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The Genealogy Of Jesus The Messiah

Last time we introduced the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew we said was a tax collector; in Jewish society he was viewed on the same social rung as a harlot because he had sold out to Rome and was making a living by gouging his fellow Jews. When he writes, likely around AD50 he is a believer in the Messiahship of Jesus. His gospel has all the signs of being distinctively Jewish. For example, he uses kingdom of heaven far more frequently than kingdom of God in order to not offend Jews who abstained from using the name of God. Also he quotes from the OT far more frequently than other Gospel writers. Further he leaves Jewish customs unexplained and his expressions and vocabulary are distinctively Hebraic. His message is therefore directed toward fellow Jews who made up the nucleus of the early Church in the Book of Acts. These Jews would have been arguing with their fellow unbelieving Jews over the claim that Jesus was the Messiah. One of the skeptic's objections to this claim would have been that if Jesus was the Messiah then where was the Messiah's kingdom? Matthew writes in part to answer this objection. His answer is two-fold. First, he argues that Jesus has the Messianic credentials. Jesus has the proper genealogy, he has the orthodox teaching and the confirmatory miracles. Thus Jesus is the Messiah. Early Jewish believers would be confirmed in their faith in Jesus as the Messiah by these credentials. Jewish unbelievers would be challenged once more to put their faith in Jesus as the Messiah by these same credentials. Second, he argues that the Messiah's kingdom program has been put on hold temporarily in light of the nation Israel's rejection. Jesus' parables of the kingdom in Matt 13 and His Olivet Discourse in Matt 24-25 make plain that the kingdom has been delayed until the nation Israel accepts Him as their Messiah. Early Jewish believers would again be confirmed in their faith that Jesus was the Messiah by this explanation. Jewish unbelievers would again be challenged to put their faith in Jesus as the Messiah so that the kingdom

could come. Matthew is making an argument. His argument is the reason he picks and chooses certain material and presents it in the manner he presents it. He wants to confirm his Jewish audience's faith in the Messiah and give an explanation for the delay in the kingdom program. Remember that Matthew is getting his kingdom concept from the OT. We don't get a concept of the kingdom from Matthew. Matthew is picking up the kingdom concept from the OT as that which centered on the eternal king from David who would sit on an eternal throne and rule an eternal kingdom on earth. So we are to interpret the kingdom in that light and not read a concept of the kingdom that we might imagine into Matthew. This is critical because an increasingly common view is that Jesus offered the kingdom and those who received entered an already form of the kingdom that will find it's not yet form in the future. Progressive Dispensationalist David Turner describes it as follows. "A common and helpful way to describe the dynamic nature of God's reign is to say that it has been inaugurated at Jesus' first coming and will be consummated when he returns. John, Jesus, and the disciples announce the dawning of the kingdom (3:2; 4:17; 10:7). Those who repent at this message of God's rule already begin to experience the reality the kingdom (5:3, 10)."ⁱ This already-not yet scheme therefore holds that Jesus did inaugurate a form of the kingdom not known in the OT. It rejects the postponement of the kingdom. Matthew, then, in their view, does give us a concept of the kingdom which had never been revealed before. This view is predicated on the idea that when Jesus, the King came, the kingdom also came and so all who had faith in Him actually enter the kingdom at that time. My understanding as a Traditional Dispensationalist differs substantially in that Jesus, the King came, but the kingdom only came near. Its actual arrival was contingent upon Israel's national repentance. When the nation rejected the kingdom's arrival was postponed (from the human point of view). Those who did believe in Him were given kingdom citizenship and will enter the kingdom of God when it actually arrives in the future. Until then, those of us in the Church do receive kingdom citizenship when we believe and thus are assured kingdom entrance in the future. In this view Matthew did not give us a concept of the kingdom, he merely carried over the kingdom concept from the OT and explained why the kingdom did not come and what God's program is in the meantime; it's coming was and remains contingent on Israel's reception of Jesus as the King.

Because of one's understanding of the kingdom, how one handles Matthew is pivotal. As Dr Pentecost said, "If I were pressed as to the two most important books of the dispensationalist, it might surprise you to know I would not pick Daniel and Revelation. I would pick Matthew and Acts."ⁱⁱ I would agree because Matthew explains the postponement of the Kingdom's arrival and Acts explains the transition to the mystery Church during the postponement.

Tonight we have a few more introductory items to bring into the picture and then we'll look at Matt 1:1-17. The gospels are generally studied in one of two methods. First, there are those who study them as a narrative of the life of Christ. This approach results in trying to harmonize the Gospels in order to reconstruct the life of Jesus. The result is a history. Second, there are those who study them in light of their doctrinal content. This approach results in emphasizing the doctrines of each gospel writer or comparing the doctrines of the gospel writers with those of the epistles. The result is a theology. Both the narrative and doctrinal approaches have some validity and have yielded helpful results. However, both have neglected to some degree the importance of allowing each Gospel writer to make his own specific argument. Matthew is neither strictly narrative nor doctrinal. Structurally, Matthew uses narrative to set the historical context for the doctrinal discourses. As Toussaint says, "It appears Matthew uses the narrative sections of his Gospel as an introduction to and a setting for the discourses of Jesus. Because of this the events generally recede into the background and the discourses assume the important role."ⁱⁱⁱ So Matthew does use narrative but the emphasis in Matthew is on the discourses. There are five discourses and so the way to think through the book is to section off the narrative and the discourse that follows, then go into the next narrative and the discourse that follows and so on and so forth. Marking off these five sections Matthew uses an identical expression at the end of each discourse, "And when Jesus had finished..." (*kai egeneto ote etelesen*). Observe the first one in Matt 7:28 at the close of the Sermon on the Mount, "When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." Turn to the second one in Matt 11:1, "When Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities." For the third one turn to Matt 13:53 at the close of the kingdom parables, "When Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there." The fourth one is Matt 19:1, "When Jesus had finished these words, He departed from Galilee and

came into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan; and large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there.” Finally, in Matt 26:1 following the Olivet discourse, “When Jesus had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion.” So it seems the identical expression, “When Jesus had finished...” at the conclusion of each of the five discourses gives us the structure in Matthew’s mind. We can wisely build our structure around his structure and not arbitrarily force a structure on the text. All Bible study should have this goal, to read out what is present and to avoid reading in what we think. That’s why it’s so much work. It’s not easy to draw out of the text because it forces us to focus on the text, which is very near the whole of loving God.

So putting together what we’ve just said, Matthew gives a narrative to provide context, then with the context set he records one of Jesus’ discourses. When Jesus finishes the discourse Matthew concludes with the identical expression “When Jesus had finished...” and turns to the next narrative and discourse. In the end what comes out is five pictures or frames in succession which present Matthew’s argument. This succession is not strictly chronological but logical building blocks in the argument. Without being too detailed at this time the five sections are 1:1-7:29; 8:1-11:1; 11:2-13:53; 13:54-19:2; 19:3-25:46. At the end there is one final section detailing the death and resurrection, 26:1-28:20. That said I still think it’s helpful to see these sections in the general flow of the argument. What’s the flow of the argument? In Matthew 1-11 Jesus offers the Kingdom, in Matthew 12 the leadership reject the Kingdom, in Matthew 12-28 Jesus explains the postponement of the Kingdom’s arrival in light of the rejection. Tonight we will get into the first section and the first two blocks of narrative-discourse, 1:1-7:29 and 8:1-11:1.

Now within these narrative-discourse pictures Matthew does something interesting. He groups material into numbers of three or five or six or seven or ten or fourteen. In the genealogy there are three groups of fourteen generations, in the temptations there are three temptations, in the miracles there are ten works of wonder, etc...Why does Matthew cluster generations or events in numerical groups? It may simply be that Matthew was a tax collector and had an infatuation with numbers. More likely, however, he is using the clusters as teaching devices. Scroggie says, “Jewish-Christian

catechists would use them in their catechumen classes, and in this way much narrative and teaching could be held in the mind.”^{iv} So basically Matthew gives us pedagogical devices in order to help us master his material. J. Vernon McGee said this book was as critical as Genesis for you to be able to “think your way through.”^v Matthew, by his clusters, helps us achieve that aim.

Starting with our formal exposition, in Matt 1:1-17 we have the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, a legal document that puts Gentiles to sleep. I hope you don’t go to sleep. Paul had someone fall asleep in his bible class and the guy fell out of the window and died. Paul resuscitated him but I can’t do that because I’m not an apostle. Fortunately we don’t have any windows to fall out of but its best just stay awake anyway. If you were a Jew this information would be most pertinent. Why? Because if Jesus did not have the genealogical credentials to be the Messiah then the rest of Mathew’s argument is pointless. The Messiah had to be of the seed of David, the seed of Abraham. Therefore genealogical details were scrupulously kept by the Jews so that if Messianic claims were made they could go down to the Temple where these genealogies were kept and validate or invalidate the claims. Can they still do that today? No. Why not? Because in AD70 the Temple was destroyed by Titus and the Roman armies and these genealogies were lost. Therefore it stands to reason that since God would not leave the nation Israel without means of genealogical validation that the Messiah had to come before AD70.

The first phrase is not unimportant, **The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah.** The phrase **the record of the genealogy** is *Biblos geneleos*. It is literally translated, “a book of generation” referring to how something came into existence. Obviously in view here is how Jesus the Messiah came into existence. The identical expression is used in the Septuagint in Gen 2:4 and 5:1. In Gen 2:4 we find “the book of the generation” of the universe as recorded in Gen 1:1-2:4. In Gen 5:1 we find “the book of the generation” of Adam. The NT Matt 1:1 appropriately opens with “the book of the generation” of Jesus. Thus there are three books; first, the book of the origins of the universe, second the book of the origin of Adam who fell into sin and thus brought ruin upon the entire human race, and third, the book of the origin of Jesus who did not fall into sin and thus brings salvation to the entire human race. The names of all men will ultimately be in one of two books, the book of Adam, wherein all the names are recorded of those who by

their own rejection will suffer eternal condemnation in the lake of fire or the book of Jesus, wherein all the names are recorded of those who by grace will glory in eternal justification in the new heaven and new earth. So **the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah** is not a cute introductory phrase but the very beginning of the good news that there is another book in addition to that of Adam, and thus freedom from condemnation in Adam into the eternal life of Jesus the Messiah.

The name **Jesus** is the personal name given to Him by Joseph as revealed to him by an angel of the Lord. The name is *Iesous*, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *Yeshua* from which we get Joshua or Jeshua or Jehoshua. All the names mean the same thing; they mean “the Lord is salvation.” Jesus’ personal name then, tells us His identity, that He is the Lord, and His provision, that is salvation. There is salvation in no other name under heaven than the name of Jesus. Salvation is exclusively found in Jesus.

This **Jesus is the Messiah. Messiah** is Jesus’ title not a personal name. The title in Greek is *Christos*. In the OT Septuagint *Christos* translates the Hebrew *Mashiach* all 39 times. Thus *Christos* is the equivalent of the Hebrew *Mashiach*. Both mean “the Anointed One.” The anointing refers to the spreading of oil on someone or something to set them or it apart for service. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed for service. Here the clear emphasis is on the fact that Jesus was anointed in the office of King. He is the Davidic King.

Matthew is the book of the generation of Jesus, who by nature is the Lord who provided salvation, who is the Messiah set apart to the office of King. This is a royal genealogy. How does the royal genealogy begin in v 1? By summarizing His genealogy. He is **the son of David, the son of Abraham**. He skips a whole lot there to point out the main players **David** and **Abraham**. Now didn’t Matthew know that **Abraham** came before **David**? Why then did he start with **David** and not **Abraham**? Who’s **David**? David was the king to whom God made the Davidic covenant. In that covenant God promised David an eternal king, an eternal kingdom and an eternal throne (2 Sam 7:12-16; Ps 89). David’s covenant was *particular* to just one descendant who would fill this office of King. This particular focus is the primary reason David is mentioned first. Who was Abraham? Abraham was the father of the Jewish people to whom God made the covenant promising a land, seed and

worldwide blessing (Gen 12:1-3). Abraham's covenant was *universal*, applying to all Jews who would have a faith like Abraham, even guaranteeing blessing beyond the Jews to the world of the Gentiles. This universal focus is the reason Abraham is mentioned second.

So do you see again Matthew's emphasis? The emphasis is first on the *particular* Davidic covenant and second on the *universal* Abrahamic covenant. Importantly, this is precisely the order the book follows. Jesus is first presented as the sovereign Davidic king who offers the kingdom to the nation Israel. After the rejection Jesus turns to proclaiming the universal offer of salvation to all nations. As Toussaint says, "The emphasis falls on His royalty and then on His universality. "First He is sovereign, then Savior." This is the order Matthew follows in the development of his argument."^{vi}

Now if verse 1 is a summary of the genealogy then vv 2-16 are the details of the genealogy. Let's make some general remarks about the genealogy. First, the genealogy is very Jewish in that the Messiah's genealogy had to be confirmed to be traced back to David. If Jesus' genealogy could not be proven to be that of David then all other facts were irrelevant to the case. Put simply, if Jesus was not descended from David then He could not possibly be the Messiah. Second, the genealogy is that of Joseph and not Mary. Luke 3 records the genealogy of Jesus through Mary. This is clear in that while both Joseph and Mary were descended from David, Matthew records that Joseph was descended through David's son Solomon and Luke records that Mary was descended through David's son Nathan. Third, Matthew divides his genealogy into three groups of fourteen. In verse 17 he says, "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations." This is one of Matthew's pedagogical teaching devices, a way to help us keep in mind the content of Jesus' genealogy. Fourth, Matthew does not record every name in Jesus' genealogy. In Jewish genealogies it was acceptable to leave gaps as long as the line was not broken. This, however, is not acceptable for a chronology which depends upon time. Thus there is a difference between a chronology and a genealogy. An example of a chronology is Genesis 5; an example of a genealogy is Matthew 1. Matthew probably used genealogical records from the Temple to compose this genealogy and picked and chose the names he wanted to use in order to maintain his three groups of fourteen generations.

Fifth, Jewishness is determined by the father not by the mother. There are a few Gentile women in this genealogy. Matthew would not be so cumbersome to include women if it would nullify Jesus' Jewishness. This proves that Jewishness is unrelated to the background of the mother and solely depends on the father. These are five general remarks about the genealogy, within the genealogy itself we will add further remarks unique to Matthew's genealogy.

Verse 2 begins the genealogy with **Abraham** and not Adam. Luke's genealogy traces Jesus back to Adam. Why does Matthew only trace back to **Abraham** and not Adam? Because his audience is Jewish. The Jewish nation began with **Abraham** not Adam. For legal reasons Matthew did not need to go beyond **Abraham** to prove that Jesus was a Jew. Observe the name **Abraham** is used rather than Abram. Abram was his name prior to the covenant; **Abraham** his name after the covenant. So the name **Abraham** is used to focus our attention on the Abrahamic covenant and Jesus' relationship to the Abrahamic covenant as the seed line of the King. **Abraham** we are told **was the father of Isaac**. Abraham also was the father of Ishmael but he was not in the covenant line, **Isaac** was the covenant line, thus only Isaac is mentioned because Matthew is tracing the seed line of the Abrahamic covenant. **Isaac** we are then told **was the father of Jacob**. Again, **Isaac** also fathered Esau but he was not the covenant line and **Jacob** was of the covenant line. So the seed line is all-important. **And Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers**. Why is **Judah** singled out among **his brothers**? Once again to single out the Messianic seed line. In Gen 49:10, Judah was the tribe chosen to be the seed line of the Messiah. Jacob said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah." Since the scepter refers to kingly rule then the Messiah would most definitely come from the tribe of Judah.

In verse 3, **Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar**. **Tamar** is a strange mention in the genealogy since Jews did not customarily include females in genealogies. Matthew includes four females by name and one by implication in his genealogy. Therefore Matthew's inclusion of each of these women has a purpose. The background for understanding Tamar's inclusion is her story in Gen 38. Tamar was given to Judah's son Er, but Er died without having any offspring and so she was given to his brother Onan. When he would not give her offspring but spilled it on the ground he died. Because of the loss of his two sons Judah was afraid to give her to his

youngest son Shelah. Instead he commanded her to go and live with her father promising to give him to her when he grew of age. However, when he grew of age Judah did not give him to her. In anger she stationed herself alongside a road that Judah was traveling and disguised herself as a harlot. She then seduced Judah and conceived by him. As a result she had twins sons, mentioned here, **Perez and Zerah**. So the mention of Tamar in the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah is not exactly something to boast about. Why then is Tamar mentioned? To demonstrate that the Messiah came to die for sinners.

Now of the twin boys the seed line of the Messiah is traced through Perez. **Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. Verse 4, Ram was the father of Amminidab, Amminidab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon. 5Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab. Rahab** is the second woman mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. What was she? Her story is found in Joshua 2 and 6. She was a Canaanite inhabitant of the city of Jericho that the Jews had set their sights on for destruction. When the two spies came they found refuge in her brothel. So she was a Gentile and not a Jew and her occupation was that of a harlot and a brothel owner. Her inclusion by Matthew is surely an unlikely blight on the Messiah's genealogy. One of Jesus' descendants was indeed a Canaanite prostitute. Why did Matthew include her? For two reasons. First to show that the Messiah came to save sinners, even grotesque ones such as prostitutes. Matthew himself as a tax collector was no higher on the social scale than a prostitute. How could a Canaanite like Rahab marry into the Jewish people? Jews could marry foreign girls if they adopted the Jewish faith. In Joshua 2 when Rahab gave shelter to the two spies we learn that she feared YHWH. To fear YHWH was an OT way of saying that she had a circumcised heart. Rahab was a believer in the Jewish God and worshipped Him. This is why she was spared in the judgment of Jericho. So the second reason Matthew included Rahab was to show that the Messiah came to save Gentiles. Salvation extends beyond the Jewish people.

Now after the destruction of her people and city she came to live among Israel and married **Salmon who was the father of Boaz. Boaz, we are told, was the father of Obed by Ruth. Ruth** is the third woman in the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. Who was **Ruth**? Her story is found in the Book of Ruth. When there was a famine in Israel a woman named Naomi and

her husband Elimelech went into Moab with their two sons. The two sons married Moabite girls, one of whom was Ruth. Naomi's husband then died as well as her two sons, leaving the two girls as widows. In the bitterness of loss Naomi instructed her two daughters-in-law to return to their people and gods. Ultimately Ruth refused saying "where you go I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." Ruth, like Rahab was a believer in the Jewish God. Upon returning to the land with Naomi she was eventually redeemed by **Boaz** and came to be in the genealogy of the Messiah. Matthew includes her to teach us one of the same truths that was taught through Rahab, namely, that the Messiah came to save Gentiles too and not Jews only.

In verse 5 **Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 Jesse was the father of David the king. David** we saw before in verse 1 as the primary focus of the genealogy. He is here called **the king**. Solomon too was a king as well as Rehoboam and Abijah and Asa, etc...but only David is referred to as **the king**. This is to highlight the one to whom the Davidic covenant was originally made. The fact that none of the other kings are emended by **the king** shows that the covenant was not fulfilled by any of them. The One who will fulfill the covenant as the Davidic king is the One who's genealogy this is, that is, Jesus the Messiah.

In verse 6, **David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah**. However, **Bathsheba's** name is not mentioned in the original Greek text. It merely states, "David was the father of Solomon by the one of Uriah." Bathsheba's name was deliberately excluded by Matthew and only thought of by implication. Why? Because Bathsheba was not the one in the wrong but David was the one in the wrong. David had ultimately wronged Uriah by fornicating with his wife and then murdering him. Why then does Matthew include the expression, "by the one of Uriah"? To show that the Davidic promise could not have been fulfilled in David but only by one greater than David, namely, Jesus the Messiah.

In verse 7, **Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa. 8 Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, 9 Uzziah was the father of Jothan, Jothan the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. 10 Hezekiah was the father of**

Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah. 11 Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. This is the legal throne line.

David through Solomon. Solomon was promised an everlasting throne and an everlasting kingdom. All the men listed after him were kings and sat on the throne of David. **Jeconiah's** inclusion is critical. Why? Who was Jeconiah? Jeconiah was also known as Jehoiachin and in shortened form as Coniah.

What curse did God level against Coniah in Jer 22:30? "No man of his descendants will prosper Sitting on the throne of David Or ruling again in Judah." In some sense the Coniah curse delegitimized this line of David. In what sense?^{vii} There are several views of this curse. One view is that the curse wasn't even on Coniah but on Zedekiah. Laney holds this view. He considers the mention of Coniah in the context as a warning to Zedekiah that if he follows in the footsteps of Coniah his line will be cursed. I think this view is highly unlikely in the context. A second view is that the curse removed throne rights from all of Coniah's descendants. If this is the case then everyone following Coniah in the genealogy was devoid of throne rights and could not sit on the throne. In this view, then, Jesus could not get throne rights from Joseph but from Mary. Fruchtenbaum says Matthew's genealogy shows that Jesus was not the king, Luke's genealogy of Mary shows that Jesus was the king. Numbers 27 and 36 show that if a father had no sons then he could pass his inheritance through his daughter to a grandson if she married within the same tribe. Mary was of the tribe of Judah and so was Joseph. So Jesus received his throne rights through his mother. The problem with this view is that Mary was a descendant of David's son Nathan and the throne rights were promised to David's son Solomon in 2 Sam 7:13-14.

Therefore throne rights could not be inherited by Jesus from Mary's father Heli. No one in the line had throne rights. A third view is that the Coniah curse related to the right to exercise throne rights, not to possess throne rights. In this case all of Coniah's descendants had throne rights but could not exercise those rights by actually sitting and reigning. Matthew shows that Joseph was in Coniah's line but that Jesus was only adopted into the line and not a natural descendant. Therefore Joseph could pass his throne rights on to Jesus by way of legal adoption and at the same time Jesus could sit and exercise those rights because he avoided the Coniah curse. This seems like the best view since Matthew is certainly setting out to show that Jesus is the king, the rightful Davidic heir. It would be contrary to his point if Matthew failed to show that. This view also is the most careful to understand

the Coniah curse as it related not to the passing on of throne rights but of the illegitimacy of any of Coniah's direct descendants exercising those rights. Jesus was then able to receive throne rights from his father Joseph by way of adoption but also to exercise those rights since he was not a natural descendant.

Continuing verse 12, **Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. 13Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor. 14Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud. 15Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob.** Now each of these men, in my understanding, possessed throne rights but could not exercise those rights because they were under the Coniah curse. So when we come to Jacob in verse 16, he has throne rights and he passes those on to Joseph by physical birth, but Joseph could not exercise them because he was under the curse. Verse 16, **Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.** At this point the sentence structure changes significantly in order to show that Jesus is not under the Coniah curse. Until this time there are two structures that have been used. The first structure is to say that "X was the father of Y" where X stands for the father and Y for the son (i.e. *X egennesen ton Y*). This structure is used 38 times. Literally the Greek actually says that X gave birth to Y. So, for example, in verse 2, "Abraham gave birth to Isaac, Isaac gave birth to Jacob" and so on and so forth.^{viii} Here in verse 16 Matthew breaks from that structure. The text does not say Joseph gave birth to Jesus as we might expect, but rather deliberately avoids that structure altogether saying **Joseph the husband of Mary, who gave birth to Jesus.** It was Mary who gave birth to Jesus not Joseph. This is a unique and deliberate structure in the genealogy. The second structure used by Matthew up to this verse is how he includes a mother. This structure is simply to say "by Z," Z standing for a mother (i.e. *ek Z*). This structure is used four times. For example in verse 3, "by Tamar," in verse 5 two times, "by Rahab" and "by Ruth," and in verse 6 one time, "by the one of Uriah." Here in verse 16 Matthew breaks from this structure. He does not say Joseph gave birth to Jesus "by Mary" as typical, but rather deliberately avoids this structure saying **Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus.** What we have then is a unique structure in this genealogy. This unique structure accomplishes three things. First, it

means that Joseph is not the father of Jesus in the physical sense, only by adoption. This would result in a question, "If Joseph was not the father of Jesus then who was the father?" This will be answered in the next pericope. Second, it means that Mary was the mother of Jesus. This would result in a related question to the prior one, "If Mary was the mother of Jesus then who was the father?" Or, "How did she become pregnant?" Again, the answer is in the next pericope. Third, Joseph is stated to be the **husband** of Mary. This means that Jesus could receive throne rights from Joseph because he married Mary and adopted Jesus. As mentioned before he also received throne rights from Mary by physical descent. All of this is to accomplish the design of Matthew that brackets the entire pericope, namely, Jesus is **the Messiah**, the Anointed King.

Verse 17, **So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.** This again is the pedagogical device that would aid in memorizing Israel's history by dividing it into three time periods of fourteen generations each. Why three time periods? Because during each time period God made an everlasting covenant with Israel. From **Abraham to David** he made the Abrahamic covenant; from **David to the deportation to Babylon** he made the Davidic covenant; and from **the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah** he made the New covenant. Jesus the Messiah is the one who is to fulfill all three covenants and so Matthew divided Israel's history around the covenants unique to the three periods.

Why fourteen generations? Perhaps because David's name in the Hebrew adds up to fourteen. Hebrew letters have numerical equivalents. The D is four, the V is ten and so DVD equals four + six + four which equals fourteen. David is unquestionably the main character in the genealogy so this makes sense. Three evidences make this certain. First, in verse 1 David is mentioned before Abraham. Second, David is mentioned five times in all, which is even more than Abraham who is mentioned four times. Third, in verse 6 David is mentioned as the last of the first group of fourteen and as the first in the second group of fourteen. He is the only one listed in two groups of fourteen. Together these three observations point up the undoubted conclusion; Matthew is writing a royal genealogy of the King. He is the One to fulfill the Davidic covenant. He is the One who received throne rights from

his father through adoption. However, unlike his father he could exercise those throne rights. Matthew has proved that Jesus has the right to the eternal throne and will establish His eternal kingdom.

In conclusion Pentecost says, “It is significant to note that, when Jesus offered Himself to Israel as the Messiah, His claim to Davidic descent was never challenged. The Jews must have consulted the records to see whether the One who made such claims for Himself had the right to make those claims. Had they found any flaw in His descent, they would have been quick to accuse Him of being an impostor. Even though the nation rejected Him, it was not because He was outside the Davidic line and therefore ineligible to claim the Davidic throne.”^{ix}

Next week’s pericope will explain His supernatural origin and it’s fulfillment of OT prophecy.

ⁱ David, L Turner, *Matthew Among the Dispensationalists: A Progressive Dispensational Perspective on the Kingdom of God in Matthew*, 11/19/09, p 6.

ⁱⁱ Dwight Pentecost, *Dispensational Problems in Matthew*, Lecture Notes, DTS, 1989.

ⁱⁱⁱ Stanley Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 24.

^{iv} Toussaint, *Behold...*p 22 citing Scroggie, *Guide to Gospels*, p. 311.

^v J. Vernon McGee, *Through the Bible*, p. 4.

^{vi} Toussaint, *Behold...*p 37.

^{vii} Another view is that it only delegitimized Coniah’s sons. Later descendants had throne rights but did not exercise the throne rights.

^{viii} The meaning of this expression is debated. One view is that it refers to actual physical descent, a second view is that it refers to transmission of an inheritance within a bloodline. This latter view is probably correct since Matthew has in view generations through which the inheritance was transmitted. Thus Matthew gives the legal rights of Christ to the throne. Luke’s genealogy of Mary gives the physical descent. Mary was of a line that avoided the Coniah curse and so His throne rights could not be questioned on the basis of the laws of inheritance established when a father had no son, as in the case of Heli and the virgin Mary (cf Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 38.)

^{ix} Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 39.

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