

God with us, Immanuel (Genesis 12:1-3 & Matthew 1:1-25)

Christmas Day-Dec-25

Genesis 12:1-3

The Call of Abram

¹ The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

² “I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”

Matthew 1:1-25

The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

¹ This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

² Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

³ Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar,
Perez the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram,

⁴ Ram the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,

⁵ Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab,
Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth,
Obed the father of Jesse,

⁶ and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife,

⁷ Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,

Abijah the father of Asa,

⁸ Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,

Jehoram the father of Uzziah,

⁹ Uzziah the father of Jotham,

Jotham the father of Ahaz,

Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰ Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,

Manasseh the father of Amon,

Amon the father of Josiah,

¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

¹² After the exile to Babylon:

Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,

Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

¹³ Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,

Abihud the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim the father of Azor,

¹⁴ Azor the father of Zadok,

Zadok the father of Akim,

Akim the father of Elihud,

¹⁵ Elihud the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar the father of Matthan,

Matthan the father of Jacob,

¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

¹⁷ Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as

your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Please have your Bibles open at Matthew chapter 1

There’s a **sermon outline** for you to take **notes**.

Let me **pray** first. Let’s pray...

Intro

Each Christmas Day we celebrate the birth of Jesus who has the **title Immanuel** which is **mentioned** in our NT passage Matthew chapter 1 v23.

Immanuel means “God is with us”

I’d like to make 3 simple points this morning...

God’s is with us - Throughout History (Matthew 1:1–17, Genesis 12:1-3)

1st point is **God is with us - throughout history**

[Slide-Point 1]

We see this in the genealogy listed in verses 1 to 17

V1 - The genealogy is for **Jesus** (whose name means God saves)

He is described as the **Messiah** (which means God’s anointed chosen one) – whom God chose to send to **save people**.

And Jesus is also given the title “**Son of David**” – meaning He is a descendant of King David – Israel’s greatest ever King!

This title “**Son of David**” is important – because God made a promise to King David – 1000 years before Jesus was born (3000 years before our time) – that one of King David’s descendants would be on King David’s throne – and He would be a forever King!

Over the centuries people came to understand that the Messiah – would be a “**Son of David**” – so **the title “Son of David” became synonymous with the Messiah coming!**

One of the **themes of Matthew’s Gospel** is this title the “**Son of David**” – which is **mentioned 10x** in Matthew’s book - to underline Jesus’ Messianic identity— especially through the cries of needy broken people and the worship of the crowds following Jesus, culminating in Jesus’ own teaching about the Messiah.

[Slide-Son of David (14)]

To get across the importance of this title - **Son of David** – Matthew being a **tax collector** and being a **numbers man** – mentions in v17

There were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen generations from the exile to the Messiah.

The **number fourteen is important** – Matthew is using something call **gematria** – which **assigns numbers to letters**

In **Hebrew** at the time of Jesus – there were **no vowels when writing words** – so the name **David** would be written in Hebrew as – **DVD**

In the Hebrew Alphabet...

D = is the letter Dalet = and is the 4th letter – so has the value 4

V = is the letter Vav = and is the 6th letter – so has the value 6

D = is the letter Dalet = and is the 4th letter – so has the value 4

So, $4 + 6 + 4 = 14$ – hence the ***fourteen*** generations!

That's kind of clever – isn't it – **Matthew wants to emphasize that Jesus really is the Messiah – the Son of David – and to emphasize Jesus' historical background!**

[Slide-1st point again]

Then the genealogy itself **starts – v2 - with the patriarch Abraham** (who lived 2000 years before Jesus)

Why start with **Abraham**?

Well that's where the **nation of Israel has its origin**

Israel began with **promises that God made to a man named Abram** in our Old Testament (OT) reading from Genesis 12:1-3 – if we quickly turn there.

V1 – God tells Abram to leave his home country and go to a **land** God will show him – that land will be the land of **Canaan** – which will become the land of **Israel**

God promises Abram – v2

“I will make you a great nation” (which is the nation of Israel)

“I will make your name great” (Abram's name became Abraham – which means

“Father of many nations” – Genesis 17:5)

And God promises to **bless** Abram – v3 – and at the end of v3 – God promises that ***“all peoples on earth will be blessed through Abram”***. And all peoples on earth – **are blessed** – through Abraham – because one of Abraham's

descendants – Jesus – whose genealogy Matthew is listing here – will be the one to be born to **bless all people** – by dying for the sin of the whole earth!

And that's not the only exciting thing about this genealogy of Jesus

[\[If we turn back to Matthew Chapter 1\]](#)

The genealogy also **includes women** – which is very **unusual** for Jewish genealogies which **usually are all male**.

V3 mentions **Tamar** – who had some scandal around her – when she disguised herself as a prostitute to seduce Judah son of Jacob so that she could bear a child.

V5 mentions **Rahab** – who was a **Canaanite woman and a prostitute** – who helped Joshua's men when the Israelites first entered the Promised Land – Rahab is a **Gentile** (non-Jew). She ends up being the **great great grandmother of King David!**

Also v5 mentions **Ruth** – who was a **Moabite widow** – who married a Jewish man called Boaz – and Ruth too is a Gentile – but ends up being the **great grandmother of King David**

And verse 6 refers to **David's wife [who is Bathsheba]** the mother of Solomon and the woman that David had an adulterous affair with.

The inclusion of - Tamar and Bathsheba, even though they were surrounded by scandal, shows nothing can de-rail God's plan to send a Messiah!

The inclusion of Gentiles - Rahab and Ruth - shows Jesus came for the Gentiles, not just the Jews!

The genealogy also includes the Exile to Babylon and return from exile – so even the exile of God’s people – and the absence of a King of Israel during the exile and after the exile – even that can’t derail God’s plan to send a Messiah

Application

Matthew’s genealogy shows God at work through ordinary, flawed, and unexpected people, including Gentiles, widows - and also shows God even works with people’s bad choices.

The genealogy also shows God’s plan was unfolding over generations, and nothing — neither exile, failure, nor sin — could derail it!

For us today: Even when we face difficult circumstances, uncertainty, or setbacks – and even when we make bad choices - **God is still at work in our history — in our lives, in our communities, and in the world!**

God is with us – throughout history!

God is with us – In the Gift of Salvation (Matthew 1:18–23)

2nd point is - **God is with us - in the gift of salvation**

[Slide-2nd Point]

The people of Israel waited centuries for the Messiah the Son of David to come and when He came, **He came in the most unexpected way!**

V18 - Mary and Joseph were pledged or betrothed (which is much more formal and binding than people being engaged to be married today). And Mary was found to be pregnant by Holy Spirit (HS) - God himself brought this about - it’s a miraculous birth!

V19 - discovering Mary is expecting a child is a great shock for Joseph - he and Mary were not together in a physical sense yet.

In those days, it was a scandal and disgrace to have a child out of wedlock - and the assumption is, if Mary is pregnant, she must have been unfaithful to Joseph

V19 - the law allowed for divorce in such situations but Joseph is a kind and compassionate man and he didn't want to make this a public issue, so he planned to divorce Mary quietly

V20 - but Joseph needn't have worried about that because God intervened and sent an angel to speak to Joseph in a dream - to let Joseph know that the child Mary is carrying is from God and was conceived miraculously by the Holy Spirit - so it's perfectly fine for Joseph to take Mary as his wife - there has been no unfaithfulness on Mary's part

The Angel also passes on some **salvation information** in v21 - the child to be born will be a **son** - whose name is **Jesus** (which means **the Lord saves**) and this **son** will **save people from their sins**

Not only that vv22-23- but Jesus' birth will also **fulfil a prophecy from Isaiah 7:14** – that says: *“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).*

This means the son Mary will have is **fully human** (through His mother Mary) and **fully God** (through the HS)

And the fact, that Mary is a **virgin** – is **critical**...

It means Jesus is conceived miraculously – and he is not born with the inherited sin of Adam [and Eve] that we are all born with. Therefore, Jesus is sinless and able to make the perfect once and for all sacrifice for sin – whereas the priests

who made animal sacrifices for sin were sinful themselves – so that's why they had to repeatedly make these animal sacrifices.

If Jesus wasn't sinless – He couldn't make the perfect sacrifice and we would still be in our sins and unable to gain complete forgiveness and unable to gain eternal life – and we would have no hope!

Also the **virgin birth** is **critical** because it **fulfils prophecy** – and **maintains God's integrity!**

And the virgin birth – also means - **God is with us - in the gift of salvation**

Application

For us it means we have this Christmas gift of Jesus - God with us - who grows up to die on a cross - to take the punishment for our sins and swaps it for forgiveness - and then He rises from the dead – to prove He has power over death. And so when we die - we don't have to stay dead but our death gets swapped for eternal life in Heaven.

But like any gift we need to unwrap it and accept the free gift of Jesus - and then repent and believe.

By accepting this gift we are free from guilt of our sin and free from fear of death - all because - **God is with us - in the gift of salvation**

God is with us - and calls for a response (Matthew 1:24–25)

3rd point is **God is with us - and calls for a response**

[Slide-3rd Point]

And **we get our response** – from Joseph's response 24-25.

V24 - Joseph responded to God's word immediately he awoke - He didn't doubt – He didn't get consumed by fear – He didn't ask a whole load of “what if's – He didn't rationalize the information - or analyze how farfetched it seemed for the child to be from the HS - **He took God at His word.**

In our OT reading, **Abraham, took God at His Word** – at age 75 he left his homeland – and waited until he was 100 to receive the Son God promised. Abraham did become a great nation – Israel – when Abraham's grandson Jacob (v2) had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel. These tribes of Israel did not get to live in the land God promised Abraham – until 600 years after that promise! **Yet, Abraham took God at His Word!**

We can take God at His Word - even if we can't explain how - even if we don't know why - **we walk by faith not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)** - trusting God and obeying God...

Trust and obey, for there's no other way

To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey

When we read or hear God's word - **we must trust what He says and obey it!**

For example:

God's word says: ***⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.***

Are we trusting and obeying God's Word? Are we handing our problems over to God and presenting our prayers to Him?

God's Word also says: ⁴ *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.* ⁵ *It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.* ⁶ *Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.* ⁷ *It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.* ⁸ *Love never fails.*

Are we trusting and obeying God's Word? Is that what our love for people looks like?

V25 - Joseph obeyed God's Word – he gave Jesus the name God assigned Him...

And Joseph didn't consummate the marriage until baby Jesus was born.

Why? If Joseph had consummated the marriage beforehand, it would blur the claim of Jesus' divine conception. **Matthew wants His readers to understand**

that Jesus' origin is miraculous and holy – and Jesus really is - God with us.

God's plans always involve His **deliberate timing**.

Like Joseph, we can trust and obey God's timing in our own lives.

And patiently wait for Him!

Conclusion

To finish up then

At Christmas time – we can get so consumed, even stressed, with Christmas festivities – and we can get so derailed as we reflect on previous years and memories – some of which might remind us of loved ones no longer with us – or remind us of past crisis we've had in our lives – all that can easily cause us to

lose sight of the fact that - the very first Christmas brought - **Jesus - Immanuel – God with us** – into our world!

[Slide-Conclusion-1]

Although that was a **past** event 2000 or so years ago!

Jesus - Immanuel - is God with us NOW!

Jesus is with us NOW – through **prayer**

Jesus is with us NOW – in **His Word** – *His Word is a lamp to our feet and a guide to our path* (Psalm 119:105)

Jesus is with us NOW – **through the Holy Spirit** – which lives inside each Christian – and the **Holy Spirit enables us to produce the fruit of the Spirit** - *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*—which all show **God's character at work within us**

[Slide-Conclusion-2]

And that's why - **Jesus – Immanuel – God with us** – can promise *surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age* (Matthew 28:20)

I pray whatever situations we are currently facing – we remember that - because of Jesus – God is with us now and forever more!

Let's pray

Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank You that in Jesus You have come to be truly with us—bringing salvation, hope, and Your comforting presence. Thank You for Joseph's example of trust and obedience, and for fulfilling Your promises through Christ our Immanuel. Help us to walk in confidence that You are near, to obey

Your Word even when it is costly, and to rejoice that Jesus is the Saviour who delivers us from our sins. In His name we pray, Amen.

Benediction

May the God who loved the world so much that He sent His Son fill your hearts with wonder and peace.

May Jesus Christ, Immanuel—God with us—walk with you in every joy and trial. And may the Holy Spirit strengthen you to live in faith, hope, and love, now and forever. Amen.