

Lesson #2- Matthew Chapter 1 Questions for Discussion (With Help for Teachers):

1. Why do you think the gospel according to Matthew begins with the genealogy of Jesus Christ?

Help for Teachers: Matthew's gospel is written largely to a Jewish audience, who acknowledged the Old Testament as true. Foundational to convincing the Jewish people that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God, would be that He is qualified by virtue of His lineage, as the Old Testament Scriptures had declared. The Jewish people placed enormous importance on heritage.

2. A summary of Jesus' lineage is given in the very first verse. Matthew then goes back and fills in the intermediate fathers, thus irrefutably proving the connection from Abraham, through David, and all the way to Jesus. Why is it critical that Jesus be descended humanly from Abraham?

Help for Teachers: The Abrahamic covenant [Gen. 12:1-3, Gen. 13:14-16, others] is a covenant in which only one party, God, would be responsible for insuring its fulfilment. Abraham would be a blessing, by the declaring of the gospel, to all families of the earth. His inheritance would be forever. The number of his seed would be innumerable. Jesus is the point of the covenant, and He alone accomplishes and insures its fulfilment. The "seed" of Abraham extends beyond those biologically descended from Abraham to all of us who respond to the gospel in faith ["Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. 3:6-9]

3. From David?

Help for Teachers: The Davidic covenant [2 Samuel 7:8-16, 1 Chron. 17:7-14] is another unconditional covenant that God declares He will Himself fulfil. God promises to David that He will establish a place for His people, Israel, and they won't be moved, that their enemies will be defeated and no longer hurt them, that God will establish from the seed of David a Ruler, that will be to Him a Son, and that His mercy will never be removed from Him, as in the case of former disobedient kings. God declares that the throne of His Son, the Ruler, will be established forevermore. We know that no physical king has been on the throne of Israel since the carrying away of Israel into Babylonian captivity. Israel, both nationally and the Israel of God [Gal. 6:16], are under constant threat and attack from a multitude of enemies. So how is this possible? It is fulfilled in the fact that Jesus Christ has, and always will be, the Great High King of Heaven. His kingdom is from everlasting [Psalms 103:19]. He reigns and we participate in His kingdom through the

church as we proclaim the gospel. Jesus' eternal kingdom and the promises of the Davidic covenant will be completely apparent to all at His return.

4. Matthew doesn't give as many details of Jesus' birth as Luke does. What is recorded mostly concerns bringing to the reader's attention one important fact.

- What is this fact and why is it so important?

Help for Teachers: The virgin birth of Jesus Christ, the incarnation of God, God becoming Man, is the fact that Matthew emphasizes. 1. Mary was "espoused", the marriage had not been consummated. 2. "before they came together", Mary was discovered to be pregnant. 3. The Child in her was of the Holy Ghost. Mary had never been with a man. 4. Joseph reacted as you would expect an honorable man to react, hurt and unable to go forward with the marriage, but not wishing to destroy his, as he would have had to assume, unfaithful fiancé. 5. It took a proverbial act of God, an angel sent from heaven, to satisfy Joseph. The angel of the Lord explains Mary's miraculous condition, and commands Joseph to go on with the wedding plans.

- What does the name Emmanuel mean?

Help for Teachers: God with us. It is important that Jesus was born of a virgin and that Jesus is fully God and fully man in one person.

The humanity of Jesus Christ (Jesus is fully Man)

- Through the virgin birth we see:
 - Salvation comes from the Lord. The fulfillment of the prophecy that the seed of the woman would destroy the serpent (Gen. 3:15) is by the man, Jesus Christ
 - The sinlessness of Jesus Christ is accomplished through the virgin birth. Had Jesus been born of a human father, He would have had inherited sin, a sin nature, like we all have from our father Adam.
- Jesus had a human body, mind, soul, and emotions
 - He was born, He learned, He was thirsty and hungered, He became tired, He wept, was angry, was troubled in soul, He marveled, He was tempted, He suffered, and He died.
 - Of great importance, though tempted and tested, Jesus never sinned
- Reasons for Jesus' humanity
 - It is so important that we affirm that Jesus is fully man as well as fully God that John says, "1Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2Hereby know ye the Spirit

of God: **Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:**" [1 John 4:1-2]. Some reasons for Jesus' incarnation: Jesus, as our representative in obedience, did for us what Adam failed to do. Jesus was our substitutionary sacrifice, He is the One Mediator between God and man, in fulfillment of God's original purpose for man to rule over creation, to be an example for our pattern of life, to be the first-fruit and pattern for our redeemed bodies, to be a compassionate and sympathizing High Priest.

- Jesus will remain fully God and fully man forever
 - Jesus appears after His resurrection to His disciples as a Man. He had "flesh and bones". He had nail scars and the scar from the spear. He ascended into heaven in a resurrected human body and the angels announced that He would return in like manner. Stephen sees "the Son of Man" standing at the right hand of God. Saul has a vision of Jesus, who he persecuted, on the road to Damascus. John, in the Revelation, sees "One like the Son of Man" filled with great glory and power. He promises to one day drink wine again with His disciples and have a great marriage feast. Jesus will continue forever in His role of Prophet, Priest, and King.

The deity of Jesus Christ (Jesus is fully God)

- Direct Scriptural claims that Jesus is God
 - The word "Theos" [meaning God, Creator, Ruler over all] is used multiple times referring directly to Jesus Christ [John 1:1, 18, 20:28, Romans 9:5, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8, 2 Peter 1:1].
 - "Lord" can often be comparable to our "sir", but in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the O.T. Hebrew Bible, "Lord" is translated from the Hebrew "Jehovah" or "Yahweh", meaning God, 6,814 times. Any Greek speaking reader of the O.T. in the times of the N.T. would have immediately recognized the name "Lord" as referring to the Omnipotent God. "Lord" is used many, many times in the N.T. directly referring to Jesus Christ.
 - Other strong Biblical claims of the Bible that Jesus is God include Jesus' claim that before Abraham was, "I Am". Jesus liberally used "I AM" in His teachings concerning His identity.
- The miracles Jesus performed proclaim His Deity
- Jesus never gave up any of His divine attributes, not even during His advent on earth.

“13Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;” [Col. 1:13-19]

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” [Col. 2:9]