

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black
Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

1.

Introduction

1.

The Purpose of Genealogies Earthly, Biblical, and Messianic

1.

Matthew's gospel begins with the genealogy of Jesus Christ. An earthly king's genealogy can demonstrate his right to the throne. Often we think genealogically when we say "She has her mother's eyes," or when you say "That habit didn't come from my side of the family!" "He's just a chip off the old block. Like father, like son." Our genealogies explain some of how we got to be the way we are. And many Biblical genealogies work that way—in

Genesis

the genealogies describe the

origins of all nations

, highlight

faithful line

of God's covenant people, and provide the foundational structure of the

12 tribes of Israel

. For those captives returning from exile the genealogies in

1 Chronicles

established their

right to an inheritance

in the land, and to

membership in the covenant community

.

2.

The Purpose Jesus Christ's Genealogy

1.

God's Gracious Provision. The genealogy of Jesus Christ bears some of these marks, but it is less concerned with what Jesus received from his ancestors and more with what He will

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

give
them. "
The Son of Man came not to
be served
, but to
serve
, and to
give
his life as a ransom for many.
" (

Matt. 20:45

) Though God visited the iniquity of Jesus' fathers upon Him, how much more does God also show His gracious lovingkindness to a thousand generations of those who love Him through Christ their Savior!

2.

Fourteens: The genealogy is intentionally structured in 3 sets of 14 to focus on Abraham, David, and Christ, who were faithful covenant representatives, after explicit givings of the covenant.

3.

Representatives: As such it is a covenant history of Israel, in terms of good covenant representatives leading up to Christ, the last faithful covenant representative. More than merely demonstrating Christ's right to membership among God's people, this genealogy declares Him to be the great coming Savior whom all before had hoped in.
. Abraham rejoiced to see His day (

John 8:56

), and though David's son, David called Him " Lord.
" (

Psalms 110:1; Acts 2:34

)

4.

Promises: Christ's lineage demonstrates He is the fulfillment of God's promises to bless His people and all nations through Abraham, and to provide a perfect king through the line of David.

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black
Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

5.

Outline. We will consider the passage under four headings. Jesus is the:

1.

King of All Nations vv. 1, 17

2.

King of the Jews vv. 2-6a

3.

King of the Kings vv. 6b-11

4.

Hope of the Exiles vv. 12-16

5.

Body

1.

Genesis: Beginnings & Generations: King of All Nations 1

1.

The first words of the New Testament teach us that Jesus is the King of All Nations of men.

1.

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. 2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

2.

Genesis: Beginnings & Generations. Unlike Christ's genealogy in the gospel of Luke, Matthew does not mention Adam, but he clearly has Genesis in view. Genesis is the book of beginnings and generations; of God's work of creation

"

In the beginning

'
" and relating through His covenant with the generations of men

. In Christ God's Covenant of Grace comes to full bloom, and in Him is the beginning of the New Creation.

3.

Covenant Head. Matthew introduces Christ's genealogy with a formula taken verbatim from the Greek translation of Genesis: "The book of the genealogy of...." Genesis uses this formula to highlight the line of God's chosen people who remain faithful to Him, under the covenant headship of a faithful covenant representative. Jesus Christ came from this line, and stands as its greatest covenant Head

.

4.

God's Promises Fulfilled. And so following the outlines of Genesis, Christ's genealogy begins with "Abraham...Isaac...and Jacob." Just as you, God's people, recognize these covenant heads as your fathers in the faith, so you should recognize Jesus Christ to be the faithful

son of Abraham

" whom the Lord will provide, that in Him all nations shall be blessed; the "

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

seed of the woman

" who will "

crush the serpent's head

," the promised Messiah, your Savior, and your King. Remember God's promises at the end of Genesis—just as Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac from the dead, so God restored Joseph to Jacob, saved them all from famine and death, and turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.

In this Jesus Christ, God will do it again

!

5.

Matthew fulfills Genesis. As Genesis is the foundation of the Old Testament, so Matthew is the Genesis of the New Testament. The OT's book of the genealogy of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 2:4), of the faithful lines of Adam (5:1), of Noah (6:9), of Shem (10:1; 11:10), of Abraham (through Terah—11:27), Isaac (25:19), and Jacob (37:2), and even of the unfaithful lines of Ham, Japheth (10:1), Ishmael (25:12), and Esau (36:1), finds its final culmination in "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

6.

In the line of Jesus Christ you see that "these are the generations of" Adam, of Seth, of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob. He is the King of all of the faithful among the people God has made. But He is also a Light to the Gentiles, the King of All Nations, a Savior for those bound in the darkness of this world.

He calls you to return to the faithful covenant line, by faith to trust in Him as your Savior, through repentance to make Him again your Lord

7.

Rise: The time of promise, hope, and fulfillment: King of the Jews 2-6a

1.

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

In **vv. 2-6a** Matthew makes plain that Jesus is the King of the Jews.

1.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, 3 and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, 4 and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of David the king.

2.

Promise, Hope, and Fulfillment. As these names chronicle the rise of Israel from one man to a great nation, they show God leading His people through times of promise

,
hope
, and
fulfillment

1.

Promise: King of the Fathers. Because Jesus Christ arises from the time of God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Christ is the King of the Fathers

2.

Hope:

-

King of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

-

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

Christ is also the King of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. During the wilderness wandering and early days in the land the 12 tribes of Judah hoped in God's promises and were led by their elders and by judges God raised up to redeem them. But because " there was no king in Israel, everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

" (

Judges 21:25

) But God had promised a king through the line of Judah even in the days of Jacob, who said "

The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes.

" Christ is the king not only of Judah, but of all 12 tribes, and so Judah's brothers rightly deserve their mention in his lineage.

-

Application. Do you know that on the 12 gates of the New Jerusalem will one day be inscribed the twelve tribes of Israel, and on its twelve foundations the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb? Even today God has made of the Jews and Gentiles one new people in the church! Through faith in Christ Judah, Simeon, Levi, and the rest are now your brothers in Christ and fathers in the faith.

-

Savior of Sinners

-

-

Women contaminated by sin. Jesus Christ is the Savior of Sinners. This genealogy mentions four women contaminated by sin but redeemed by Christ:

Tamar

, the adulteress,

Rahab

, the prostitute and a Canaanite,

Ruth

, the Moabitess, a widow whose ancestry was the product of Lot's incest, and

Bathsheba

the adulteress through the sin of David.

-

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

That these women whose lives bore the ugly stains of sin were used by God to give birth to the Savior of the world, we learn how truly Christ "took on the likeness of sinful flesh," and "came into the world to save sinners.

" So far from casting them off as their sins deserve, by His saving grace Jesus Christ now gives an adulteress, a prostitute, a widow, and an illegitimate child a role in fulfilling His promise of salvation and an honored place in the halls of faith. "

By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

" (

Heb. 11:31

)

-

Application: Membership in the Family of God

-

Dear friend, has your life been tarnished by sin so you feel you have no honorable standing among the people of God? Trust in Christ, who "has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows....he poured out His soul to death and was numbered among the transgressors...he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

" (

Isaiah 53:4, 12

) He has no wife or children, but "

he shall see His offspring

" (

53:10

) in you who have faith in Him. You once were "

separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now...you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ....So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

" (

Eph. 2:12-13, 19-20

)

-

Sinner, take heart, Jesus Christ is the Savior of Sinners!

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

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Through Him you can become part of the family of God. Have you made a public profession of faith in Christ, and joined a congregation of His church? Though to do so you must renounce the world, you will find Christ and the members of His body are your true and blessed family. Jesus said "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (Matt. 12:50) Today Christ says to you, "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first." (Matt. 19:29-30)

-

Fulfillment: David's son and David's Lord

-

Moving on from the time of promise and hope, this genealogy leads to the time of fulfillment. God keeps His promises. You see this in its direct quotation from the last verses of Ruth (4:18-21):

-

Perez fathered Hezron, Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

-

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

By God's gracious plan Ruth's life went from rags to riches, born an apostate and outcast but reborn a member of the household of God, from destitute widow to joyful wife of a godly husband, her kinsman redeemer. Out of her poverty, by faith Ruth cried out, "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God

" (

Ruth 1:16

),

and through God's rich providence she bore the King who would redeem and bless God's people above all others.

-

God keeps His promises!

-

Through Ruth came David, the greatest king of the Old Testament. And so through Ruth came Christ, who was David's son, yet David's Lord. David himself proclaimed Christ his Lord, saying in **Psalm 110:1**, "The LORD says to my Lord."

-

God had promised the Christ, the Messiah, would be a son of David. In **Psalm 89:3**:

-

3 You have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: 4 'I will establish your offspring forever, and build your throne for all generations.'"

-

In **Psalm 132:11-12**:

-

11 The LORD swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: "One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. 12 If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on your throne."

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

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And now Jesus, the perfectly obedient son of David, risen from the dead and seated at the right hand of God the Father, does reign forever on the throne of David. There should be no doubt that Jesus is the one of whom Isaiah prophesied "the government shall be upon his shoulder...Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness, from this time forth and forevermore.

" (

Is. 9:6-7

)

Fall: Rebellion: King of the Kings 6b-11

1.

But the pride of the kings of Israel went before their fall. They were mere men, sons of sinful Adam, and "like Adam they transgressed the covenant." (**Hosea 6:7**) From David to the Exile his sons progressively turned away from the Lord, until the day when once again, "there was no king in Israel, " and God's people longed for the perfect King of Kings to appear.

1.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, 7 and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, 8 and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, 9 and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, 10 and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, 11 and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

the deportation to Babylon.

2.

Every one of these men in vv. 6-11 are kings, from David to Babylon. The genealogy focuses on the kings of Judah, though only David is designated a king, because the promise of the Christ were given to him. It lists kings both good and bad, for the knowledge of good and evil kings sets in more vivid relief the kingdom of Christ's perfection and glory. The history of the kings goes from good to bad to worse; David was good, Solomon half so, though there were glimmers of messianic hope in the faithful prophets marked by Elijah and Elisha, in the faithful kings who walked in all the way of David their father, in the repentance of Hezekiah and the revival of Josiah, nevertheless the kings are a story of Israel and Judah's decline into the sins of their fathers, worshipping the Baals of the Canaanites, walking in the ways of the world.

3.

Of the last king, Jechoniah, God said "Write this man down as childless...for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.

" (
Jer. 22:30
) From then on the throne of David was no longer filled by his sons in the way of an earthly king, but in the inscrutable wisdom of His eternal plan God had appointed a greater heavenly King on a greater throne of which David's was an earthly copy, "

One greater than Solomon

" (

Matt. 12:42

), "

a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek

" (

Psalms 110:4

), one king to rule them all, the Lord Jesus Christ! Of Him God said, "

The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

" (

Psalms 110:5

)"
I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.... Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth....Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way....Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.

" (

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

Psalm 2:6, 11, 12

) To reign on his throne David's sons must worship Christ, and Christ reigns on that throne by drawing all to worship Him. Speaking of His coming crucifixion, the King of kings said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

" (

John 12:26

) John saw this worship in

Rev. 7:9-10

, testifying that "

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

"

4.

In Christ God's promise is fulfilled, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah...until Shiloh comes. " (Gen. 49:10) Jesus Christ is the "King of

kings

and

ord of lords

.
" (

Rev. 17:14; 19:16

)

5.

Exile & Restoration: Dark rebellion & no hope! Hope of the Exiles 12-16

1.

In the Exile and Restoration to follow, God's people mourned the fall of David's earthly throne. They felt even they were without God and without hope in the world. This is the import of the names in vv. 12-16, most of whom remain unknown.

1.

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

12 And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, 13 and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, 14 and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, 15 and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, 16 and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

2.

But in v. 16 we must learn that Christ is the redeeming Light at the end of the Exile's dark world. Jesus Christ is the Hope of the Exiles.

3.

From God's faithfulness to His promises in providing Christ the Savior at the end of the Exile we should learn several things.

1.

First, God's promised blessings will come even if He delays for many years. When will Christ come again? No man will know the day or the hour, but He will come again on the clouds of heaven, and you can be certain of that promise.

2.

Second, God's promised blessings will come despite your sin, misery, and despair. At the time of Christ the seed of Abraham was not at the head of the nations but the tail (

Deut. 28

!); they had "become tributary to the Roman yoke, and...the house of David was buried in obscurity; for Christ was to be
a root out of dry ground.

"

[1](#)

They cried out in the Psalms, "
How long, O Lord?

" But now "

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

" (

Isaiah 9:2

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black

Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

) So now you must "

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you....And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

" (

Isaiah 60:1, 3

) Jesus is one greater than Jonah, one greater than Solomon, and you now bear the light of Christ in the darkness of this world. So proclaim Him to the world; do not hide your candle under a bushel, for "

you are the light of the world...let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

" (

Matt. 5:14, 16

) And "

take heed lest the light in you be darkness.

" (

Luke 11:35

) Because God through Christ is saving you from the sin and misery of this dark world, at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light...11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

" (Eph. 5:8, 11) To you who despair that your miseries have still not come to an end, Jesus says "

In this world you will have tribulation, but take heart; I have overcome the world.

" (

John 16:33

) "

He who endures to the end will be saved.

" (

Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13

)

3.

And so third, "you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised ." (Heb. 10:36) 1 Peter 1:17 says that you now are in an "

exile

" too, and so Christ is your hope, as well. God "

has caused us to be born again to a living

hope

through the resurrection of

Jesus Christ

from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

" And so you are in the world, but not of it, for your "

citizenship is in heaven

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black
Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

" (
Philippians 3:20

). Peter urges you "

as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evil doers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. 13 Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. 16 Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. 17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

" (
1 Peter 2:11-17
)

4.

This is how to live because Christ is the Hope of the Exiles.

5.

Conclusion

1.

Fourteens 17

1.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ ends by revealing its intentional plan.

1.

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the

Matt. 1:1-17 - The Genealogy of the King

Written by Tim Black
Sunday, 07 December 2008 15:15 -

Christ fourteen generations.

2.

The sets of fourteen generations show that Jesus is the King of All Nations, the King of the Jews, the King of Kings, the King of the Hope of the Exiles, and the Anointed One, born to set His people free.

3.

This is the Genealogy of the King.

[1](#) Matthew Henry, 3.