matthew 1:5 — Outsiders Brought In

“Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse.”

Two more women appear in this verse.

Both were outsiders.

Rahab was a Canaanite woman from Jericho.

She had lived as a prostitute.

But she believed in the God of Israel, hid the Israelite spies, and was spared when Jericho fell.

Ruth was a Moabitess.

Moab was a nation with a long history of hostility toward Israel.

But Ruth declared to Naomi:

“Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.”

Boaz, the son of Rahab, became Ruth's kinsman-redeemer.

Their son Obed became the grandfather of King David.

Cross References

Joshua 2:11

> The LORD your God is God in heaven above and on earth below.

Hebrews 11:31

> By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had welcomed the spies in peace.

Ruth 1:16

> Wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.

Ruth 4:17

> They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Spiritual Principle

The family of the Messiah has always been open to those who come by faith.

A Canaanite and a Moabitess are named in the ancestry of Jesus.

That is a preview of the gospel going to all nations.

Key Truth

God does not ask where you came from before He welcomes you.

He asks whether you will trust Him.

VI. DAVID THE KING

Matthew 1:6a — “Jesse the Father of David the King”

“Jesse was the father of David the king.”

Matthew gives David a title no one else in the list receives:

“The king.”

This is the high point of the first section of the genealogy.

God had promised David an everlasting throne.

The prophets later spoke of a coming King from David's line, a shoot growing from the stump of Jesse.

Matthew wants his readers to understand:

Jesus is the heir to David's throne.

Cross References

1 Samuel 16:13

> Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully on David from that day forward.

Isaiah 11:1

> Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

Jeremiah 23:5

> “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up a righteous Branch for David. He will reign wisely as King.”

Luke 1:32

> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is not only Savior; He is King.

To receive Jesus is to receive His rule over our lives.

VII. THE WIFE OF URIAH

Matthew 1:6b — David's Greatest Failure Remembered

“David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.”

This is the fourth woman in the genealogy.

But Matthew does not use her name.

He calls her:

“The wife of Uriah.”

Her name was Bathsheba.

Matthew's wording reminds the reader of David's greatest sin.

David committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Then he arranged the death of her husband, Uriah, a loyal soldier.

Matthew could have hidden this.

Instead, he points straight at it.

Even Israel's greatest king needed forgiveness.

Yet God, in His mercy, brought Solomon from that marriage and continued the royal line.

Cross References

2 Samuel 11:27

> But the thing David had done was evil in the eyes of the LORD.

2 Samuel 12:13

> David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan replied, “The LORD has taken away your sin; you will not die.”

Psalm 51:1

> Be gracious to me, God, according to Your faithful love; according to Your abundant compassion, blot out my rebellion.

Spiritual Warning

Sin carries real consequences, even for those God uses greatly.

David's sin brought great sorrow into his family.

Matthew's wording keeps that warning in front of us.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance opens the door to mercy.

David's confession in Psalm 51 shows that the way back to God is honest repentance.

VIII. THE KINGS OF JUDAH

Matthew 1:7–8 — From Solomon to Uzziah

“Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa. Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah.”

The genealogy now becomes a list of kings.

Solomon built the temple, but his heart was turned away by idolatry in his later years.

Under Rehoboam, the kingdom divided.

Asa and Jehoshaphat were generally faithful kings who sought the LORD.

Joram married into the wicked house of Ahab and led Judah into sin.

Matthew moves from Joram directly to Uzziah.

Several generations are skipped here.

This was a common practice in Jewish genealogies.

The word **“father”** could mean **“ancestor.”**

Matthew's purpose was not to list every person, but to trace the royal line clearly and memorably.

Cross References

1 Kings 11:4

> When Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away to follow other gods.

2 Chronicles 17:3–4

> The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the former ways of his father David. He sought the God of his father and walked by His commands.

2 Chronicles 21:6

> He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for Ahab's daughter was his wife. He did what was evil in the LORD's sight.

Spiritual Principle

A godly heritage does not guarantee a godly heart.

Each generation must choose to follow the LORD for itself.

IX. FAITHFUL AND UNFAITHFUL KINGS

Matthew 1:9–10 — From Jotham to Josiah

“Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah.”

These verses show the spiritual ups and downs of Judah's history.

Ahaz was one of Judah's most wicked kings.

He even sacrificed his own son in the fire.

Yet it was to Ahaz that Isaiah gave the prophecy Matthew will quote later in this chapter:

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son.”

Hezekiah, his son, was one of Judah's most faithful kings.

Manasseh was perhaps the most wicked of all, yet he humbled himself late in life and God restored him.

Josiah led one of the greatest revivals in Israel's history when the Book of the Law was rediscovered.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

> Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive, have a son, and name Him Immanuel.

2 Kings 18:5

> Hezekiah trusted in the LORD God of Israel; not one of the kings of Judah was like him, either before him or after him.

2 Chronicles 33:12–13

> When he was in distress, he sought the favor of the LORD his God and earnestly humbled himself before the God of his ancestors. He prayed to Him, and the LORD was moved by his request.

2 Kings 23:25

> Before him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength.

Spiritual Principle

No one is beyond the reach of God's mercy.

If God could restore Manasseh, He can restore anyone who truly repents.

Application

Family patterns are real.

But they are not destiny.

- A faithful parent may have an unfaithful child.
- An unfaithful parent may have a faithful child.
- A broken life may be restored late.
- Revival can come in a dark generation.
- God remains sovereign through every generation.

X. THE EXILE TO BABYLON

Matthew 1:11 — “At the Time of the Exile”

“Josiah was the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.”

Matthew marks a turning point.

The exile.

Jerusalem fell.

The temple was destroyed.

The people were carried away to Babylon.

To many, it seemed as though David's throne had come to an end.

Jeconiah, also called Jehoiachin, was taken captive.

God had even declared through Jeremiah that none of Jeconiah's descendants would sit successfully on David's throne.

How then could the Messiah come through this line?

Matthew will answer that question in verse 16.

Cross References

2 Kings 24:15

> Nebuchadnezzar deported Jehoiachin to Babylon.

Jeremiah 22:30

> None of his descendants will succeed in sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.

Jeremiah 29:11

> “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

Spiritual Principle

God's promises survive even when everything looks lost.

The exile looked like the end of David's line.

It was not.

Key Truth

Judgment was real.

But God's promise was greater than Israel's failure.

XI. AFTER THE EXILE

Matthew 1:12 — Shealtiel and Zerubbabel

“After the exile to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel.”

The line continued in a foreign land.

Zerubbabel became the governor of Judah after the return from exile.

He led the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.

God spoke of him through the prophet Haggai as His chosen servant and His signet ring.

The family of David was humbled.

But it had not disappeared.

Cross References

Ezra 3:8

> Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel... began the work of rebuilding the house of God.

Haggai 2:23

> “On that day,” declares the LORD of Armies, “I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, My servant... and make you like My signet ring, for I have chosen you.”

Zechariah 4:6

> Not by strength or by might, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of Armies.

Spiritual Principle

God rebuilds what sin and judgment have torn down.

Restoration is part of God's character.

XII. THE SILENT GENERATIONS

Matthew 1:13–15 — From Abihud to Jacob

“Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob.”

After Zerubbabel, none of these names appear anywhere else in the Old Testament.

They lived during the centuries between the Old and New Testaments.

No prophet spoke during much of this time.

The royal family of David was no longer royal.

By the time of Joseph, David's descendants included a working carpenter in the small town of Nazareth.

The throne seemed forgotten.

But God had not forgotten.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:1

> A shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse.

Galatians 4:4

> When the time came to completion, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.

2 Peter 3:9

> The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay.

Spiritual Principle

God's silence is not God's absence.

During four hundred years of quiet, God was preparing the world for the coming of His Son.

Application

You may be in a season where nothing seems to be happening.

But God is still at work in:

- Ordinary days.
- Quiet years.
- Unnoticed faithfulness.
- Unanswered prayers.
- Seasons of waiting.

XIII. JOSEPH, THE HUSBAND OF MARY

Matthew 1:16 — “Of Whom Jesus Was Born”

“Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Christ.”

For forty generations, the pattern has been the same:

“A was the father of B.”

But now the pattern changes.

Matthew does not say Joseph was the father of Jesus.

He says Joseph was:

“The husband of Mary.”

Then he says:

“Of whom Jesus was born.”

In the original Greek, the word **“whom”** is feminine.

It refers to Mary alone.

Matthew is carefully preparing his readers for the virgin birth.

Joseph was Jesus' legal father.

Through Joseph, Jesus received the legal right to David's throne.

But Jesus was not Joseph's biological son.

This also answers the problem of Jeconiah's curse.

Jesus received the legal right to the throne through Joseph, but He was not a physical descendant of Jeconiah through Joseph.

Cross References

Luke 1:34–35

> Mary asked the angel, “How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?” The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.”

Luke 3:23

> As He began His ministry, Jesus was about thirty years old and was thought to be the son of Joseph.

Romans 1:3

> Concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was a descendant of David according to the flesh.

Spiritual Principle

Every word of Scripture is chosen carefully.

A single small word in this verse protects one of the great truths of the Christian faith.

Key Truth

Jesus is the legal Son of David through Joseph and the eternal Son of God through the miracle of His birth.

XIV. THREE SETS OF FOURTEEN

Matthew 1:17 — The Structure of History

“So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; from David until the exile to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.”

Matthew organizes the genealogy into three groups of fourteen.

This was a teaching and memory device.

It also carries meaning.

In Hebrew, letters also had number values.

The letters of the name **David** add up to fourteen.

Matthew's whole genealogy is shaped around David.

The three periods tell the story of Israel:

Abraham to David — the rise of the nation to the throne.

David to the exile — the decline and fall of the kingdom.

The exile to Christ — the long wait for the promised King.

History is not random.

It is moving toward Christ.

Cross References

Acts 17:26

> From one man He has made every nationality to live over the whole earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live.

Ephesians 1:10

> To bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth, in Him.

Daniel 2:21

> He changes the times and seasons; He removes kings and establishes kings.

Spiritual Principle

God is the Lord of history.

Empires rise and fall.

But God's purpose moves forward on schedule.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

History is His story — and every chapter points to Jesus.

XV. THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 1:18 — “Found to Be with Child from the Holy Spirit”

“The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After His mother Mary had been pledged in marriage to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew now turns from the genealogy to the birth itself.

Mary was pledged to Joseph.

A Jewish betrothal was much more binding than a modern engagement.

The couple was legally considered husband and wife, though they did not yet live together.

Breaking a betrothal required a legal divorce.

Before they came together, Mary was found to be pregnant.

Matthew states the cause plainly:

“From the Holy Spirit.”

This was not a natural event.

It was a divine miracle.

Cross References

Luke 1:31

> Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name Him Jesus.

Luke 1:37

> For nothing will be impossible with God.

Genesis 3:15

> I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike His heel.

Spiritual Principle

The coming of Christ was God's work from beginning to end.

Salvation did not begin with human effort.

It began with a divine miracle.

XVI. JOSEPH, A RIGHTEOUS MAN

Matthew 1:19 — Justice and Mercy Together

“Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, he decided to divorce her quietly.”

Joseph faced a crisis.

As far as he knew, Mary had been unfaithful.

The law gave him the right to make the matter public.

But Joseph was:

“A righteous man.”

His righteousness was shown in two ways.

He would not ignore what appeared to be sin.

But he would not humiliate Mary either.

He chose to divorce her quietly.

Joseph's response shows a beautiful balance of truth and mercy.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 22:23–24

> If there is a young woman who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and sleeps with her, take the two of them out to the gate of that city and stone them to death.

Micah 6:8

> Mankind, He has told each of you what is good and what it is the LORD requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Proverbs 10:12

> Hatred stirs up conflicts, but love covers all offenses.

Spiritual Principle

True righteousness is never cruel.

Godly people care about holiness, but they also care about people.

Application

When we believe we have been wronged, Joseph shows us a better way:

- Do not act in anger.
- Do not seek to shame others.
- Think carefully before acting.
- Show mercy where possible.
- Remain open to what God may reveal.

XVII. AN ANGEL APPEARS IN A DREAM

Matthew 1:20 — “Do Not Be Afraid”

“But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’”

Joseph was thinking it through.

He had not acted in haste.

Then God spoke.

Notice how the angel addressed him:

“Joseph, son of David.”

Joseph was being reminded of his place in the royal line.

The child he would raise was connected to God's promise to David.

The angel told him:

“Do not be afraid.”

Joseph may have feared what people would say.

He may have feared being part of a scandal.

But God gave him the truth.

The child was from the Holy Spirit.

Cross References

Genesis 15:1

Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield; your reward will be very great.

Isaiah 41:10

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God.

Matthew 2:13

After they were gone, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to Joseph in a dream.

Spiritual Principle

God gives guidance to those who are seeking to do right.

Joseph was trying to act righteously, and God met him in his uncertainty.

Key Truth

Fear often fades when God's truth is revealed.

XVIII. HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS

Matthew 1:21 — The Meaning of the Name Jesus

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.”

This is one of the most important verses in the chapter.

The name **Jesus** is the Greek form of the Hebrew name **Yeshua** or **Joshua.**

It means:

“The LORD saves.”

The name was not chosen by Mary or Joseph.

It was chosen by God.

And God explained why:

“He will save His people from their sins.”

Many people in Israel expected a Messiah who would save them from Rome.

But Jesus came to deal with a deeper problem.

Not merely political oppression.

Sin.

Cross References

Luke 19:10

> For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.

Acts 4:12

> There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.

1 Timothy 1:15

> Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Psalm 130:8

> He will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

Spiritual Principle

Humanity's greatest need is not improvement, but salvation.

Jesus came not merely to teach us, inspire us, or reform us.

He came to save us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The name of Jesus is His mission.

XIX. TO FULFILL WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN

Matthew 1:22 — The First Fulfillment

“Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet.”

This is the first of many fulfillment statements in Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew wrote with a Jewish audience strongly in view.

He repeatedly shows that Jesus fulfills the Old Testament Scriptures.

Notice who Matthew says spoke the prophecy:

“The Lord through the prophet.”

The prophet was the messenger.

The Lord was the source.

Cross References

2 Peter 1:21

> No prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 5:17

> Don't think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

Luke 24:44

> Everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

Spiritual Principle

God's Word always comes true.

What God speaks, God fulfills.

Key Truth

Fulfilled prophecy is one of the strongest reasons to trust the Bible.

XX. IMMANUEL — GOD WITH US

Matthew 1:23 — The Virgin Will Conceive

“See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel, which is translated ‘God is with us.’”

Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14.

Isaiah first spoke these words to King Ahaz during a time of national crisis.

God offered a sign.

Matthew shows that the full and final fulfillment of that sign is Jesus.

Two great truths appear in this verse.

First, the virgin birth.

Jesus was conceived without a human father.

Second, the identity of the child.

His name is **Immanuel.**

“God is with us.”

Jesus is not merely a messenger from God.

He is God Himself who has come to be with His people.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

> Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive, have a son, and name Him Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6

> For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us... He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

John 1:14

> The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Matthew 28:20

> And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Spiritual Principle

God did not save us from a distance.

He came near.

Application

Matthew's Gospel begins with **“God with us”** and ends with Jesus saying:

“I am with you always.”

The presence of God is the great promise of the whole Gospel.

Because Jesus is Immanuel:

- You are never alone in suffering.
- You are never alone in temptation.
- You are never alone in grief.
- You are never alone in obedience.
- You are never alone in death.

XXI. JOSEPH OBEYED

Matthew 1:24 — Immediate Obedience

“When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary as his wife.”

Joseph does not say a single word in the Gospels.

But his actions speak clearly.

When God spoke, Joseph obeyed.

He did not delay.

He did not negotiate.

He took Mary as his wife.

In doing so, Joseph accepted whatever misunderstanding and gossip might follow.

He protected Mary.

He accepted responsibility for the child.

Cross References

Matthew 2:14

> So he got up, took the child and His mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt.

James 1:22

> But be doers of the word and not hearers only.

John 14:15

> If you love Me, you will keep My commands.

Spiritual Principle

Faith is shown through obedience.

Joseph's faith did not stay in his mind; it moved his feet.

Key Truth

The greatest response to God's Word is not admiration but obedience.

XXII. HE NAMED HIM JESUS

Matthew 1:25 — Joseph's Faithfulness Completed

“But he did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. And he named Him Jesus.”

Matthew stresses again that Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus.

Mary remained a virgin until Jesus was born.

Then Joseph named the child.

Naming a child was the father's right and responsibility.

By naming Him, Joseph publicly accepted Jesus as his legal son.

And that gave Jesus His legal place in the royal line of David.

The chapter ends with one word:

Jesus.

Cross References

Luke 2:7

> Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped Him tightly in cloth and laid Him in a manger.

Luke 2:21

> When the eight days were completed for His circumcision, He was named Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived.

Philippians 2:9–10

> For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience honors God in private as well as in public.

Joseph's restraint and faithfulness were known to God even when no one else saw them.

XXIII. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM MATTHEW 1

1. God Keeps His Promises

Jesus is called:

“The Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

Promises made centuries earlier were fulfilled in Him.

Principle:

God's delays are never God's denials.

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2. Grace Runs Through the Genealogy

Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah are all named.

Kings like Manasseh are included.

Principle:

Jesus came into a family of sinners because He came to save sinners.

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3. The Gospel Is for All Nations

Rahab was a Canaanite.

Ruth was a Moabitess.

Principle:

From the first page of the New Testament, God shows that His salvation reaches beyond one nation.

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4. God Is Sovereign Over History

Matthew arranges history into three sets of fourteen generations.

Principle:

Nothing in history is outside God's control, and all of it moves toward Christ.

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5. Jesus Was Born of a Virgin

Mary was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

Principle:

The miracle of Christ's birth testifies that He is more than a man.

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6. Jesus Came to Save

“He will save His people from their sins.”

Principle:

Jesus is not just a teacher or example; He is a Savior.

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7. God Uses Ordinary, Obedient People

Joseph was a working man from Nazareth.

But he listened to God and obeyed.

Principle:

God's great purposes often move forward through quiet, faithful obedience.

XXIV. FOUR WOMEN IN THE GENEALOGY

Matthew includes four women before Mary.

Each one tells us something about the grace of God.

Tamar

A woman wronged by Judah, whose story involved deception and scandal.

God brought the line of the Messiah through her son Perez.

Rahab

A Canaanite prostitute who believed in the God of Israel.

God saved her and placed her in the line of David.

Ruth

A Moabitess who left her gods to follow the LORD.

God made her the great-grandmother of King David.

The Wife of Uriah

A woman caught up in the sin of a king.

God brought Solomon, the next king, from her.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

These women show us that God's grace reaches:

- The wronged.
- The outsider.
- The foreigner.
- The broken.
- The sinner.

And all of them point to Mary, through whom God did the greatest miracle of all.

XXV. WHY DOES MATTHEW BEGIN WITH A GENEALOGY?

To many modern readers, a list of names seems like a strange way to begin a book.

But to Matthew's first readers, it was the perfect beginning.

It Proves Jesus' Right to the Throne

A Jewish Messiah had to be a descendant of David.

It Connects Jesus to Abraham

Jesus is the one through whom the nations would be blessed.

It Shows God's Faithfulness

Generation after generation, God kept the line alive.

It Shows That Jesus Entered Real History

Jesus is not a legend or myth.

He was born into a real family, in a real place, at a real time.

Spiritual Principle

Christianity is rooted in history, not in imagination.

XXVI. MATTHEW 1 AND LUKE 3

Both Matthew and Luke give a genealogy of Jesus.

But they are different.

Matthew's Genealogy

- Begins with Abraham and moves forward.
- Traces the line through Solomon.
- Emphasizes Jesus as the royal King.
- Follows Joseph's legal line.

Luke's Genealogy

- Begins with Jesus and moves backward.
- Traces the line through Nathan, another son of David.
- Goes all the way back to Adam.
- Emphasizes Jesus as Savior of all humanity.

Many Bible students have understood Luke's genealogy to follow Mary's family line, while Matthew follows Joseph's legal line.

Either way, both Gospels agree on the most important truth:

Jesus is the Son of David.

Key Truth

Matthew shows Jesus as the rightful King of the Jews.

Luke shows Jesus as the Savior of the whole human race.

XXVII. WHAT MATTHEW 1 TEACHES ABOUT THE VIRGIN BIRTH

The virgin birth is not a minor detail.

It is essential to who Jesus is.

It Was Prophesied

Isaiah 7:14 foretold that the virgin would conceive.

It Was Miraculous

Mary was with child from the Holy Spirit.

It Shows Jesus Is Fully God

His conception was from God, not from a human father.

It Shows Jesus Is Fully Man

He was truly born of a woman.

It Preserves His Sinlessness

Jesus came into the world as the holy Son of God, not as one more descendant of fallen Adam needing a Savior.

Key Truth

The virgin birth is the doorway through which the eternal Son of God entered human history.

XXVIII. WHAT MATTHEW 1 TEACHES ABOUT JESUS

Matthew 1 presents Jesus as:

The Christ

The anointed Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

The Son of David

The rightful heir to David's eternal throne.

The Son of Abraham

The promised blessing for all nations.

The Son of God

Conceived by the Holy Spirit.

The Savior

He will save His people from their sins.

Immanuel

God with us.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The child born in Bethlehem is the King of Israel, the Savior of sinners, and God Himself come to dwell with us.

XXIX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why does Matthew call Jesus “the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” in the very first verse?

These titles connect Jesus to the two great covenant promises of the Old Testament.

God promised Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his offspring.

God promised David that his descendant would reign forever.

Matthew immediately shows that Jesus is the fulfillment of both.

Question 2

Why is it unusual that Matthew includes women in the genealogy?

Jewish genealogies usually listed only men.

Matthew deliberately includes Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah.

Their stories involve:

- Scandal.
- Foreign backgrounds.
- Sin committed by or against them.
- The surprising grace of God.

Their inclusion shows that God's grace reaches people we might not expect.

Question 3

Why does Matthew refer to Bathsheba as “the wife of Uriah”?

The wording reminds readers of David's sin of adultery and murder.

It shows that even Israel's greatest king needed God's forgiveness.

It also honors Uriah, the faithful man who was wronged.

Question 4

Why are some generations left out of the genealogy?

Jewish genealogies often skipped generations.

The word **“father”** could mean **“ancestor.”**

Matthew's goal was to show the line of descent clearly, not to list every individual.

His arrangement into three groups of fourteen also made the genealogy easier to remember.

Question 5

What is the significance of the number fourteen?

Matthew divides history into three sets of fourteen generations.

In Hebrew, the letters of the name David add up to fourteen.

This emphasizes that Jesus is the true Son of David.

It also shows that history is under God's careful direction.

Question 6

How does verse 16 point toward the virgin birth?

Throughout the genealogy, Matthew writes, **“A was the father of B.”**

But in verse 16, he does not say Joseph was the father of Jesus.

He says Joseph was **“the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born.”**

The word **“whom”** is feminine in Greek, pointing to Mary alone.

Question 7

What does Joseph's decision in verse 19 tell us about his character?

Joseph was a righteous man.

He would not ignore what he thought was sin.

But he also refused to shame Mary publicly.

His righteousness was joined with mercy and self-control.

Question 8

What does the name Jesus mean, and why is it important?

The name Jesus means **“The LORD saves.”**

The angel explained:

“He will save His people from their sins.”

Jesus' name describes His mission.

He came to rescue people from sin, not merely from political or earthly trouble.

Question 9

What does the name Immanuel teach us about Jesus?

Immanuel means **“God is with us.”**

Jesus is not only sent from God.

He is God who came to live among His people.

This is the foundation of the Christian belief that Jesus is both fully God and fully man.

Question 10

Why is the virgin birth important to the Christian faith?

The virgin birth:

- Fulfilled prophecy.
- Shows that Jesus came from God.
- Shows that He is truly human.
- Shows that His coming was a miracle of God, not human effort.

- Points to His holiness and sinless nature.

Question 11

How did Joseph respond to God's message?

Joseph obeyed immediately.

He took Mary as his wife.

He protected her and accepted responsibility for the child.

He named the child Jesus, just as the angel had commanded.

Question 12

What should Matthew 1 change about the way Christians live today?

Matthew 1 should cause believers to live:

- Confident that God keeps His promises.
- Grateful for grace that reaches sinners.
- Open to people from every background.
- Trusting God's control over history.
- Worshiping Jesus as Savior and King.
- Aware that God is with them.
- Ready to obey when God speaks.

XXX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Matthew 1 asks several important questions.

Do I Believe God Keeps His Promises?

God's promises to Abraham and David waited centuries for fulfillment, but not one failed.

Do I Think My Past Is Too Broken for God?

Look at the names in Jesus' family line.

Grace is greater than any history.

Have I Received Jesus as My Savior?

He came to save His people from their sins.

Have I trusted Him to save me?

Have I Submitted to Jesus as My King?

The Son of David has the right to rule my life.

Do I Live Aware That God Is With Me?

Immanuel is not only a Christmas word.

It is a daily truth.

Am I Responding to God Like Joseph?

When God makes His will clear, do I obey promptly?

Do I Show Mercy When I Have Been Hurt?

Joseph chose not to shame Mary even when he thought he had been wronged.

Am I Faithful in the Quiet Seasons?

Many generations served God without seeing the fulfillment of the promise.

XXXI. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Writes Straight Lines Through Crooked Generations”

The genealogy of Jesus is not a list of perfect people.

It includes liars and schemers.

It includes adulterers and idolaters.

It includes foreigners and outcasts.

It includes wicked kings and repentant kings.

It includes people no one remembers.

And yet through all of them, God moved His plan forward without failure.

Every generation added another link in the chain.

And the chain ended exactly where God said it would:

Jesus Christ.

This creates a powerful principle.

Human failure is real.

But it is never final when God is at work.

God does not need perfect people to accomplish His perfect plan.

He works through flawed people by His grace.

Principle:

Human sin cannot cancel God's promises; it only reveals how great His grace must be.

XXXII. FINAL APPLICATION

Matthew Chapter 1 stands at the doorway of the New Testament.

For centuries, Israel had waited.

The prophets had spoken.

Then the prophets went silent.

The throne of David was empty.

The royal family was poor and forgotten.

Rome ruled the land.

Many may have wondered whether God had forgotten His promises.

But in a small town called Nazareth, a young woman was told she would bear a son.

And a carpenter named Joseph was told not to be afraid.

No crowds were watching.

No kings were paying attention.

No headlines announced what was happening.

But God was keeping every promise He had ever made.

The promise to Abraham.

The promise to David.

The promise of Isaiah.

The promise of a Savior.

Matthew 1 therefore reminds us:

Never assume God has forgotten because He is quiet.

Before the King came, there were forty-two generations of waiting.

Before the Savior was revealed, there was a young couple who simply obeyed.

Before the world saw Jesus, God was preparing every detail.

The story of salvation did not begin with a crowd.

It began with:

A faithful promise.

A miraculous conception.

An obedient man.

And a child named Jesus.

The same Jesus still saves:

Tell people that God keeps His promises.

Tell people that grace reaches sinners.

Tell people that Jesus came to save them from their sins.

Tell people that God came near.

Tell people that He is still with us.

And until He returns:

Trust His promises.

Receive His grace.

Obey His Word.

Rest in His presence.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for being a God who keeps Your promises.

Thank You that what You promised to Abraham and to David, You fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Thank You that no generation was outside Your care and no failure could stop Your plan.

Thank You for the grace that runs through the family line of Jesus.

Thank You that You welcomed Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba into Your story.

Thank You that You still welcome sinners, outsiders, and broken people who come to You by faith.

Thank You for sending Your Son into the world.

Thank You for the miracle of His birth by the Holy Spirit.

Thank You that His name is Jesus, because He saves His people from their sins.

Save us from our sins.

Rule over our lives as our King.

Thank You that He is Immanuel, God with us.

Help us live every day aware of Your presence.

When we are afraid, remind us of Your Word.

When we are uncertain, give us wisdom like You gave Joseph.

When we have been hurt, give us mercy instead of revenge.

When You make Your will clear, give us hearts that obey without delay.

When we walk through quiet seasons, help us remain faithful.

Teach us to trust You when we cannot see what You are doing.

Help us remember that You are writing a story far greater than our own.

Use our lives, our families, and our faith to point the next generation to Jesus.

May we worship Him as the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, and the Son of God.

And may we never forget the wonder of His name:

“God is with us.”

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Verse

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.” — Matthew 1:21

Central Truth

Jesus Christ, the promised Son of David and Son of Abraham, was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin as Immanuel, God with us, to save His people from their sins.

Matthew 1 in One Sentence

Matthew traces the faithful hand of God through forty-two generations of real and imperfect people to the miraculous birth of Jesus, the promised King and Savior, whose name declares that He saves His people and whose title declares that God is with us.