

“The Miracle”
December 8, 2019
Matthew 1:1-25

Introduction:

The genealogy that we just read is the genealogy of Jesus the Christ on Joseph’s side. Jesus’ genealogy on Mary’s side is found in [Luke 3:23-37](#). But why would Matthew list the genealogy for Jesus on Joseph’s side? Although Jesus is not the physical son of Joseph, He is Joseph’s legal son and, through Matthew’s record, God shows that Jesus is a legal descendant of David. Also, by including the names of 5 women—at least 3 of them Gentiles—Matthew showed that God’s plan from the beginning wasn’t limited only to the people of Israel. This genealogy reminds us, as we saw last week, that God fulfills all His promises; e.g., God had promised Abraham in [Genesis 12:3](#), “**All peoples on earth will be blessed through you**” and in [John 3:16](#) we read that “**whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.**” As promised, the whole earth is blessed by Jesus Christ a son of Abraham.

Did you notice in [verses 16 & 25](#) that Matthew made it clear, that although Joseph is the husband of Mary, Joseph is not the father of Jesus? Jesus’ birth was a miracle. Matthew explained how this could be in the 2nd half of the 1st chapter.

Starting with Abraham, and going thru Judah, and David, and Solomon, again and again and again God said to each of them “*The Messiah—the promised One—will come through your descendants.*” This genealogy is how we know that the Messiah is who He said He was. These are his credentials. These are his papers of authenticity. By being in the line of these descendants, God proved that Jesus was who He said He was.

Down through history, there have been many great religious leaders: Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius and others. In their day, they said powerful things that were meaningful to the people of their day and great religious movements sprang up around their teachings and personalities. People

have asked: *“What makes Jesus so much better than these other great religious leaders?”* The answer to that question is found right here in Matthew 1. No other founder of any other great religion has EVER had these kinds of credentials.

For example: About 500 years before Jesus was born, a man named Buddha came along. He established a religion we know as Buddhism, and many people gathered around him and tried to live by his teachings. But before he was born, no one ever said: *“Someone is going to come along and he will come from this or that family. These are going to be his credentials. And this is how you’ll know he is who he will say he is.”*

Mohammed was born about 500 years after Christ. He established a religion we now call Islam and many people gathered around him and tried to live by his teachings. But before he was born, no one ever said: *“Someone is going to come along and he will come from this or that family. These are going to be his credentials. And this is how you’ll know he is who he will say he is.”*

BUT, when Jesus came, He didn’t just suddenly appear in history and say, *“Listen to my insightful teachings.”* Long before Jesus was ever born, God put His stamp of approval on Him. We can see that all of the Old Testament looked forward to the birth of this one little boy in Bethlehem. And because of that one Child’s miraculous birth—the birth we celebrate every December 25—miracles have taken place in the lives of millions of men and women.

II. The Greatest Miracle Birth

In **Ephesians 2:10** Paul wrote, **“For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”** God has a purpose for every person that’s born but He has a special purpose for those born miraculously—for example, consider the miracle babies Samson and Samuel and John the Baptist. This miracle Baby, Jesus, born to Mary was no different.

In these introductory verses to the Gospel of Matthew we are given 3 names or titles for this baby—names which really tell us the purpose of His birth in the beginning of His story.

A. First title: He is the Christ

One of the first titles and names of this baby is found in **verse 16**: “**who is called Christ.**” If you’ve been in church for very long, you know that “*Christ*” is a Greek word and “*Messiah*” is its Hebrew equivalent. They both mean “*the anointed one or the sent one from God.*” “*Christ*” means “the sent one from God.” Whether in Greek or Hebrew, we are told that Jesus was sent. He wasn’t an accident—He came from God; i.e. He is the Son of God. He is the Messiah. He is the Christ.

The word “*birth*” in verse 18 of Matthew 1 is the same basic word in Greek as the word “*genealogy*” in **Matthew 1:1**. It took 17 verses for Matthew to show Jesus’ human lineage but in one verse, the fact of Jesus’ divine conception, His miracle birth, is given. In verse 18 Matthew gave a parallel account of Jesus’ ancestry, but this time from His divine side—His heavenly Father’s side. There is no way that Matthew, or for that matter anyone else, could explain the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. Matthew doesn’t even try—it’s a miracle. Jesus’ conception was a miracle. It is a mystery—just as much a mystery as how God created the Universe or how there can be one God in 3 persons or how we can be changed when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Just like Joseph and Mary, we must accept it by faith.

In God’s plan Jesus didn’t just appear as God in adult form, He came to earth as a baby—He was born to Mary, His mother. Parents are important in preparing their children for becoming adults, so what do we know about Jesus’ parents? We really aren’t told a lot about Mary in the Scriptures. She was probably a native of this little tiny town called Nazareth. Because of its small size and poor reputation—remember in **John 1:46** Nathaniel said, “**”Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?”**”

Mary probably came from a poor, insignificant family. From [Luke 3:23 & 1:36](#), we learn that her father was Eli and that she had a cousin by the name of Elizabeth.

Since girls were usually betrothed when they were 12 or 13 and since Mary was betrothed to Joseph, it is assumed that Mary was around 12 or 13. From the verses from Luke which Jill and Nancy read, we know that Mary was a godly woman. She was submissive to God's will—as they read from [Luke 1:38](#) when the angel appeared to Mary, she answered and said, “**I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said.**” Mary believed God, but she was human and wondered how she could conceive. In [Luke 1:34](#) Mary asked the angel, “**How will this be, since I am a virgin?**” but she never questioned that the angel was sent from God or that what he said was true. In [Luke 1:45](#), Elizabeth said of Mary “**Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!**” Mary was humble and had a thankfulness and love for God which we see in her song which we call the Magnificat in [Luke 1:46-55](#). Let's look at part of it, [turn to Luke 1:46-49](#). You can read the rest of Mary's song at your leisure.

We don't know much more about Mary and we know even less about Joseph. In [Matt. 13:55](#) Matthew tells us that Joseph was a carpenter. But there is one thing we can be sure of—since God chose Joseph to be the foster father of the Christ, of God's anointed Son, Joseph must have been a righteous man. Like David, he must have been a man after God's own heart.

This miraculous birth to Mary and Joseph wasn't an accident, God had a plan. [Turn to Galatians 4:4-5; now turn to Colossians 1:15-20; now turn to Hebrews 2:16-18](#). God had a plan; He sent Jesus who was wholly/completely God and wholly/completely man—He was the greatest miracle baby ever born. He was—He is the Christ; the Messiah, born to Mary and Joseph.

B. Second Title: He is Jesus

Back in [Matthew 1:21](#) the angel told Joseph the 2nd title and purpose of this baby. “His Name will be Jesus.” “Jesus” is Greek for the Hebrew name “Joshua”—both mean “Jehovah will save”. Unlike other men named Jesus or Joshua who could only tell of God’s salvation, as the angel said, this Jesus, born of Mary, “will save His people from their sins.” As Paul wrote in [1 Timothy 1:15](#), “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” “Jesus” means “Jehovah will save” – “Savior.”

When we see a baby boy or girl, our wish and prayer for them is that they grow up strong and healthy and that they have a long, successful life. By comparison, this baby named Jesus was born with the purpose to die for the sins of the world—to be the Savior of all mankind. Jesus came to die for sinners. In [John 1:29](#), John the Baptist said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” BUT He didn’t just die; [turn to 1 Corinthians 15:1-5](#). To show that He had conquered death and that His sacrifice was accepted—that He really was the Savior of the world—Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, where He now intercedes for all those who call Him “Savior” or “Jesus.” In [Philippians 2:9-11](#) Paul wrote, “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” This Baby born to Mary and Joseph is the Christ, He is Jesus, and His 3rd title is:

C. Third Title: He is Immanuel

Throughout the Old Testament Jesus is foretold. In [Isaiah 7:14](#) Isaiah prophesied, “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” “Immanuel” means “God with us.” Jesus wasn’t just sent from God—the anointed One, called the Messiah; He isn’t just the Savior of mankind; He is also God Himself. As [Colossians 2:9](#) says, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.” [Hebrews 1:3](#) says, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all

things by his powerful word.” This is why Jesus said to Philip in [John 14:9](#), “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” This miracle Baby of Mary and Joseph is Immanuel, “*God with us*,” He is Jesus, “*the Savior*,” He is the Christ, “*sent from God*.”

III. The Response

Jesus was a miracle baby with a special purpose. He was sent by God with the explicit purpose of providing a way of salvation for all who believe in Him. But He was more than just someone special like Moses or John the Baptist; He was God in human form. Because they responded to God’s call in faith and trust, Mary and Joseph were called to raise up their Messiah; their Savior.

So, what is your response to this miracle baby?

A. Is He your Savior? In the verses we read from 1 Corinthians 15, Paul wrote “that Christ died for our sins” ([1 Corinthians 15:3](#)). Jesus died to pay the penalty for your sins so that you would not have to spend eternity in hell. In [2 Peter 3:9](#) we are told that God doesn’t “want anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” But every person must make a choice. [Romans 10:13](#) says “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Have you accepted this gift of eternal life in heaven? If you have accepted God’s gift, then you have received the Greatest Gift ever given on Christmas Day. If Jesus isn’t your Savior, why not be part of the greatest miracle ever to happen—accept God’s gift of eternal life.

B. Is He your Messiah and your God? If you claim to have accepted this gift from God, is Jesus really your Messiah? Is He the king of your life? Is He your God? Who has control of your life? Is Jesus Christ first in your life? Rephrasing the words found in [Luke 10:27](#), “Do you “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind?” In other words, have you given Him your time, your talents, your treasures, your thoughts?

To put it a different way: by your actions—not just your words—can everyone see that you belong to Christ? Turn to James 3:13-18. In Matthew 7:20 Jesus said, “By their fruit you will recognize them.” What does the fruit of your life say about you? If Jesus is your Lord and Savior, then allow Him to use you to tell others of His miraculous birth and “the reason for the season.”