

THE WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS THE KING

Part 1: The Arrival of Jesus the Messiah (1:1—2:23)

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Parallel passages: Mk. 1; Lk. 1; Jn. 1

I. BIBLICAL GENEALOGIES

A. Family trees, about 25 in the Bible...extremely important in ancient Israel

B. Characteristics

1. Normally written from the oldest to youngest (Luke is youngest to oldest)
2. Most often they are patriarchal line (Luke traces Mary's line)
3. Did not always include all family members
4. Omitted unimportant family members, or those who might cause embarrassment
5. Often memorized
 - Since people of the ANE had less access to written works, they committed a great deal of information to memory (possibly in musical form, easy to remember)
 - To this day it is not uncommon for a Bedouin Arab to be able to recite a list of his ancestors from memory for an hour without making any mistakes¹

C. Four reasons why biblical genealogies were kept

1. Tribal records
2. Royalty records
 - Kingship successions, especially King David
3. Priestly records
 - To keep track of priestly records (Neh. 7:64)
 - By the time of Christ, everyone who was a priest was expected to prove his descent from the tribe of Levi and the house of Aaron
4. Inheritance rights & land allotment records
 - Especially when the Jewish captives returned from Babylon to Jerusalem, a register of their genealogies was made (Neh. 7:5)
 - See also Ruth 4:3, Naomi's inherited land

D. Written records were lost in AD 70, the destruction of Jerusalem, but most were memorized

1. For the most part, tribal identities have been lost through the generations, and the majority of Jews do not know which tribe they are

¹ (Nelsen's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary 482)

- from
2. There are a number of people whose families have passed down their identity as *Kohanim* (Priests) or Levites, which means they descend from the tribe of Levi
 3. "Priest" (Heb. *kōhēn*)
 4. Related surnames: Cohen, Kahn, Katz, Levine, Cowan

II. THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS (1:1-17)

A. Names and titles of Jesus (1:1)

1. "Jesus"
 - Gr. *Iesous*; Heb. *Yehoshua* (Joshua) meaning Yahweh saves"
2. "Christ"
 - Not a name but a title -- Gr. *Christos*; Heb. *mashiakh* means "anointed one" a king
3. "Son of David"
 - Mathew is demonstrating Jesus' legal descent from King David.
 - As such he has the legal right to occupy the throne of David (Luke 1:32)
 - Fulfils the Messianic prophecies of 2 Sam. 7:12; Mic. 5:2
4. "Son of Abraham"
 - This title takes Jesus' royal lineage all the way back to the nation's inception in the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1-3)
 - Matthew's concern is not merely with Israel but with all the world (Gen. 12:3)
5. Immanuel (1:23), "Jesus is God with us"

B. Lineage is arranged in three groups of 14 generations (Matt. 1:17)

1. Possibly for ease of memorization
2. Possibly because the number 14 comes from the numerical value of the consonants in the Hebrew form of "David" (d=4, v=6, 4+6+4 =14)²

C. Group 1: From Abraham to David (1:1-6a)

1. Notice Gentile women are included
2. Tamar: Probably a Canaanite women
3. Rahab (prostitute) and Ruth (Moabite) were Gentiles
4. The lineage is comprised of men, women, adulterers, prostitutes, heroes and Gentiles—and Jesus will be Savior of all³
5. Implication: The Messiah came for all people, not just Israel

D. Group 2: From David to exile in Babylon (1:6b-11)

1. A period when Israel fell into idolatry

² This comes from the Jewish practice of *gematria*, the giving of a numeric value to the consonants in a word. (ESV Crossway Bibles note on 1:17).

³ (ESV Crossway Bibles 1820 note 1:3.)

2. Notice names of Asa and Jehoshaphat, clearly wicked kings
3. Implication: The Messiah has come not because of Israel's righteousness, but in spite of Israel's sins

E. Group 3: From exile to the Christ (1:12-17)

1. A period when Israel had no king
2. A period when God promised a bright future for Israel
3. Implication: The Messiah is God's promise of a bright future

F. A comparison of Mathew's and Luke's genealogies⁴

Matthew's Genealogy (Matthew 1:1-17)	Luke's Genealogy (Luke 3:23-38)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written to a Jewish audience • From Abraham to Jesus • Emphasizes Jesus' kingship • Traces Joseph's (Jesus' legal father) genealogy • From oldest to youngest (traditional) • 42 names • Three groups of 14 names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written to a Gentile audience • From Jesus to Adam • Emphasizes Jesus' humanity • Traces Mary's genealogy • From youngest to oldest (non-traditional) • 77 names • Three groups of 21 names and one group of 14 names

III. THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF CHRIST (1:18-25)

A. Jesus' birth was "by the Holy Spirit" (1:18)

1. "Betrothed" (1:18 ESV) was as binding as modern marriage and the betrothed couple were regarded legally as husband and wife⁵
2. However, having sexual relations during this period was considered immoral.
3. The angel announces Jesus' conception explaining that he is the prophesied "Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14)
4. Joseph had no sexual intercourse with Mary until after the birth of Jesus (1:25)

B. Jesus' birth fulfilled many OT prophecies (1:21-22)

1. "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet" (Isa. 7:14)

⁴ For an explanation of the differences between the two genealogies see, "Why are genealogies in Matthew and Luke so different," < <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-genealogy.html>>. Accessed November 21, 2020.

⁵ (MacArthur, Matthew: The Coming of the King 7)

2. He was born in Bethlehem during the time of Herod (2:1)
 - Prophesied in Micah 5:2
3. Matthew later cites over 12 OT prophecies of the coming Messiah which were fulfilled by Jesus
 - E.g., Matt. 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 26:54-56; 27:9, 35
4. Matthew says "house," Luke says "manger" so was Jesus born in a house or a barn?⁶

IV. THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN (2:1-12)

A. Herod (2:1-8)

1. An Idumean (descendant of Esau) king of Judea and friend of the Romans
2. Refurbished the 2nd temple to gain favor with the Jews
3. Became alarmed when the magi spoke of the King of the Jews (2:3)
4. "Star" (2:2), not a supernova or a conjunction of planets as some modern theories suggest, but more likely a supernatural reality similar to the Shekinah that guided the Israelites in the days of Moses⁷
5. Tried to trick the magi in telling him where this king was (2:7-8)

B. The magi visit the child (2:9-12)

1. The number of wise men is not given...could be three because of three gifts
2. Wise men/magi were probably priestly individuals from the Persian Empire (kings? Perhaps, see Psalm 72:10-11; Isa. 49:7; 60:3)
3. They were students of ancient science, especially of astrology and religion
4. Had a knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures
5. Something transpired that led the Magi to believe that the expected Deliverer (King?) had been born and they had come with the purpose of worshipping him⁸

C. The magi gave gifts to Jesus of "gold, frankincense and myrrh" (2:11)

1. The theory about these three gifts given to Jesus is that they had a spiritual meaning:
 - gold as a symbol of royalty and kingship
 - frankincense (an incense) as a symbol of deity

⁶ Was Jesus born in a barn? Not exactly. The Biblical account mentions neither barn nor cave—it is assumed because of the manger. Mangers are animal feeding troughs, and barns are where one would expect to find them. But in the ancient world, as well as in primitive modern cultures, mangers are also found within the house itself. Animals are regularly kept in homes at night. A small number of flock animals were housed, not in attached exterior sheds, but inside the house in one of the ground floor rooms. Here, animals, tools and agricultural produce were stored.
<<https://christiananswers.net/q-abr/abr-a012.html>>.

⁷ (MacArthur 8)

⁸ (Pentecost 66)

- myrrh (an embalming oil) as a symbol of suffering and death... often used in embalming⁹
- 2. Most likely thought only of their value (“they opened their treasures,” Matt. 2:11 NIV)
- 3. The wise men were warned later in a dream not to return to Herod (2:12)

V. GOD’S PROVIDENTIAL CARE (2:13-23)

A. The flight to Egypt (2:13-15)

1. Joseph warned in a dream to go to Egypt (2:13)
2. Joseph, Mary and Jesus remained in Egypt until Herod died (2:14-15)
3. The phrase “out of Egypt I have called my Son” (2:15) is a quote from Hosea 11:1 and portrays the Exodus as a type of Jesus’ exiting out of Egypt (antitype).

B. Herod kills the male children (2:16-18)

1. Magi didn’t return to Herod (warned in a dream, 2:12)
2. Herod gave orders to kill all boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity, who were two years old and under (cp. Jer. 31:15)
 - This was to eliminate his competitor to his throne
3. The age of two was based on the Magi’s informing him that the star had appeared two years earlier¹⁰

C. The return to Nazareth (2:19-23)

1. The death of Herod most likely took place at 4 BC, so it is probable that the stay in Egypt was very brief—perhaps only a few weeks¹¹
2. Jesus grew up in an exceptional home.
3. Joseph: His foster-father
 - Known for his saintliness of character and integrity
 - He belonged to the middle industrial class, being an architect-builder and carpenter¹²
4. Mary, his mother
 - The most highly favored of all women
 - She was a woman of beautiful humility with a loving character and an intelligent student of the Scriptures¹³

⁹ (Youngblood 1006)

¹⁰ (Pentecost 70)

¹¹ (MacArthur, Matthew: The Coming of the King 9)

¹² (Pentecost 72)

¹³ (Pentecost 72)

VI. SUMMARY: JESUS IS THE LONG-ANTICIPATED MESSIAH

A. Because He had the right names

1. Jesus: Yahweh saves, Savior
2. Christ: Anointed One, King
3. Immanuel: God with us

B. Because He had the right ancestry

1. Abraham: His seed (not "seeds") will be a blessing to all people ("seed" = Christ; Gal. 3:16)
2. David: he will be the eternal King

C. Because He fulfilled the right prophecies

1. The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
2. The Messiah would be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14)
3. The Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob (Num. 24:17)
4. The Messiah would be called Immanuel (Isa. 7:14)
5. The Messiah would spend a season in Egypt (Hos. 11:1)
6. A massacre of children would happen at the Messiah's birthplace (Jer. 31:15)
7. The Messiah would be called a Nazarene¹⁴ (Isa. 11:1), a synonym for someone who is despised or detestable
8. The Messiah would be given gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Isa. 60:6)

VII. CHALLENGE FOR NEXT WEEK

What is the connection between Matthew 3:3 and 1 Thess. 4:16?

¹⁴ Matthew may have intended a wordplay connecting the word "Nazareth" (Heb. "branch") to the Messiah also referred to as a "branch," see Jer. 33:15. (ESV Crossway Bibles 1823, notes on 2:23)