

Matthew 1:1-17 – The Son of David

Some early manuscripts have the title “according to Matthew” (KATA MATTHAION). The early church believed that Matthew, one of the twelve disciples, wrote the New Testament book of Matthew. The Gospel of Matthew gives strong evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the long expected son of David who sits on his throne forever. D. A. Carson and R. T. France believe the book was probably written in the sixties, before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. There are a lot of direct Old Testament quotes which Matthew cited to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of these OT prophecies. If Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, then he must be descended from king David. That is where the book starts. See the [“Overview of Matthew”](#) for more information on the book of Matthew.

Read Matthew 1:1-6.

In verse 1, what statement was made about Jesus? See Genesis 5:1 for similar wording to the first few words of the book. Does the opening cover the entire book of Matthew or just the first 17 verses? The word translated “genealogy”, according to BDAG, can refer to someone’s life or history, or it can refer to their ancestral line. (1:1)

The first three names in the genealogy of Jesus are very familiar. What is the significance of starting with Abraham? What was the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? How is Jesus the fulfillment of that promise? (1:2)

What blessing did Jacob give to Judah? See Genesis 49:10. (1:2)

In verses 3-6, what names stick out to you? Are there any names that a Jewish king might not want in his genealogy? See Ruth 4:18-22 for the genealogy from Perez to David. An expanded genealogy of Jacob to David is found in 1 Chronicles 2:1-15. (1:3-6)

Read Matthew 1:7-11.

The genealogy of the Kings of Judah from Solomon to Josiah is found in 1 Chronicles 3:10-14. Azariah (in 1 Chr. 3) is the same person as Uzziah (in Matthew 1). See the ESV footnote for 2 Kings 15:13. Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah were left out of Matthew’s genealogy. It was not a mistake. It was intentional in order to have 14 generations from David to the deportation to Babylon. The list contains both good and bad kings. (1:7-10)

In verse 11, Josiah was the “father” of Jechoniah and his brothers. Josiah was actually the grandfather of Jechoniah. This is not a mistake. In genealogies where a generation is skipped on purpose, “begot” or “father of” can be translated as “grandfather of” as in the ICB and the NCB. This part of the genealogy is found in various places including 1 Chronicles 3:15-16, “The sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum”. Which sons of Josiah were king of Judah? See 2 Chronicles 36:1-12. Jechoniah, known by Jeconiah or Jehoiachin in the OT, was one of the kings when Jerusalem was under siege by Babylon. Jechoniah was the son of Jehoiakim. Zedekiah, the third son of Josiah, was the last king of Judah before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. (1:11)

Read Matthew 1:12-17.

In verse 12, we have a head-scratcher. 1 Chr 3:17 says that the sons of Jeconiah were Shealtiel and Pedaiah, among others. 1 Chr 3:19 says that Zerubbabel was the son of Pedaiah and not Shealtiel. Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Matthew and Luke all say that Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel. One way that this can be reconciled is that Shealtiel, the oldest, did not have a son and so his brother, Pedaiah, had a son in his name according to the law of Moses in Deuteronomy 25:5-6. There is no surviving record that this happened but it is one possible explanation. Do you have another way of reconciling this record of scripture? Ezra 1:1 called Zerubbabel “governor of Judah”. (1:12)

In verses 13-15, the names after Zerubbabel are outside of the Old Testament record. 1 Chr 3:19-20 does not mention Abiud as one of the sons of Zerubbabel. One would think that the records of the descendants of David would be well kept. Some have suggested that King Herod destroyed the records to prevent challenges to his “kingship”. Others have suggested that such records were destroyed when the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. That would be an argument for a date for Matthew before the destruction of the temple. Matthew seemed confident in providing these names as proof that Jesus was descended from king David. (1:13-15)

In verse 16, was this the genealogy of Joseph or Mary? Many believe that Matthew traced the lineage of Jesus through Joseph and Luke traced the lineage of Jesus through Mary. How was Joseph described? How was Mary described? How was Jesus described? Notice that the text did not say that Joseph was the father of Jesus. Verse 16 ties back to verse 1. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. Why was it important for Matthew to establish that Jesus was descended from king David? (1:16)

In verse 17, the genealogy was summarized by three groups of 14 generations. Depending on how you count, you may come up one generation short. Some count David twice. Some count Jechoniah twice. W. Hendricksen suggests that the symbolism is that the six sets of seven generations leads up to Jesus, the completion and climax of these generations. D. A. Carson says that the 14’s are derived from the fact that the numerical value of “David” in Hebrew is 14. Do you have another explanation for the 3 groups of 14 generations? Matthew trimmed the genealogy to fit this structure. (1:17)