



Chapter 1

The Genealogy of Jesus & The Birth of Jesus

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Design Structure of the Four Gospels

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
	----- Synoptic Gospels -----			
Presents as:	Messiah	Servant	Son of Man	Son of God
Face:	Lion	Ox	Man	Eagle
Ensign:	Judah	Ephraim	Reuben	Dan
Camp Site:	East	West	South	North
Genealogy:	Abraham (Legal)	-	Adam (Bloodline)	Eternity (Preexistence)
What Jesus:	Said	Did	Felt	Was
To the:	Jew	Roman	Greek	Church
1st Miracle:	Leper cleansed	Demon expelled	Demon expelled	Water into wine
Ends with:	Resurrection	Ascension	Promise Spirit (Acts)	Promise return (Revelation)
Style:	Groupings	Snapshot	Narrative	Supernatural Review
Key Word:	Fulfilled (38X)	Eutheos (42X)	It came to pass (40X)	Verily, Verily (24X)
Jesus:	151X	13X	88X	247X
Facts:	Whole Camp	Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Aspects:	Human	Human	Human	Divine
Ministry:	Galilean	Galilean	Galilean	Judean

The first thing to notice about the Gospels is that they are skillfully designed; each one is tailored to suit its specific perspective. Matthew was a Jew, a Levite; he presents Jesus Christ as the Messiah of Israel—the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. This first book of the New Testament plunges right in to establish Jesus as the *Mesiah Nagid*, the Messiah the King.

After first establishing the royal genealogy, Matthew then proceeds to focus on the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies: Matthew uses the term “fulfilled” 82 times! (Again, his interest was to present Jesus as the Messiah of Israel; Jesus’ credentials are that He *fulfilled prophecy*.)

The first miracle described in Matthew is also very Jewish—the leper was cleansed, and leprosy was, to Jews, a sign of sin. Matthew also ended his Gospel in a very Jewish way; with the Resurrection. [Matthew left out the Ascension, but remember that it is not a milestone in respect to Jesus’ Messianic mission (His return, however, will be).]

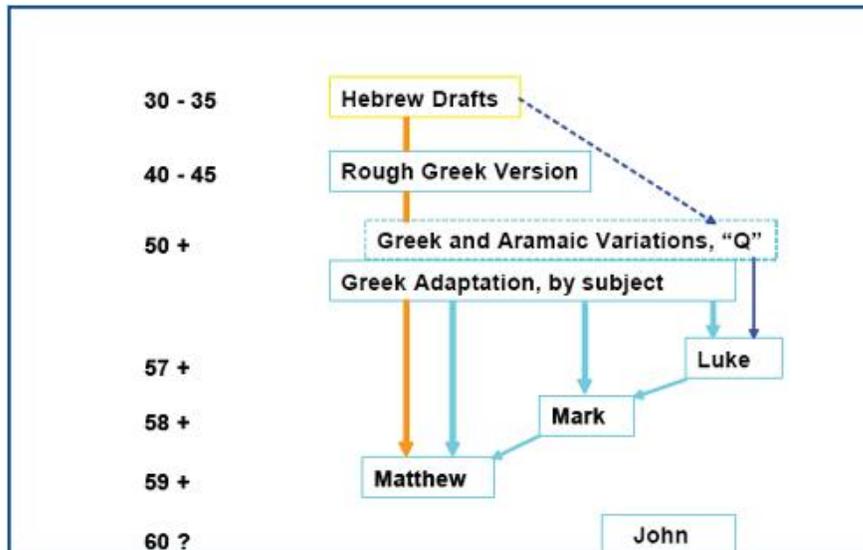
Stenographic Skill

Matthew emphasized what Jesus *said*. He evidently recorded the discourses verbatim. As a customs official, he was a *tachygrapher*, or shorthand writer¹ (The reason Matthew's Gospel is so much longer than Mark's is that he includes Jesus' extensive discourses, such as the Sermon on the Mount and the Olivet Discourse; without these discourses, Mark's Gospel is longer!)

Early Origin

Many scholars now believe that the Gospels were written before Paul's first imprisonment in 57-60 A.D., and that virtually all of the New Testament books were written before Jerusalem's destruction.²

There is no hint in the New Testament of Nero's persecutions after 64 A.D., nor of the execution of James, the Lord's brother, in 62 A.D. There is not the slightest mention of the Jewish revolt against the Romans, which began in 66 A.D., nor of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70



A.D. These historic events would have been irresistible in making many of the arguments in the New Testament documents. Textual evidence suggests that the Gospels were originally written in Hebrew. In hundreds of places the Greek sentence structure betrays a Semitic influence and implies a

translation from the Hebrew. It appears that within five years after the death and resurrection of Christ, most of His words and deeds had been committed to a simple written Hebrew form and Matthew is, of course, assumed to be part of this compilation.

Within a decade, this corpus would have been translated into a Greek version for church requirements. This corpus, or its variations, is often called the "Q-document" (for German, *quelle*, source).

Around the year 50 A.D. the original material was developed into written Greek form and the "synoptic" Gospels were composed, probably since the persecutions were

1. Even in the Old Testament, in Psalm 45:1, the Hebrew, *mahiyr caphar*, the "ready writer (KJV)," or "skillful writer (NIV)," is translated in the Greek Septuagint, *oxygraphos*, a synonym for *tachygraphos*, or shorthand writer. (The technical term must have been common enough among Greek-speaking Jews in the 3rd century B.C. for its use in the Septuagint to have any purpose.)

2. Santala, *The Messiah in the New Testament*, p.47-48.

imminent. The key point is that *eyewitnesses were still around to verify the details.*³ A summary diagram is shown, see left.⁴

Papyrus Discovery

In 1994, an ancient segment of the Greek text of Matthew's Gospel was analyzed and it appears to be dated *before* 66 A.D. Known as the *Magdalen Papyrus*, P64, it contains segments of Matthew 26:23 and 26:31 on both sides of three fragments. Using a scanning laser microscope, it has provided physical evidence "that the Gospel according to Matthew is an eyewitness account written by contemporaries of Christ."⁵

Structural Discoveries

It was through the amazing efforts of Dr. Ivan Panin (1855-1942) that the "heptadic" (seven-fold) structure of the Biblical text was revealed. Of the many remarkable discoveries, perhaps the most provocative is that the vocabulary that is unique to Matthew's Gospel (i.e., words that are not used elsewhere in the New Testament) is an *exact* multiple of 7.⁶

How could this feature have been *deliberately* organized? Only by one of two ways: either all of the other writers of the New Testament had to agree, in advance, not to use these particular words (which is highly unlikely!); or, Matthew would have had to compose his Gospel last. Think about it: this is a strange property to "engineer" into the text.

Employing the argument that this proves that Matthew's Gospel was, thus, the last to be composed is a bit treacherous, however, since the same feature is true of the Gospel of Mark: the vocabulary which is unique to Mark's is also an exact multiple of 7. And so is Luke's. And John's. And also the writings of Paul, James, Peter, and Jude! Each, thus, appears to have been "written last." This strange design feature seems clearly to be a "fingerprint" of the *supernatural* Author Himself.

Provocative Hermeneutics

One of the most fundamental principles of Biblical hermeneutics—principles of interpretation—is the emphasis on the *context*. And, indeed, that is of crucial importance in applying any Biblical passage.

However, Matthew seems to take some very provocative excursions that are instructive.

In Matthew 2:15, he applies Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt I have called my son," to the flight of Joseph, Mary, and the child to Egypt to escape from Herod's infanticide. An examination of the context of Hosea 11 makes such a *Messianic* application seem a far reach, indeed! Only by the Holy Spirit could Matthew have justified this linkage.

³ Mark appears to quote Luke; in over 150 places in Mark appears to know Acts; some infer that he also knew of the letters to the Thessalonians, Corinthians, Romans, Colossians, and James.

⁴ This view is sometimes referred to as "the Jerusalem School" after David Flussey and Robert Lindsey of the Hebrew University.

⁵ Dec 24, 1994, *The Times*, London, front page. Carsten Peter Thiede, Director of the Institute for Basic Epistemological Research in Paderborn, Germany; first published in *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie*.

⁶ There are 42 unique words (7 x 6) which have 126 letters (7 x 18).

(A similar stretch appears in Matthew 2:17-18, where he ostensibly applies Jeremiah 31:15 to this same tragic infanticide.)

Your Challenge

Matthew's thoroughness and precision lends many special insights as one delves into his detailed presentations.

His rendering of the Seven Kingdom Parables in Chapter 13 is remarkably parallel to the Letters to the Seven Churches in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3, etc. His presentation of Jesus' confidential briefing to His disciples about His Second Coming in Chapter 24 is an essential foundation in any eschatological (end-time) study. So, clearly, this very basic book of the Bible is, of course, a most rewarding study to both novice and experienced Bible students who are willing to diligently dig in.

My prayer is that you will be blessed as you embark on this fascinating study!

Introduction to the Book of Matthew

Events unique to Matthew: No less than **60 Old Testament references** —NONE in Mark, Luke, or John. Matthew was a Levite: His interest was to present Jesus as the Meshiach of Israel; His credentials are that He fulfilled prophecy. The following are unique to Matthew's Gospel.

There are Unique Passages

Comparing synoptic gospels, there are some things in Matthew which are not in Mark and Luke. There are 31 sections which are unique to Matthew:

His Childhood

- 1) Visit of the Magi Mt 2:1-15
- 2) Massacre at Bethlehem Mt 2:16-18
- 3) Flight to Egypt Mt 2:19-22
- 4) Return into Nazareth Mt 2:23

Ten Parables

- 1) The Tares Mt 13:24-30
- 2) The Hidden Treasures Mt 13:44
- 3) The Pearl Mt 13:45
- 4) The Dragnet Mt 13:47
- 5) The Unmerciful Servant Mt 18:23-35
- 6) The Laborers in the Vineyard Mt 20:1-16
- 7) The Two Sons Mt 21:28-32
- 8) The Marriage of the King's Son Mt 22:1-14
- 9) The Ten Virgins Mt 25:1-13
- 10) The Talents Mt 25:14-46

Two Miracles

- 1) The Two Blind Men Mt 20:30-34
- 2) The Coin in the Fish's mouth Mt 17:24-27

Nine Special Discourses

Matthew knew shorthand! It was required of a customs official (Mt 9).

- 1) The Sermon on the Mount Mt 5-7
- 2) The Invitation to the Weary Mt 11:28-30
- 3) Idle Words Mt 12:36-37
- 4) The Revelation to Peter Mt 16:17-19
- 5) Humility and Forgiveness Mt 18:15-35
- 6) Rejection of that Generation Mt 21:43
- 7) The Eight Woes Mt 23
- 8) The Prophecy on Olivet Mt 24:1-25:46
- 9) The Commission and Promise Mt 28:18-20

Six Events of Final Week

- 1) Conspiracy and Suicide of Judas Mt 26:14-16 27:3-11
- 2) The Dream of Pilate's Wife Mt 27:19
- 3) Resurrection of Saints Mt 27:52, 53 (after His Resurrection)
- 4) Suggested Plot about His Body Mt 27:62-64
- 5) The Watch at the Sepulcher Mt 27:65-66
- 6) Earthquake Resurrection morning Mt 28:2

[E.W. Bullinger is credited for this list]

Unique Phrases

“Kingdom of Heaven” —	32 x (Not in any other gospel)
“Father in Heaven” —	15 x (only other place is 2x in Mark)
“Son of David” —	10 x (found 3x in Mark, 3x in Luke)
“End of the Age” —	only found in Matthew
“That it might be fulfilled.”	9x (only in Matthew)
“That which was spoken”	14x (nowhere else)

Design Challenge: A Genealogy

- The number of words must be divisible by 7, evenly.
- The number of letters must also be divisible by 7, evenly.
- The number of vowels and the number of consonants must also be divisible by 7.
- The number of words that begin with a vowel must be divisible by 7.
- The number of words that begin with a consonant must be divisible by 7.
- The number of words that occur more than once must be divisible by 7.
- The number of words that occur in more than one form must be divisible by 7.
- The number of words that occur in only one form must be divisible by 7.
- The number of nouns shall be divisible by 7.
- Only 7 words shall not be nouns.
- The number of names shall be divisible by 7.
- Only 7 other kinds of nouns are permitted.
- The number of male names shall be divisible by 7.
- The number of generations shall be divisible by 7.

This is the genealogy of Jesus Christ as found in Matthew 1:1-11 (in Greek)!

McGee: Introduction: The genealogy which opens the Gospel of Matthew and the New Testament is in many respects the most important document in the Scriptures. The entire Bible rests upon its accuracy. You will notice it has three divisions:

1. Genealogy from Abraham to David (vv. 1–6).
2. Genealogy from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity (vv. 7–11).
3. Genealogy from the Babylonian captivity to Joseph, the carpenter (vv. 12–17).

In our study of Genesis, we note the fact that it is a book about families. The genealogies there are very important, and we see them here as we start the New Testament.

Now I must confess that at first this looks rather boring. You give someone a New Testament, and they begin here in the Gospel of Matthew with a genealogy staring them in the face, and they're not going to get very far in it. A chaplain friend of mine told me that in World War II he gave out literally thousands of New Testaments to servicemen. He's seen the men in the bunks open the New Testament, read for a minute or two at the beginning of Matthew, start through that genealogy and come to the conclusion this Book wasn't for them. Can't blame them! My point is that we ought to use a little wisdom in giving out literature to people. The average person should start first in any one of the other three gospels, preferably Mark, rather than the Gospel of Matthew. But that doesn't lessen the importance of this genealogy.

The New Testament rests upon the accuracy of this genealogy because it establishes the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is of the line of Abraham and of the line of David. Both are very important. The line of Abraham places Him in the nation, and the line of David puts Him on the throne—He is in that royal line.

The genealogies were very important to the nation Israel, and through them it could be established whether a person had a legitimate claim to a particular line. For example, when Israel returned from the captivity, we find in the Book of Ezra, "These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood" (Ezra 2:62). It was possible in Ezra's day to check the register of the tribe of Levi and remove those who made a false claim.

Evidently these genealogies were kept by the government and were accessible to the public. I have a notion they were kept in the temple because Israel was a theocracy, and actually the "church" and the state were one. This genealogy was obviously on display and could have been copied from the public records until the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70. The enemies of Jesus could have checked them and probably did. This is interesting and important because they challenged every move of the Lord Jesus, even offering a substitute explanation for the Resurrection, but they never did question His genealogy. The reason must be that they checked it out and found that it was accurate.

This is most important because it puts Jesus in a very unique position. You remember that He said the Shepherd of the sheep enters in by the door but the thief and the robber climb up some other way to get into the sheepfold (see John 10:1–2). That "fold" is the nation Israel. He didn't climb into the fold over a fence in the back, and He didn't come in through the alleyway. He came in through the gate. He was *born* in the line of David and in the line of Abraham. This is what Matthew is putting before us. He is the fulfillment of everything that had been mentioned in the Old Testament. So the enemies of Christ never could challenge Him in regard to His genealogy. They had to find some other ways to challenge Him, and, of course, they did.

When I was a teenager, I became interested in the Bible for the first time, and I went to a summer conference where the Lord spoke to my heart. Our Bible teacher thrilled my heart as he taught the Word of God. One morning he asked, “How many of you young people have read the Bible through in a year?” There were two to three hundred young people there, but not a hand went up. He asked the same question four times. Finally, one young man in the back put up his hand rather hesitatingly and said, “Well, I read it, but I only read the parts that were interesting. I didn’t read the genealogies.” Everybody laughed, and the teacher laughed, too, and admitted that he didn’t read them either. At that very moment it occurred to me that since the Spirit of God has used so much printer’s ink to give them to us, there must be some importance in them for us. So I’ll have you note this genealogy now in Matthew because it is very important.

This is the genealogy of the Lord Jesus on Joseph’s side. We’ll have another when we get over to Luke, and that will be from Mary’s side.⁷

Hegg: Matthew’s Gospel begins with a genealogy of Yeshua, and apparently does so for a number of reasons. First, following the Babylonian captivity, the Jewish community was very keen on tracing genealogical records to ensure family purity, and especially as it pertained to the priesthood of the returning exiles. It is therefore very much in keeping with Matthew’s Jewish perspective that he begin by showing the lineage of the Messiah. But secondly, Matthew’s intention in giving us this genealogy is not merely to show that Yeshua was (and is) Jewish, but more particularly to trace His genealogy to Abraham, with whom God made an eternal covenant, culminating in the Messiah. That is, the final and ultimate blessing of the covenant made with Abraham was “in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Gen 12:3, cf. 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14), and from the viewpoint of the Apostles, Yeshua was the Seed through Whom this promise was realized (cf. Gal 3:16). Moreover, in the unfolding revelation of the Abrahamic covenant in the Tanach, the promise was continually narrowed in terms of its fulfillment. It first was given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then narrowed to the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10). From the tribe of Judah, the family of Jesse was chosen, and particularly David. It was to David as the chosen King of Israel that God made the eternal covenant of kingship (2Sam 7), and promised an eternal dynasty culminating in the reign of Messiah (cf. Acts 2:29f). Matthew’s genealogy, then, traces Yeshua’s lineage from Abraham through David, marking Yeshua as the legitimate, royal Messiah Who would sit upon the throne of David as the Messianic King.

A third purpose of the genealogical record is to dispel the accusations, which were apparently very early (cf. John 8:41, “We are not born of fornication”), that Yeshua was of illegitimate birth due to His mother’s improper behavior. One such version of this slander was that Yeshua was born of a Roman soldier named Pantheras (ben Pandira/Pantira in some rabbinic literature) and Mary, who had been divorced from her husband on the basis of adultery during the betrothal period. Origen notes that Celsus (ca. 170–180) was aware of this particular slander against Yeshua, a slander that was taken up in some rabbinic literature produced in the era when Christianity had gained a formidable position against Judaism, and during which growing persecution of the Jewish community was carried out in the name of “Jesus.”¹ Exactly how early this slander against the legitimate birth of Yeshua became an issue cannot be determined. But by all indications, it was quite early, and it appears certain that Matthew intends, by his genealogy, to dispel such slander.⁸

⁷McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸Tim Hegg, Commentary on Matthew, torahresource.com

Matthew 1:1

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Presenting this genealogy was one of the most interesting ways that Matthew could begin a book for a Jewish audience. Because a person's family line proved his or her standing as one of God's chosen people, Matthew began by showing that Jesus was a descendant of Abraham, the father of all Jews, and a direct descendant of David, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah's line. The facts of this ancestry were carefully preserved. This is the first of many proofs recorded by Matthew to show that Jesus is the true Messiah.

[son] The words "father" and "son" in Hebrew do not mean adjacently (they have no word for grandfather, or grandson).

Matthew is laying down the claim to throne of David, the legal line of Jesus. Matthew begins his genealogy with the first Jew: Abraham.

[Christ] Greek: *Christos* (GSN-5547), "Anointed." Used in the New Testament 569 times. Like the name "Jesus" it has no reference to deity, but to the humanity of the Son of God, who received the anointing of the Spirit 30 years after He was born of Mary (Matthew 3:16; John 3:34; Isaiah 11:1; Isaiah 42:1-5; Isaiah 61:1; Acts 10:38). God "made" Him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). The Hebrew is *Mashiyach* (HSN-4899) (Daniel 9:24-26; John 1:41; John 4:25).

[son of David, the son of Abraham] Son of Abraham and David by direct descent (Matthew 1:2-16; Romans 9:5), and by promise (Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:6-22; Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 22:41-46; 2 Tim. 2:8). "Son of David" is used nine times of Christ in Matthew (Matthew 1:1; Matthew 9:27; Matthew 12:23; Matthew 15:22; Matthew 20:30-31; Matthew 21:9,15; Matthew 22:42). David is mentioned first because he was the most illustrious of His ancestors (as king and prophet) and because his line is singled out by later prophets as the one of Abraham's seed through whom the Messiah was to come.

[the son of David, the son of Abraham] As Abraham was the *first* from whose family it was predicted that Messiah should spring (Ge 22:18), so David was the *last*. To a Jewish reader, accordingly, these behooved to be the two great starting-points of any true genealogy of the promised Messiah; and thus this opening verse, as it stamps the first Gospel as one peculiarly Jewish, would at once tend to conciliate the writer's people. From the nearest of those two fathers came that familiar name of the promised Messiah, "the son of David" (Lu 20:41), which was applied to Jesus, either in devout acknowledgment of His rightful claim to it (Mt 9:27; 20:31), or in the way of insinuating inquiry whether such were the case (see on Jn 4:29; Mt 12:23).⁹

⁹Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. On spine: Critical and explanatory commentary. (Mt 1:1). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

McGee: “The book of the generation” is a phrase which is peculiar to Matthew. It’s a unique expression, and you won’t find it anywhere else in the New Testament. If you start going back through the Old Testament, back through Malachi and Zechariah and Haggai and back to the Pentateuch, through Deuteronomy, Numbers, Leviticus, Exodus into Genesis, you’ll almost come to the conclusion that it’s nowhere else in the Bible except here in Matthew. Then all of a sudden, you come to the fifth chapter of Genesis and see “This is the book of the generations of Adam ...” (Gen. 5:1). There is that expression again. There are two books: the book of the generations of Adam and the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. How did you get into the family of Adam? You got in by a birth. You didn’t perform it; in fact, you had nothing to do with it. But that’s the way you and I got into the family of Adam. We got there by birth. But in Adam all die (Rom. 5:12). Adam’s book is a book of death.

Then there is the other book, the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. How did you get into that family, into that genealogy? You got into it by a birth, the new birth. The Lord Jesus says we must be born again to see the kingdom of God (see John 3:3). That puts us in the Lamb’s Book of Life, and we get there by trusting Christ. We all are in the first book, the book of the generations of Adam. I trust that you, my friend, are also in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

Matthew says Jesus is “the son of David, the son of Abraham.” Didn’t Matthew know that Abraham came before David? Of course he did because he makes that clear in the rest of the genealogy. Then why did he put it this way? He is presenting the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, the One who is the King, the One who is to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth. And that comes first. He must be in the line of David in fulfillment of the prophecies that God made to David. He is the Son of David.

He is also the Son of Abraham and it is very important that He be the Son of Abraham, because God had said to Abraham, “... in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ...” (Gen. 22:18). And in Galatians 3:16 Paul explains who that “seed” is: “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” So Jesus Christ is the Son of Abraham.¹⁰

Jewish New Testament:

“**Yeshua the Messiah**” is rendered “Jesus Christ” in other English versions, as if the man’s first name were “Jesus” and his last name “Christ.” Neither is the case. “*Yeshua*.” is Jesus’ name in Hebrew and Aramaic, the languages he spoke; in his thirty-some years on earth people called him Yeshua. The word “Jesus” represents the efforts of English-speakers to pronounce the name of the Messiah as it appears in the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, “*Iêsous*”—yee-**soos** in modern Greek, perhaps yay-**soos** in ancient *Koinê* Greek, which began to displace Aramaic as the *lingua franca* of the Near East after Alexander’s conquests (331–323 B.C.E.). In turn the word “*Iêsous*” represents the ancient Greek-speakers’ attempts at pronouncing “*Yeshua*.” By using Hebrew “Yeshua” throughout, the *JNT* calls attention to the Jewishness of the Messiah. On the name “Yeshua” itself see v. 21&N.

¹⁰McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The Messiah. The Greek word here is “*christos*,” which means the same thing as Hebrew “*mashiach*,” namely, “anointed” or “poured on.” The significance of being known as “The Anointed One” is that both kings and *cohanim* (priests) were invested with their authority in a ceremony of anointing with olive oil. Thus, inherent in the concept of “Messiah” is the idea of being given God’s priestly and kingly authority.

The Greek word “*Christos*” is usually brought over into English as “Christ.” In two verses of the New Testament (Yn 1:41, 4:25) the Greek text has “*Messias*,” obviously, like English “Messiah,” a transliteration of the Hebrew word; there the *JNT* uses “*Mashiach*” (see Yn 1:41N).

The *JNT* also renders “*Christos*” as “*Mashiach*” in two narratives where its specifically Jewish significance stands out in bold relief: at 16:15 and at 26:63 (and equivalently at Mk 8:29, 14:61; Lk 9:20, 22:67). Others might have used this criterion to introduce “*Mashiach*” in other passages, for example, at Ac 2:31, 36, 38. A translator’s decision to use “Christ,” “Messiah” or “*Mashiach*” depends on the purpose of his translation; in the end it may come down to his intuition or personal preference.

But usually in the text of the *JNT* Greek *Christos* is rendered by “Messiah”; “Christ” does not appear even once. This is because “Messiah” has meaning in Jewish religion, tradition and culture; whereas the word “Christ” has an alien ring and a negative connotation because of the persecutions Jews have suffered from those claiming to be his followers. Further, the use of the word “Messiah” more than 380 times in the text of the *JNT* is a continual reminder that the New Testament claims Yeshua to be none other than the promised *Mashiach* for whom the Jewish people have yearned. The English word “Christ” does not point to Yeshua’s fulfillment of Jewish hopes and biblical prophecy.

Son of. The Hebrew word “*ben*” (“son,” “son of”) is commonly used in three distinctive ways in the Bible and in Judaism:

- (1) In both the Bible and in Judaism a man is normally identified as the son of his father. For example, if Sam Levine’s son Joe is called up to read from the *Torah* scroll in the synagogue, he will be announced not as Joseph Levine but as *Yosef ben-Shmu·el* (“Joseph, son of Samuel”).
- (2) “*Ben*” can also mean not the actual son but a more distant descendant, as is the case in this verse: **David** and **Avraham** were distant ancestors of Yeshua (also v. 8: Yoram was not the father but the great-great-grandfather of Uziyahu).
- (3) Thirdly, “*ben*” can be used more broadly to mean “having the characteristics of,” and this too applies here: Yeshua had qualities found both in Avraham and in King David.

Son of David. Avraham and David are singled out because they have unique importance in the Messiah’s lineage. The term “**Son of David**” is actually one of the titles of the Messiah, based on the *Tanakh*’s prophecies that the Messiah will be a descendent of David and will sit on David’s throne forever (for the *Tanakh* references see Ac 13:23&N). While “Son of David” does not appear as a Messianic title in the *Tanakh* and is first seen as such in the pseudepigraphic Psalms of Solomon 17:23, 36, written in the first century B.C.E., the New Testament records the use of this term some 15–20 times?, and it has been used continuously in Judaism till the present.

Son of Avraham. This term is significant in at least four ways:

- (1) Both King David and King Yeshua trace their ancestry back to the individual chosen by God as the father of the Jewish people (Genesis 12:1–3).
- (2) Yeshua is the promised “seed of Avraham” (Genesis 13:15, explained by Ga 3:16).

(3) The Messiah's mystical identity with the Jewish people (see 2:15N) is hinted at, since every Jew is a son of Avraham (3:9).

(4) Yeshua also has a *mystical* identity with everyone who believes in him, whether Jewish or Gentile (Ro 4: 1, 11, 17–20; Ga 3:29).¹¹

Explaining Varied Reports of the Lineage: by; Augustine:

Some might be perplexed by the fact that Matthew enumerates one series of ancestors, descending through David to Joseph, while Luke specifies a different succession, tracing the ancestry from Joseph backwards through David. It was easy for them to perceive that Joseph was able to have two fathers, one blood father by whom he was born and another adoptive father by whom he was adopted. Indeed, this was the custom of adoption even among that people of God. In this way they could endow son-ship upon those whom they had not given birth. Recall how Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses (and she was a foreigner). And Jacob himself adopted his own grandsons, the sons of Joseph: "And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt, before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. And the offspring born to you after them shall be yours." In this way, too, it came about that there were twelve tribes of Israel, with the tribe of Levi being given the special task of tending the temple. Along with this one there were thirteen tribes, although there had been twelve sons of Jacob. In this way it is understood that Luke included Joseph's father in his Gospel, not by whom he was begotten but by whom he was adopted. He recounted his ancestors upwards until he came to David.¹²

Hegg: Matthew opens his Gospel with words that echo the *toledot* of Genesis. The Genesis narrative is structured around the listing of genealogies of the significant characters in the patriarchal narrative (cf. Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:13, 19). Genesis 5:1 begins, "This is the book of the generations of Adam (or Mankind)" (זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם), and it seems clear that Matthew intends to mimic this language with his opening words: Bivblo~genevsew~ ΔIhsou` Cristou` uiJou` Dau;d uiJou` ΔAbraavm, literally "The book of the generation of Yeshua Messiah, son of David, son of Abraham." The Lxx of Gen 5:1 also has bivblo~ genevsew~ (*biblos geneseos*), "book of the generation," found only one other time in the Lxx, Gen 2:4. In using the pattern of Gen 5:1, Matthew has taken up a line from the Torah that would have been familiar to any Jewish person of his day. But in using this well known formula for describing the genealogy of Yeshua, he has both linked Him to the fulfillment of the patriarchal promises (the covenant) as well as presented Him as the representative of mankind, even as Adam is so represented. Paul would also present Yeshua as the "last Adam" (1Cor 15:45, cf. Rom 5:14) Who had come to redeem mankind from the sin of the first Adam.¹³

¹¹ Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:1). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

¹² Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Intervarsity Press, Thomas C. Oden

¹³ Tim Hegg, Commentary on Matthew, torahresource.com

Matthew 1:2

Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

Only the fourth son of Jacob is here named, as it was from his loins that Messiah was to spring (Gen 49:10).

VIP Bible Background Commentary: 2-16. As in Old Testament genealogies, but in contrast to Luke and Greco-Roman genealogies, Matthew records the names beginning with the oldest and moving to the most recent.

Genealogies reminded Jewish people of God's sovereignty in arranging marriages and providing offspring. Sometimes they explained why a person behaved a particular way (e.g., Moses' descent from lawbreakers like Reuben, Simeon and [directly] Levi helps explain some of his own weaknesses in Exodus 6:12–30). Most important, they were essential to document a person's proper lineage as a pure Israelite (in contrast to some other Galileans, who could be descended from converted Gentiles), a member of the priesthood, or royalty. Genealogies could also be used as unifying links between major figures in history; Genesis links Adam, Noah and Abraham in this way (Gen 5, 11). Matthew connects Jesus with the Old Testament narratives about the patriarchs, the Davidic kingly line and the exile.

At least partial genealogical records of important (especially priestly) families were kept in the temple. After the temple was destroyed in 70, anyone could have claimed to be of Davidic descent, but the claim for Jesus was made before 70, when it still could have been checked (Rom 1:3). Even after 70, the evidence for his Davidic descent was still sufficient to provoke trouble for some of Jesus' relatives with the Roman government.

Women did not need to be recorded in ancient genealogies, but Matthew includes four women (1:3, 5–6), three of them Gentiles (Gen 38:6; Josh 2:1; Ruth 1:4) and the other also a Gentile or at least the wife of a Gentile (2 Sam 11:3)—even though he omits the matriarchs prominent in Jewish tradition, Sarah, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel. Thus he hints from the Old Testament that God has always planned missions to all peoples (Mt 28:19).

Scholars have suggested that some ancient genealogies incorporated symbolic material based on the interpretation of biblical texts. Jewish interpreters of Scripture sometimes would modify a letter or sound in a biblical text to reapply it figuratively. Thus the Greek text of Matthew 1:10 reads “Amos” (the prophet) rather than “Amon” (the wicked king—2 Kings 21), and Matthew 1:8 reads “Asaph” (the psalmist) rather than “Asa” (a good king turned bad—2 Chron 16); most translations have obscured this point.

Old Testament ***Old Testament.** The common modern term for the Hebrew Bible (including Aramaic portions) as defined by the Jewish and Protestant Christian canons; Jewish readers generally call this the Tenach.

Gentiles ***Gentile.** Anyone who is not Jewish. In ancient Jewish parlance, this was often the equivalent of “pagan.”

narratives **Narrative.** Story form (applied to both true and fictitious stories), as opposed to other literary forms, like explanatory discourse.

1:17. Matthew omits some names, as was customary in genealogies (in this case perhaps following the Greek translation of the Old Testament); creating patterns like three sets of fourteen made lists easier to remember. Some commentators have argued that Matthew uses fourteen generations because the numerical value of David's name in Hebrew letters is 14. (Unlike letters in the English alphabet, Greek and Hebrew letters were also used as numerals; the Jewish practice of counting the numerical values of words and deriving meaning from them came to be called *gematria*.) Dividing history into eras was common; a later Jewish text, 2 Baruch, divided history into fourteen epochs.¹⁴

Matthew 1:3

And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;

[**Thamar**] "Tamar": Cf. Gen 38 (Perez and Zerah are the illegitimate offspring of Tamar by Judah when he thought she was a prostitute and lay with her.)

Four women in this genealogy. Rahab and Ruth were Gentiles. Tamar and Bathsheba were Jews. Thus Christ descended from both Jews and Gentiles. Rahab was a harlot (James 2:25). Both Tamar and Bathsheba committed adultery (Genesis 38; 2 Samuel 11:1-5). Ruth was a pure woman (Ruth 3:11).¹⁵

[**Phares**] "Perez": 10 generations to David (Ruth 4:18-22). In Leviticus an illegitimate son prohibits inheritance until the 10th generation. See 1 Chron. 2:4-12; Ruth 4:13-22 for the names of Phares to Jesse (Matthew 1:3-5).

[**begat**] Greek: *gennaō* (GSN-1080). When used of the father it means to beget or engender. When used of the mother it means to bring forth. Translated be born (Matthew 1:16); conceive (Matthew 1:20); gender (Galatians 4:24); and bear (Luke 1:13).

"Perez and Zerah" Perez and Zerah were twins (cf. Gen. 38:27–30). The Messianic line came through Perez.¹⁶

Phares and Zara, the twin-sons of Judah, are likewise both named, though Phares only was Christ's ancestor, for the same reason that the brethren of Judah are taken notice of; and some think because the birth of Phares and Zara had something of an allegory in it. Zara put out his hand first, as the first-born, but, drawing it in, Phares got the birth-right. The Jewish church, like Zara, reached first at the birthright, but through unbelief, withdrawing the hand, the Gentile church, like Phares, broke forth and went away with the birthright; and thus *blindness is in part happened unto Israel, till the fulness of the*

2 Baruch **2 Baruch**. A Jewish apocalypse from the late first or early second century A.D.

¹⁴Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Mt 1:2). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

¹⁵Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

¹⁶Utley, R. J. D. (2000). *Vol. Volume 9: The First Christian Primer: Matthew*. Study Guide Commentary Series (6). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

*Gentiles become in, and then Zara shall be born—all Israel shall be saved, Rom. 11:25, 26.*¹⁷

Severus; “How could Fornicators Be in Jesus’ Lineage?”

It is for this reason [to show Christ’s true humanity] that in this genealogy the Evangelist mentioned in his list even those who had shocking carnal relations that were in appropriate and outside the law. For Matthew wrote with due deliberation, “And Judah became the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar” and even more plainly “And David became the father of Solomon by Uriah’s wife.” These were women with whom they became united by fornication and adultery. By this means the genealogy revealed that it is our very sinful nature that Christ himself came to heal. It is that very nature which had fallen revolted and plunged into inordinate desires. When our nature fled [from God], he took hold of it. When it dashed out and ran away in revolt, he stopped it, held onto it, enabled it to return and blocked its downward spiral. This is what the words of the apostle say in this regard: “For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect.

Christ therefore took upon himself a blood relationship to that nature which fornicated, in order to purify it. He took on that very nature that was sick, in order to heal it. He took on that nature which fell, in order to lift it up. All this occurred in a charitable, beneficial manner wholly appropriate to God.

Although sinless, he became united to the flesh that is of the same essence as ours, which possesses an intelligent soul. It is with this premise that the gestation and conception from the Holy Spirit was spoken and the virgin birth occurred, the birth that knew not marriage or carnal union and that respected in an unspeakable manner the seal of virginal purity. (Cathedral Sermons, Homily 94)¹⁸

Matthew 1:4

And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;

Matthew 1:5

And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

[Rachab] Rahab: of Joshua’s time. Thus, Boaz had a Gentile mother, Rahab! (Joshua 2:1-24; Joshua 6:25; James 2:25).

¹⁷Henry, M. (1996, c1991). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible : Complete and unabridged in one volume* (Mt 1:1). Peabody: Hendrickson.

¹⁸ Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, IntVarsity Press, Thomas C. Oden

Matthew 1:6

And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

[of her that had been the wife of Uriah] = Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11; 1 Kings 1:11-31).

Note: It was *David's* sin. (Cf. Proverbs 31: Bathsheba's counsel to Solomon...)

[**David the king**] David's line in Matthew is the royal line through Solomon. His line in Luke 3:23-38 is through Nathan, another son (2 Samuel 5:14), and Heli, the father of Mary. Both lines were necessary in fulfilling prophecy. God had cursed Jehoniah (Coniah or Jehoiachin) of the royal line and sworn that no seed of his should ever sit on the throne of David and reign in Jerusalem (Jeremiah 22:24-30). God had also sworn to David that his line through Solomon would forever sit on his throne (2 Samuel 7). The only way this could be fulfilled was for Jesus, the Son of David through Nathan and Mary, to become the legal heir to the throne of David through Joseph of the kingly line (Luke 1:32-33; Isaiah 9:6-7; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 22:16). Jesus, being the foster Son of Joseph and the firstborn in the family, became the legal heir to David's throne through Joseph.

Though divers kings are here named, yet none is expressly called a king but David (v. 6), *David the king*; because with him the covenant of royalty was made, and to him the promise of the kingdom of the Messiah was given, who is therefore said to inherit *the throne of his father David*, Lu. 1:32.¹⁹

McGee: A careful look at the genealogy that follows is not only interesting; it is actually thrilling. Four names stand out as if they were in neon lights. It is startling to find them included in the genealogy of Christ. First, they are the names of women; second, they are the names of Gentiles.

Customarily, the names of women did not appear in Hebrew genealogies, but don't find fault with that for the very simple reason that today we have the same thing in marriage. In a marriage the name that the couple takes is the name of the man. They don't take the name of the woman. Her line ends; his goes on. That's the way we do it today, and that's the way they did it then.

Down through the years I have performed marriages in which the girl had a lovely name like Jones or Smith, and she wanted to exchange it for a name like Neuschwander or Schicklegruber! You would think that she'd not want to surrender her name for one having four or five syllables, but that's the way they do it today. I have a clipping in my file of about ten years ago that tells of a couple in Pasadena who did the unusual thing of taking the name of the woman, which, I understand, can be legally done. But our custom is to take the name of the man, and it is the man's genealogy that is given.

In Jesus' day it was indeed unusual to find in a genealogy a woman's name—yet here we have four names. They are not only four women; they are four Gentiles. As you

¹⁹Henry, M. (1996, c1991). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible : Complete and unabridged in one volume* (Mt 1:1). Peabody: Hendrickson.

know, God in the Law said that His people were not to intermarry with tribes that were heathen and pagan. Even Abraham was instructed by God to send back to his people to get a bride for his son Isaac. Also, the same thing was done by Isaac for his son Jacob. It was God's arrangement that monotheism should be the prevailing belief of those who were in the line that was leading down to the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet in His genealogy are the names of four gentile women—two of them were Canaanites, one was a Moabite, and the fourth was a Hittite! You would naturally ask the question, "How did *they* get into the genealogy of Christ?"

"Tamar" is the first one, and she is mentioned in verse three. Her story is in Genesis 38, and there she is called Tamar. That chapter is one of the worst in the Bible. Tamar got into the genealogy because she was a sinner.

"Rachab" is the next one mentioned in verse five. She's not a very pretty character in her story back in Joshua chapter 2 where she is called Rahab. But she did become a wonderful person after she came to a knowledge of the living and true God. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace" (Heb. 11:31). She got into the genealogy of Christ for the simple reason that she *believed*. She had faith. Notice the progression here. Come as a *sinner*, and then reach out the hand of *faith*.

"Ruth" is the next one mentioned in verse five. She is a lovely person, and you won't find anything wrong with her. But at Ruth's time there was the Law which shut her out because it said that a Moabite or an Ammonite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord (see Deut. 23:3). Although the Law kept her out, there was a man by the name of Boaz who came into his field one day and saw her. It was love at first sight.

Now, maybe you didn't know that I believe in love at first sight. I proposed to my wife on our second date, and the only reason I didn't propose on our first date was because I didn't want her to think I was in a hurry! I do believe in love at first sight. But don't misunderstand me—we waited a year before we were married, just to make sure. And I think that is always the wise thing to do. Boaz loved Ruth at first sight, and he extended grace to her by putting his mantle around her and bringing her, a Gentile, into the congregation of Israel. She asked, "... Why have I found grace in thine eyes ...?" (Ruth 2:10). You and I can ask that same question of God regarding His grace to us. Again, note the progression. We come as *sinners* and hold out the hand of *faith*, and He, by His marvelous grace, *saves* us.

"Bathsheba" is not mentioned by name but called "her that had been the wife of Urias" (v. 6). Her name isn't mentioned because it wasn't her sin. It was David's sin, and David was the one that really had to pay for it. And he did pay for it. She got into the genealogy of Christ because God does not throw overboard one of His children who sins. A sheep can get out of the fold and become a lost sheep, but we have a Shepherd who goes after sheep and always brings them back into the fold. He brought David back. So this is the whole story of salvation right here in this genealogy.

Now there are some more interesting things about this genealogy. If you will compare this genealogy with the one in 1 Chronicles 3 (some of the names are spelled differently), you will find that in verse eight of Matthew, the names of Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah are left out. This shows that genealogies are quoted to give us a view of a certain line of descendants and that every individual is not necessarily named in every genealogy of the Bible. I think we should remember this in the genealogies given to us in Genesis before

the Flood. These are not necessarily complete genealogies, but they are given to trace a certain line for us. I personally think man has been on this earth a lot longer than Ussher's dating which is found in the margins of many editions of the Bible. Remember that these dates are by *Ussher* and are not part of the Bible. They are faulty and do not belong there.²⁰

Nelson: 1:3–6 The mention of women in a Jewish genealogy is unusual. But in addition to Mary, four women are listed in this catalog of names. The extraordinary emphasis is underscored by the *kind* of women Matthew mentions: **Tamar**, who was involved in a scandal with Judah (Gen. 38); **Rahab**, the Canaanite harlot of Jericho (Josh. 2); **Ruth**, who was not an Israelite, but a Moabite (Ruth 1:4); and Bathsheba, **the wife of Uriah**, a woman involved in a sin of horrendous proportions (2 Sam. 11:1–12:23), and who may have been a Hittite. At the beginning of his Gospel, Matthew shows how God's grace forgives the darkest of sins and reaches beyond the nation of Israel to the world. He also points out that God can lift the lowest and place them in royal lineage.²¹

Matthew 1:7

And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

[Roboam] Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:41-12:24).

[Abia] Abijam (1 Kings 14:31-15:8).

Matthew 1:8

And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

From Joram to Uzziah, there are 3 guys omitted: they are not mentioned in this genealogy: Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah! Ahaziah was called the son-in-law to the House of Jacob (2 Kgs 8:25-26) and slain by Jehu (2 Kgs 9). Joash was slain by the servants in 2 Kings 12:1 and Amaziah was slain by the people of Jerusalem in 2 Kings 14:1-2. God was visiting them because of idolatry, and fulfilled literally the punishing of the 3rd and 4th generations. Deuteronomy 29 instructs that their names be blotted out! While you will find their records in the Old Testament, they are blotted out of this genealogy! All names are not necessary in a royal genealogy.

[Josaphat] Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 15:23-24; 1 Kings 22:2-50).

[Joram] Jehoram (2 Kings 8:16-24).

[Ozias] Azariah or Uzziah (2 Kings 15:1-7).

²⁰ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²¹ Nelson Study Bible

Matthew 1:9

And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

[**Joatham**] Jotham (2 Kings 15:32-38).

[**Achaz**] Ahaz (2 Kings 16:1-20).

Matthew 1:10

And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias

[**Ezekias**] Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:1-20:20).

[**Manasses**] Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-18).

[**Josias**] Josiah (2 Kings 22:1-23:30).

Matthew 1:11

And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:

[**Jechonias**] “Jeconiah”: 2 Chr 36:8; Jer 22:24ff.

Jehoiakim had a son named “Jehoiachin” (also referred to as “Jeconiah” or “Coniah”). Jer 22:24-30. God pronounces a blood curse on Jeconiah! Matthew takes us down the royal line through Jeconiah to David and then Joseph. The Messiah must be eligible for the throne of David, yet can’t be under the blood curse of Jeconiah. Luke gives us the answer (Luke 3). This genealogy from Adam to Abraham through David is the same as Matthew, but at David Luke goes through Nathan (not Solomon) down to Heli, the father of Mary. Of the house of David, yet NOT under the blood curse of Jeconiah!²²

Jechoniah or Coniah (2 Kings 24:6-16). Between him and Josiah were two more kings that are not listed here: Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:31-24:6). Following him Zedekiah reigned and then the kingdom of Judah came to an end (2 Kings 24:6-25:30).

Copyist’s error? Jehoiakim omitted between Josiah and Jeconiah. Josiah did not beget Jeconiah; and Jeconiah did not have “brethren.”

The exile occurred in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia, conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem, and took thousands of captives to Babylonia.

McGee: In verse 11, we find that Matthew skips Jehoiakim but includes Jechonias. Jechonias deserves our special attention because God had said that none of his seed would sit on the throne. “As I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah [his name is Jeconiah,

²² Chuck Missler, Commentary on the Book of Matthew, khouse.org

but God took the Je off his name because it is the prefix for *Jehovah*, and this man was a wicked king] the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah” (Jer. 22:24, 30). Because of the sin of this man Jechonias, no one in his line could ever sit on the throne of David. You see, Joseph is in this line, but Joseph is not the natural father of Jesus. This is one of the most remarkable facts in the Scriptures, and Matthew is trying to make it clear to us. Joseph gave to Jesus the title, the *legal* title, to the throne of David because Joseph was the husband of Mary who was the one who bore Jesus. Jesus Christ is not the seed of Joseph, nor is He the seed of Jeconiah. But both Joseph and Mary had to be from the line of David, and they were—through two different lines from two different sons of David. We’ll find when we get to Luke that Mary’s line comes from David through his son Nathan. Joseph’s line comes through the royal line through Solomon. So Joseph and Mary both had to go to Bethlehem to be enrolled for taxation because they were both from the line of David. You see how interesting, fascinating, and important these genealogies are and how much they are worth our study.²³

Matthew 1:12

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

Salathiel “adopted” to circumvent blood curse on Jeconiah? He was son of Neri (Luke 3:27), a descendant of David through his son Nathan.

[Salathiel] 1 Chron. 3:17-19; Ezra 3:2; Ezra 5:2.

Matthew 1:13

And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

[Abiud] The nine men from here to Joseph are not mentioned elsewhere in Scripture.

Matthew 1:14

And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

“Zadok” This was not the faithful priest of David’s day (cf. II Sam. 20:25; I Chr. 16:39) because Matthew’s Zadok is of the tribe of Judah, not Levi.²⁴

²³McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:9). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²⁴Utley, R. J. D. (2000). *Vol. Volume 9: The First Christian Primer: Matthew*. Study Guide Commentary Series (8). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

Matthew 1:15

And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

Matthew 1:16

And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

The legal line of Jesus to the throne, through Joseph.

Very unusual to have women in a genealogy, yet in Jesus' we see 5 women listed (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary)!

McGee: You see that this breaks the pattern which began as far back as verse 2 where it says that Abraham *begat* Isaac. From then on it was just a whole lot of "begetting," and verse 16 begins by saying, "And Jacob begat Joseph." You would expect it to continue by saying that Joseph begat Jesus, but it does not say that. Instead, it says, "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." Obviously, Matthew is making it clear that Joseph is not the father of Jesus. Although he is the husband of Mary, he is not the father of Jesus.

What is the explanation of this? Well, Matthew in the rest of this chapter will give us the explanation and will show how it fulfills Old Testament prophecy.²⁵

Nelson: Joseph the husband of Mary was a direct descendant of David. Matthew, however, was careful not to identify Jesus as the physical son of Joseph. The Greek pronoun translated **of whom** is feminine and refers to Mary. **Christ** and the word *messiah* both mean "Anointed One"; the first term is from Greek; the second is from Hebrew. In the Old Testament, anointing signified two things: God's choice and His empowerment for a task. Israelites were traditionally anointed to three different offices: prophet, priest, or king. Although the Lord Jesus was God's Anointed for all three, Matthew places the most stress on Jesus' royalty.²⁶

²⁵McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²⁶Nelson Study Bible

Luke	Matthew & Luke	Luke	Matthew
Adam		Nathan	Solomon
Seth		Mattatha	Rehoboam
Enosh		Menan	Abijah
Kenan		Melea	Asa
Mahalalel		Eliakim	Jehoshaphat
Jared		Jonan	Jehoram
Enoch		Joseph	Ahaziah*
Methuselah		Juda	Joash*
Lamech		Simeon	Amaziah*
Noah		Levi	Uzziah
Shem		Matthat	Jotham
Arphaxad		Jorim	Ahaz
Salah		Eliezer	Hezekiah
Eber		Jose	Manasseh
Peleg		Er	Amon
Reu		Elmodam	Josiah
Serug		Cosam	Jehoiakim*
Nahor		Addi	Jehoiachin*
Terah	↓	Melchi	Salatheil
	Abraham	Neri	Zerubbabel
	Isaac	Salathiel	Abiud
	Jacob	Zerubbabel	Eliakim
	Judah	Rhesa	Azor
	Pharez	Joanna	Sadoc
	Hezron	Juda	Achim
	Ram	Joseph	Eliud
	Amminadab	Semei	Eleazar
	Nahshon	Mattathias	Matthan
	Salmon	Maath	Jacob
	Boaz	Nagge	Joseph
	Obed	Esli	
	Jesse	Naum	
	David	Amos	
		Mattathias	
		Joseph	
		Janna	
		Melchi	
		Levi	
		Matthat	
		Heli	
		(Mary)	

* Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah all died violent deaths; God thus dealing with idolatry literally "to the 3rd and 4th generations" (Ex 20:4-5); their names are therefore "blotted out" according to the Law (Deut 29:20). Jehoiakim and Jechoniah likewise, since the kingdom ended as an independent kingdom with Josiah's death at Megiddo. Thus these were "blotted out" of the groups of "14 generations" in Matthew's account. [E.W. Bullinger's *Companion Bible*, Appendix 99.]

Because Mary was a virgin when she became pregnant, Matthew lists Joseph only as the husband of Mary, not the father of Jesus. Matthew's genealogy gives Jesus' legal (or

royal) lineage through Joseph. Mary's ancestral line is recorded in Luke 3:23-38. Both Mary and Joseph were direct descendants of David.

Matthew traced the genealogy back to Abraham, while Luke traced it back to Adam. Matthew wrote to the Jews, so Jesus was shown as a descendant of their father, Abraham. Luke wrote to the Gentiles, so he emphasized Jesus as the Savior of all people.

[Joseph] Eleven Joseph's in Scripture: five in the Old Testament (Genesis 30:24; Numbers 13:7; 1 Chron. 25:2; Ezra 10:42; Neh. 12:14) and six in the New Testament (Matthew 1:16; Matthew 27:57; Luke 3:24,26,30; Acts 1:23).

[Mary] Mary the wife of Joseph and the mother of four sons besides Jesus, and of at least three daughters.

(Luke 8:19-21) ¹⁹*Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.* ²⁰*And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.* ²¹*And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.*

(Matthew 13:55-56) ⁵⁵*Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?* ⁵⁶*And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?*

(Mark 6:3) ³*Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.*

Hegg: Joseph was a very popular name in the 1st Century Jewish communities. At least eighteen different Josephs are named by Josephus. The name mean "he adds," (cf. Gen 30:24). If it were not for Matthew's Gospel, we would know precious little about Joseph. In the other Gospels he is only a bystander, and the husband of Mary. Even Matthew hesitates to call Joseph the husband of Mary in the ensuing narrative (cf 2:13-14, 20-21). Yet Matthew lets us know that he was of the family of David, that he was upright, a man of visions, and resolutely obedient to the Lord. Once again, Matthew's description of Joseph shows clear parallels to the Joseph of Genesis. While there is no clear evidence to say so, it is not out of the realm of possibility that the material Matthew used regarding Joseph came from Joseph himself and those who were his close companions. It is very reasonable to believe that he related his story to those to whom he was closest, and that this testimony was carried along by those who followed Yeshua as their Messiah.²⁷

²⁷ Tim Hegg, Commentary on Matthew, torahresource.com

Matthew 1:17

So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

The throne of David ends at Babylon. If you count the generations, from Joram to Uzziah there are three guys missing: Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah! Ahaziah was called the son-in-law to the House of Jacob (2 Kgs 8) and slain by Jahu (2 Kgs 9). Joash was slain by the servants in 2 Kings 12 and Amaziah was slain by the people of Jerusalem in 2 Kings 14. God was visiting them because of idolatry, and fulfilled literally the punishing of the third and fourth generations. Deuteronomy 29 instructs that their names be blotted out! While you will find their records in the Old Testament, they are blotted out of the genealogy!

There are 42 generations named, but some not listed here

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST - McGee

Luke, who wrote the gospel bearing his name, was a Greek doctor. In his gospel, he goes into an extended section on obstetrics. Both gospels declare that Jesus was virgin born. Joseph was not His father, but Mary was not unfaithful to Joseph. Jesus is not an illegitimate child. This is something new: "... A woman shall compass a man" (Jer. 31:22).

Now, my friend, I have never objected to any man saying that he does not believe in the Virgin Birth. A man has the right to disbelieve. But I do have two very definite objections: I do not think that a *preacher* should deny the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. If he does, then he ought to get a job selling insurance and deal with births in a different way. And I do object to anyone saying that the *Bible* does not teach the virgin birth of Christ. The only Jesus that we have any historical record of is the One who was virgin born. If you want to take the position that He was not virgin born, where is your documentation? You will have to produce evidence—certainly more than the puny reasoning of man. It is so easy to sit in a swivel chair in some theological seminary and write a thesis on the impossibility of the Virgin Birth. You may write a very profound tome on the subject, but you haven't any documents to back up your denial. All you have is just rationalism. By the process of rationalizing you may say, "It couldn't have happened." Well, who are you to say that it couldn't have happened? A few years ago man said that it was impossible to go to the moon, but we have gone there, and we have gone there by using the laws of God. God is the Creator of natural laws. He can either use those natural laws or He can set them aside in order to accomplish His purposes. The record clearly states that Jesus Christ was virgin born.

In verse 17 we find a statement which will explain something in the genealogies. Matthew puts the genealogy into groupings to give an overall view of Old Testament history. One era extends from Abraham to David, another from David to the Babylonian captivity, and the third from the captivity in Babylon to the birth of Jesus Christ. Obviously, he has omitted some names from the genealogy in order to fit fourteen into

each period. The question is, why did he do this? Apparently, the number fourteen (twice seven) offered some proof concerning the accuracy of this genealogy.

Now that Matthew has shown that Joseph is not the father of Jesus, he is going to give us an explanation. Already in the Old Testament, a supernatural birth has been predicted by God. Jeremiah is talking to the nation Israel when he says, “How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man” (Jer. 31:22). That’s not the way it’s done, my friend. That’s not natural birth; it’s supernatural. The virgin birth of the Lord Jesus is the “new thing” which God has done. And it is the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy.²⁸

Matthew 1:18

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.



[The birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise] Here’s the way it happened, Matthew is telling us. When His mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph, that is, she was engaged to him, before they came together—they had had no sexual relationship—she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

[before they came together, she was found with child] The penalty would have been death for Mary.

The sign given is that the Messiah shall be *born of a virgin*. *A virgin shall conceive*, and, by her, he shall be manifested *in the flesh*. The word *Almah* signifies a *virgin* in the strictest sense, such as Mary professes herself to be (Lu. 1:34), *I know not a man*; nor had it been any such wonderful sign as

it was intended for, if it had been otherwise. It was intimated from the beginning that the Messiah should be born of a virgin, when it was said that he should be the *seed of the woman*; so the seed of the woman as not to be the seed of any man. Christ was born of a virgin not only because his birth was to be *supernatural*, and altogether extraordinary, but because it was to be *spotless*, and pure, and without any stain of sin. Christ would be born, not of an *empress* or *queen*, for he appeared not in outward pomp or splendour, but of a virgin, to teach us spiritual purity, to die to all the delights of sense, and so to *keep*

²⁸McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

ourselves unspotted from the world and the flesh that we may be presented *chaste virgins to Christ*.²⁹

[espoused to Joseph] Espousal among Hebrews was the only legal part of marriage and could not be broken off except by a bill of divorce. All legal documents were signed and contracts completed at this time. All contracts specified a time between the espousal and actual marriage relationship (Genesis 29:18; Deut. 20).

[of the Holy Ghost] Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Phil. 2; Hebrews 2.

Jewish New Testament:

Engaged. The Hebrew/Aramaic word for betrothal is “*kiddushin*,” which signifies “sanctification, separation,” i.e., the setting aside and separating of a particular woman for a particular man. According to the Mishna, adultery during the betrothal period is a more serious sin than adultery after marriage.

The Mishna specifies four kinds of death penalty in descending order of gravity: stoning, burning, beheading and strangling (Sanhedrin 7:1). A man who has intercourse with a betrothed girl is subject to the same penalty as one who has intercourse with his mother, namely, stoning (Sanhedrin 7: 4). Someone who has intercourse with another man’s wife is liable to death by strangling (Sanhedrin 11:1).

Today, partly in order to eliminate the possibility of committing this grave sin, formal Jewish betrothal (*kiddushin* or *erusin*) and marriage (*nisu'in*) are generally combined in a single ceremony.

Ruach HaKodesh, Hebrew for “Holy Spirit.” The term appears in the *Tanakh* (Isaiah 51:13(11), 63:10–11) and is equivalent to the “Spirit of God” (*Ruach-Elohim*), first seen in Genesis 1:2 as having “moved on the face of the waters” before God said, “Let there be light.” From this verse, Isaiah 48:16 and other places in the Bible it can be learned that the Holy Spirit is divine, not less or other than God. Under the terms of the New Covenant, Yeshua sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in any person who trusts God through the Messiah. The Holy Spirit gives such a person power for service, guidance into God’s truth, gifts to facilitate holy living, and fruits of righteous behavior. (The King James Version of the English Bible uses the term “holy ghost,” which has nothing to do with spooks but is seventeenth-century English for “Holy Spirit.”)

Miryam. In English this Hebrew name is usually rendered by the spelling “Miriam” in the *Tanakh* and “Mary” in the New Testament. This unfounded and artificial distinction produced by translators subtly drives a wedge between Yeshua’s mother and her own Jewishness. The original Miriam was the sister of *Moshe Rabbenu* (“Moses, our teacher”; Exodus 2: 4–8) and a prophet (Exodus 15:20); in some respects she is seen as a role-model for the Jewish woman leader of today. But the name “Mary” evokes in the reader’s thinking an otherworldly image of “Madonna and Child,” complete with haloes, beatific smiles and angels in array, instead of the New Testament’s portrayal of a down-to-earth Jewish lady in an Israel village managing her wifely, maternal and other social responsibilities with care, love and faith.

²⁹Henry, M. (1996, c1991). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible : Complete and unabridged in one volume* (Mt 1:18). Peabody: Hendrickson.

Yeshua's mother was **discovered to be pregnant by the *Ruach HaKodesh***. Sooner or later everyone discovered she was pregnant. But not everyone discovered that her pregnancy had resulted not from sexual relations but from the Holy Spirit's super-natural activity. The "virgin birth" was a supernatural event (see Section (1) of v. 23N). The God who made heaven and earth is quite capable of causing a woman to become pregnant in a way not possible in nature.

Mattityahu informs his readers of Yeshua's supernatural conception in order to counter the obvious and natural inference that Miryam had misbehaved. The early rabbis developed a tradition that Yeshua was the illegitimate son of Miryam and a Roman soldier named Pantera (in the second-century Tosefta, a collection similar to the Mishna, see Chullin 2:23; in the fifth-century Babylonian Talmud see Sanhedrin 43a, 67a). This calumny, invented, of course, to counter the claims of the Gospel, was worked up further in the sixth-century anti-gospel, *Toledot-Yeshu* (see v. 21N).³⁰

IVP: Ancient biographers sometimes praised the miraculous births of their subjects (especially prominent in the Old Testament), but there are no close parallels to the virgin birth. Greeks told stories of gods impregnating women, but the text indicates that Mary's conception was not sexual; nor does the Old Testament (or Jewish tradition) ascribe sexual characteristics to God. Many miraculous birth stories in the ancient world (including Jewish accounts, e.g., 1 Enoch 106) are heavily embroidered with mythical imagery (e.g., babies filling houses with light), in contrast with the straightforward narrative style of this passage (cf. similarly Ex 2:1–10).³¹

Matthew 1:19

Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

[**just**] Greek: *dikaios* (GSN-1342), righteous (Matthew 13:49).

[**public example**] Expose her to public shame and death, as required by law (Deut. 22:25-28).

³⁰Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:18). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

1 Enoch **1 Enoch**. An apocalypse whose five sections may drive from different authors, 1 Enoch is mainly (excepting the Similitudes) from the second century B.C. Probably written in Aramaic, it circulated especially in Essene circles and survives in part in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in full in later Ethiopic manuscripts.

³¹Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Mt 1:18). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

MT	Lxx	Matthew
<p>הִנֵּה הַעֲלֵמָה הָרָה וְיִלְדֵת בֵּן וְקָרְאת שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל</p> <p>Behold, the virgin will conceive and bear a son and you will call his name "with us God."</p>	<p>ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ</p> <p>Behold, the virgin will conceive and bear a son and you will call his name Emmanuel.</p>	<p>ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ</p> <p>Behold, the virgin will conceive and bear a son and they will call his name Emmanuel.</p>

[put her away privily] Divorce her privately (Deut. 24:1-4).

McGee: The Mosaic Law was very specific at this point. It said that a woman who was guilty of being unfaithful should be stoned to death—that was the extreme penalty. But this man Joseph was a remarkable man. We devote a great deal of attention to Mary, and rightly so. Protestants should not let themselves be deterred from giving Mary a great deal of credit. She was a remarkable person. Remember that she was the one whom God chose to be the mother of our Lord, and God makes no mistakes. He picked the right girl. While all of this is true, we need to remember that God also chose Joseph. God made no mistake in choosing him either. A hotheaded man would immediately have had her stoned to death or would have made her a public example by exposing her. But Joseph was not that kind of man. He was a gentle person. He was in *love* with her, and he did not want to hurt her in any way, although he felt that she had been unfaithful to him.³²

IVP: The penalty for adultery under Old Testament law was death by stoning, and this penalty applied to infidelity during betrothal as well (Deut 22:23–24). In New Testament times, Joseph would have merely been required to divorce Mary and expose her to shame; the death penalty was rarely if ever executed for this offense. (Betrothals were so binding that if a woman’s fiancé died, she was considered a widow; betrothals could otherwise be terminated only by divorce.) But a woman with a child, divorced for such infidelity, would be hard pressed ever to find another husband, leaving her without means of support if her parents died.

But because divorces could be effected by a simple document with two witnesses, Joseph could have divorced her without making her shame more widely known. (It was necessary to involve a judge only if the wife were the one requesting that the husband divorce her.) Much later rabbinic tradition charges that Mary slept with another man, but Joseph’s marrying her (v. 24) demonstrates that he did not believe this was the case.³³

³²McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

rabbinic ***Rabbi**. Jewish teacher. Sometime after A.D. 70 the term became a technical one for those ordained in the rabbinic movement, which probably consisted primarily of Pharisaic scribes. (To

Matthew 1:20

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

In order to prevent a very tragic situation, the angel appeared to Joseph to make clear to him what was taking place.

[dream] First of six dreams in the New Testament, all in Matthew (Matthew 1:20; Matthew 2:12,13,19,22; Matthew 27:19).

[angel of the Lord appeared unto him] Gabriel (Luke 1:26). Four such appearances to Joseph (Matthew 1:20,24; Matthew 2:13,19).

[son of David] Interesting title for Joseph. David was promised by God that the Messiah would come from his line. When David wanted to build the Temple, God would not let him build the Temple because he was a man of war. God instead built a house for David, through the promise that the Messiah would be of the House and lineage of David. House and lineage is different as seen through the genealogies of Matthew and Luke respectively.

Jewish New Testament:

Adonai, literally, “my lords”; but grammarians consider it the “plural of majesty”; so a slightly less literal translation would be “my Lord.” Long before Yeshua’s day, however, the word “*Adonai*” had, out of respect, been substituted in speaking and in reading aloud for God’s personal name, the four Hebrew letters *yud-heh-vav-heh*, variously written in English as “*YHVH*,” “Yahweh” and “Jehovah.” The Talmud (Pesachim 50a) made it a requirement not to pronounce the Tetragrammaton (the word means the “four-letter name” of God), and this remains the rule in most modern Jewish settings. In deference to this tradition (which, in my view, is unnecessary but harmless) the *JNT* uses “*Adonai*” where “*YHVH*” is meant. (Incidentally, the name “Jehovah” is a modern invention, an English hybrid based on the four Hebrew letters as transliterated into German, J-H-V-H, with the individually transliterated Hebrew vowel-points of “*Adonai*,” e-o-a.)

The Greek word here is “*kurios*,” which can mean (1) “sir,” (2) “lord” in the human sense, as in “lord of the manor,” (3) “Lord” in the divine sense, or (4) God’s personal name *YHVH*. The *JNT* uses “*Adonai*” only when one can be certain that “*YHVH*” is meant; it is not used if there is doubt. So far, editions of the *JNT* are conservative on this score; there are probably additional places in the text where “*Adonai*” could safely be substituted for “Lord.” For more on “*kurios*” see 7:21&N.³⁴

accommodate customary usage this commentary sometimes applies the term to Jewish teachers of the law in general, although such common usage may have technically been later; it also applies the term to the teachings of Jewish legal experts collected in rabbinic literature.)

³³Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Mt 1:19). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

³⁴Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:20). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

In the Old Testament, angels often brought messages in dreams; in Greek literature, deceased people (as well as pagan deities) often brought messages, but this occurs nowhere in the Bible. The Old Testament does mention expert dream interpreters, like Daniel (Dan 1:17; 2:19–45) and Jacob’s son Joseph (Gen 37:5–11; 40–41). Most stories from here in Matthew 1 to the end of Matthew 2 involve supernatural guidance (dreams or the star).³⁵

Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

The name *Jesus* means “Savior.” He shall have the name Jesus because He shall save His people from their sins.

[And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins] This is the 1st New Testament prophecy in Matthew (Matthew 1:21, and it was fulfilled in Matthew 1:25). The next prophecy is in Matthew 2:13.

[named] Last of seven persons named before birth: Ishmael (Genesis 16:11); Isaac (Genesis 17:19); Solomon (1 Chron. 22:9); Josiah, (325 years before birth, 1 Kings 13:2; 2 Kings 22:1); Cyrus (175 years before birth, Isaiah 44:28-45:1); John the Baptist (Luke 1:13,60-63); Jesus (Matthew 1:21).

[JESUS] Used 983 times in the New Testament It is the earthly name of God's Son. As God, He was not called Jesus or Christ. Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew: *Yehowshuwa* (HSN-3091) (rendered "Joshua" 218 times), meaning "Savior" or "God Who is Salvation."

[save] Greek: *sozo* (GSN-4982). Used 110 times in the New Testament of salvation from sin (Matthew 1:21; Hebrews 7:25), danger (Matthew 14:30; Matthew 27:42), spiritual conflict (John 12:27; 1 Tim. 4:16), sickness (James 5:15), hell (John 3:16-18; Mark 16:16), and slavery (Jude 1:5).

[sins] Greek: *hamartia* (GSN-266) (John 1:29).

Jewish New Testament: This verse is an example of a “semitism” (an allusion to Hebrew or Aramaic) brought over literally into the Greek text. It provides strong evidence in favor of the theory that there was a Hebrew or Aramaic oral or written tradition behind the extant Greek manuscripts, for only in Hebrew or Aramaic does the

³⁵Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Mt 1:20). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

explanation here of Yeshua's name make any sense; in Greek (or English) it explains nothing.

The Hebrew word for “**he will save**” is “*yohia*,” which has the same Hebrew root (*yud-shin-ayin*) as the name **Yeshua** (*yud-shin-vav-ayin*). Thus the Messiah's name is explained on the basis of what he will do. Etymologically the name *Yeshua* is a contraction of the Hebrew name *Y.hoshua* (English “Joshua”), which means “*YHVH* saves.” It is also the masculine form of the Hebrew word “*yeshu.ah*,” which means “salvation.”

The KJV renders this verse, “... and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” But in English, saving people from sins is no more reason for calling someone Jesus than for calling him Bill or Frank. The Greek is no better; only in Hebrew or Aramaic does the explanation explain.

In modern Hebrew Yeshua is usually called *Yeshu* (*yud-shin-vav*, without an *ayin*) by nonbelievers. This verse also shows why the name “*Yeshu*” cannot possibly be correct—it does not include all three letters of the Hebrew root of *yoshia*. However, the matter bears further scrutiny.

According to Professors David Flusser and Shmuel Safrai, Orthodox Jews, “*Yeshu*” was how the name “*Yeshua*” was pronounced by Galilean Jews in the first century. We know from 26:73 below that Jews of the Galil had a different dialect than those of Judea. According to Flusser (*Jewish Sources in Early Christianity*, p. 15) Galileans did not pronounce the Hebrew letter *ayin* at the end of a word, much as Cockneys drop “h” at the beginning. That is, instead of saying “Ye-shoo-ah” they said “**Yeh**-shoo.” Undoubtedly some people began spelling the name according to this pronunciation.

However, that is not the end of the story. In Jewish anti-Christian polemic it became customary not to use Yeshua's correct name but intentionally and consciously to use the distortion “*Yeshu*,” because at some point someone realized that “*Yeshu*” is also an acronym consisting of the first letters of the Hebrew insult, “*Yimach sh.mo v.zikhro*” (“May his name and memory be blotted out”; the words adapt and expand the last phrase of Psalm 109:13). Thus “*Yeshu*” was a kind of coded incantation against Christian evangelism. Moreover, since Yeshua came to be regarded in non-Messianic Judaism as a false prophet, blasphemer and idolater wrongly being worshipped as God, and since the *Torah* says, “You shall not even pronounce the names of their gods” (Exodus 3:13), the Messiah's name was purposely *mispronounced*. Today most Israelis saying “*Yeshu*” suppose this is the man's correct name and intend no disparagement. The *JNT* avoids “*Yeshu*” because of its history and also because in Hebrew it, like “Jesus” in English, carries the valence of “the god the Gentiles worship.”

But Yosef Vaktor (see 10:37N) reinterprets the acronym to praise Yeshua, “*Yitgadal sh.mo umalkhuto!*” (“May his name and kingdom be magnified!”)³⁶

³⁶Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:21). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Matthew 1:22

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

The 1st Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in Matthew (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14). The next prophecy is in Matthew 2:6. Matthew, who is writing for the nation Israel, points out that all this was done so that it might be fulfilled as the Lord had spoken. Matthew is appealing to the nation Israel to understand that this One who had come must be the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy.

It has been said that there are over three hundred prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ that have been literally fulfilled. I don't know how many of them are in Matthew, but I do know that Matthew quoted more from the Old Testament than the other three gospel writers all together. It seems he records things and substantiates them from the Old Testament because he is not primarily trying to give a "life of Christ" but is showing that this is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Him.³⁷

Jewish New Testament:

To fulfill what *Adonai* had said through the prophet. The New Covenant consistently presents itself as fulfilling prophecies and promises made by God in the *Tanakh*. Such conformity to statements and predictions made hundreds of years earlier, in defiance of all reasonable probabilities, proves beyond reasonable doubt that God "knows the end from the beginning." Moreover, in this case, it proves beyond reasonable doubt that Yeshua is the Messiah. Prophecy fulfillment is the chief rational reason, based on empirical observation of historical events—that is, based on facts—for Jews and others to accept Yeshua as the Messiah.

There have been more than fifty messianic pretenders in the last two thousand years of Jewish history, starting with Todah (Theudas) and Judah HaG'lili (Ac 5:36–37&NN), continuing with Shim'on Bar-Kosiba (died 135 C.E.), whom Rabbi Akiva recognized as the Messiah by changing his name to "Bar-Kochva" ("son of a star"; see 2 Ke 1:19N on "the Morning Star"), and culminating in Shabtai Tzvi (1626–1676), who became a Moslem, and Jacob Frank (1726–1791), who became a Roman Catholic. But none of them met the criteria laid down in the *Tanakh* concerning the identity of the Messiah; whereas Yeshua met all of them that are applicable to his first coming (these fulfilled prophecies are listed in 26:24N and in Section VII of the Introduction to the *JNT*). Of the four gospel writers Mattityahu especially concerns himself with pointing out these fulfillments (see 2:5, 15, 17; 3:3; 4:14; 8:17; 11:10; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 22:43; 26:31, 27:9). His object is to demonstrate that Yeshua should be recognized as the Messiah because he fulfilled what *Adonai* said about the Messiah through the prophets of the *Tanakh*.

What *Adonai* had said through the prophet. On this phrase see 2:15N, third-from-last paragraph.³⁸

³⁷McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³⁸Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:22). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Matthew 1:23

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

[**virgin**] *Almah*: damsel, maid, virgin: untouched.

“The virgin”: Definite article (Cf. Gen 24:43; Ex 2:8; Ps 68:25; SoS 1:3; Prov 30:19).

LXX - (Septuagint) Greek word used in this verse is “parthenos” which means virgin. (Lowth, Gesenius, Ewald, Delitzsch, Kay, et al.—Greek scholars—all agree that it means virgin.)

“Bethulah”: Can mean virgin, but usually Bride (city or state).

“Lord Himself”

“You” - is plural! (House of David)

The context of this passage is that the Lord will give a sign—something miraculous. (A young girl having a baby is not unusual enough to be a “sign.”) Miraculous context: see Isa 7:11.

[**Immanuel**] God with us, means the incarnation of God. Never before. Used twice in Isaiah.

(Isaiah 7:10-14) Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Talmudic translation of Isa 7:14:

Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae: “Be not troubled, O Ahaz... Does it not seem an impossible thing to thee, that will never happen that a virgin become a mother; But I tell thee such a virgin shall bring forth a son, before the House of David perish.” [Isaiah — one author—the Lord through the prophet, Isaiah. Only one Isaiah, see John 12! John quotes from both sections attributing both sections to the same Isaiah!

McGee: Now let’s look at this a moment because it is very important. The liberal theologian has, of course, denied the fact of the virgin birth of Christ, and he has denied that the Bible teaches His virgin birth. Very candidly, I suspect that the Revised Standard Version was published in order to try to maintain some of the theses of the liberals. In fact, I am sure of this because one of the doctrines they have denied is the Virgin Birth. In the New Testament of the Revised Standard Version, which was copyrighted in 1946, Matthew 1:23 reads thus: “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel’ (which means, God with us).”

In the Old Testament of the Revised Standard Version, which was copyrighted in 1952, Isaiah 7:14 reads like this: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Notice that in Isaiah they substituted “young woman” for the word *virgin*, even though in Matthew 1:23 they had used the word *virgin*, which is a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14!

The prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 was given as a *sign*. My friend, it is no sign at all for a young woman to conceive and bear a son. If that’s a sign, then right here in Southern California a sign is taking place many times a day, every day. They translated it “young woman” to tone down that word *virgin*.

Let us look at Isaiah 7:14 in the original Hebrew language. The word used for “virgin” is *almah*. The translators of the RSV went to the writings of Gesenius, an outstanding scholar who has an exhaustive Hebrew lexicon. (I can testify that it’s also exhausting to look at it!) Gesenius admitted that the common translation of the word is “virgin,” but he said that it could be changed to “young woman.” The reason he said that was because he rejected the miraculous. So this new translation and others who have followed him, have attempted to say that *almah* means “young woman” and not “virgin.”

Let’s turn back to Isaiah 7 and study the incident recorded there. This was during the time when Ahaz was on the throne. He was one of those who was far from God, and I list him as a bad king. God sent Isaiah to bring a message to him, and he wouldn’t listen. So we read: “Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD” (Isa. 7:10–12). May I say, it was pious hypocrisy for him to say what he did. God had asked Isaiah to meet Ahaz on the way to deliver God’s message to him that God would give victory to Ahaz. However, Ahaz wouldn’t believe God and so, in order to encourage his faith, Isaiah tells him that God wants to give him a sign. In his super pious way Ahaz says, “Oh, I wouldn’t ask a sign of the Lord.” Isaiah answered him, “God is going to give you a sign whether you like it or not. The sign isn’t just for you but for the whole house of David.” Now here is the sign: “... Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14). Obviously, if this refers to a young woman, it would be no sign to Ahaz, or to the house of David, or to anybody else; but if a *virgin* conceives and bears a son, that, my friend, is a sign. And that’s exactly what it means.

When the word *almah* is used in the Old Testament, it means a virgin. Rebekah was called an *almah* before she married Isaac. I asked a very fine Hebrew Christian, who is also a good Hebrew scholar, about that. He said, “Look at it this way. Suppose you went to visit a friend of yours who had three daughters and two of them were married and one was still single. He would say, ‘These two are my married daughters, and this young lady is my third daughter.’ Do you think he would mean a prostitute when he said ‘young lady?’ If you would imply that she was anything but a virgin, he would probably knock your block off.” May I say, I would hate to be those who deny the virgin birth of Jesus Christ when they must come into the presence of the Son of God. I’m afraid they are going to wish they could somehow take back the things they have said to malign Him.

The fact that the word *almah* means “a virgin” is proven by the Septuagint. During the intertestamental period, seventy-two Hebrew scholars, six from each of the twelve tribes, worked down in Alexandria, Egypt, on the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek language. When they came to this “sign” in Isaiah, those seventy-two men understood that it meant “virgin,” and they translated it into the Greek

word *parthenos*. That is the same word which Matthew uses in his gospel. My friend, *parthenos* does not mean “young woman”; it means “virgin.” For example, Athena was the virgin goddess of Athens, and her temple was called the Parthenon because *parthenos* means “virgin.” It is clear that the Word of God is saying precisely what it means.

HIS NAME

Notice something wonderful. “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” It looks as if there is a problem here. Can you tell me where Jesus was ever called Emmanuel? No, He is called Jesus because that is His name. He was given this name because He shall save His people from their sins. Christ, by the way, is His title; Jesus is His name. But it says here that He shall be called “Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

Friend, here we have one of the most wonderful things in the entire Word of God. Let’s look at this. Emmanuel means “God with us.” He can’t be Emmanuel, God with us, unless He is virgin born. That’s the only way! And notice, unless He is Emmanuel, He cannot be Jesus, the Savior. The reason they call Him Jesus, Savior, is because He is God with us. This truth about the One who came down to this earth is one of the most wonderful things in the Bible.

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9). He had to be a sacrifice that was acceptable. I couldn’t die for the sins of the world. I can’t even die a redemptive death for my own sins. But He can! How can Jesus be a Savior? Because He is Emmanuel, God with us. How did He get with us? He was virgin born. I say again, He was called Jesus. He was never called Emmanuel. But you cannot call Him Jesus unless He is Emmanuel, God with us. He must be Emmanuel to be the Savior of the world. That is how important the Virgin Birth is.

Can a person be a Christian and deny the Virgin Birth? Hear me very carefully: I believe that it is possible to accept Christ as your Savior without knowing much about Him. You may not even know that this record is in the Bible. But after you have become a child of God, you will not deny the Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus. You may not have to know it to be saved, but as a child of God you cannot deny the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

Do I sound dogmatic, friend? Well, I hope I do because I consider this to be all-important. I want a Savior who is able to reach down and save Vernon McGee. If He’s just another man like I am, then He’s not going to be able to help me very much. But if He is Emmanuel, God with us, virgin born, then He is my Savior. Is He your Savior today? He took upon Himself our humanity in this way so that He might taste death for us, that He might die a redemptive death on the cross for us.³⁹

³⁹McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Jewish New Testament:

The virgin will conceive and bear a son. This verse introduces a major controversy concerning the use of the Hebrew Bible in the New Testament. Following are three objections which non-Messianic Jews and other skeptics often make to Mattityahu's quoting Isaiah 7:14b in this verse, along with Messianic Jewish replies.

(1) *Objection:* A virgin birth is impossible.

Reply: In liberal scholarship miracles are characteristically explained away as natural phenomena in disguise. One might pursue this line here by pointing to observed instances of parthenogenesis in the animal kingdom or modern cloning experiments. But there is no instance of human parthenogenesis. Therefore one must regard a virgin birth as supernatural.

Usually objection to a virgin birth as impossible follows as a logical consequence of objecting to any and all supernaturalism. But the God of the Bible is literally "supernatural," above nature, since he created nature and its laws. Therefore, if it suits his purpose he can suspend those laws. The Bible in both the *Tanakh* and the New Testament teaches repeatedly that God does intervene in human history and does sometimes overrule the natural course of events for his own reasons.

Frequently his reason, as in this instance, is to give humanity a sign of his sovereignty, presence and concern. In fact, Isaiah 7:14a, immediately preceding the portion quoted, reads, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign." The Hebrew word for sign ("ot") means an extraordinary event that demonstrates and calls attention to God's direct involvement in human affairs. The "God" of Deism, pictured as starting the universe like a man winding a watch and leaving it to run by itself, is not the God of the Bible.

(2) *Objection:* Isaiah, in using the Hebrew word "almah," was referring to a "young woman"; had he meant "virgin" he would have written "b.tulah."

Reply: "Almah" is used seven times in the Hebrew Bible, and in each instance it either explicitly means a virgin or implies it, because in the Bible "almah" always refers to an unmarried woman of good reputation. In Genesis 24:43 it applies to Rebecca, Isaac's future bride, already spoken of in Genesis 24:16 as a *b.tulah*. In Exodus 2:8 it describes the infant Moshe's older sister Miryam, a nine-year-old girl and surely a virgin. (Thus the name of Yeshua's mother recalls this earlier virgin.) The other references are to young maidens playing on timbrels (Psalm 68:25), maidens being courted (Proverbs 30:19) and virgins of the royal court (Song of Songs 1:3, 6:8). In each case the context requires a young unmarried woman of good reputation, i.e., a virgin.

Moreover, Mattityahu here is quoting from the Septuagint, the first translation of the *Tanakh* into Greek. More than two centuries before Yeshua was born, the Jewish translators of the Septuagint chose the Greek word "*parthenos*" to render "almah." "*Parthenos*" unequivocally means "virgin." This was long before the New Testament made the matter controversial.

The most famous medieval Jewish Bible commentator, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki ("Rashi," 1040—who determinedly opposed Christological interpretation of the *Tanakh*, nevertheless explained that in Song of Songs 1:3 "*alamot*" (the plural of "almah") means "*b.tulot*" ("virgins") and refers metaphorically to the nations.

Victor Buksbazen, a Hebrew Christian, in his commentary *The Prophet Isaiah*, quoted Rashi as writing that in Isaiah 7:14 "*almah*" means "virgin." In the first four

editions of the Jewish New Testament Commentary I cited this Rashi. It has been pointed out to me that Rashi did not write what I represented him as having written, so I have removed the citation from the main body of the *JNTC* and herewith apologize for not checking the original source.

In fact, the Hebrew text of Rashi as it appears in *Mikra3Cot G.dolot* says something quite different and far less supportive of the case I am making that in Isaiah 7:14 “*almah*” means “virgin.” Following is a literal translation of Rashi’s remarks in *Mikra3Cot G.dolot*:

[Isaiah:] God gives you (plural) a sign.

[Rashi:] He gives it to you (plural) by himself upon you against your will.

[Isaiah:] Pregnant.

[Rashi:] In the future she will be like we found with Manoach’s wife, that was spoken to her by the angel and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and it was written, and he will say to her: here you are pregnant, etc.

[Isaiah:] The young girl [*almah*].

[Rashi:] My wife pregnant this year? and it will be the fourth year of King Achaz?

[Isaiah:] And she will call his name.

[Rashi:] The Holy Spirit will descend upon her.

[Isaiah:] Immanu’el.

[Rashi:] This will be to say that God is with us. And this is the sign that after the *na.arah* who will have never prophesied in all her life and with him (the son) will come the Holy Spirit. And that has been said in [Talmud tractate] Sotah, “and he will draw near to the prophetess,” etc. We never find a prophet’s wife is called a prophetess unless she prophesied. And there are some who understand this to be referring to Chizkiyahu (Hezekiah). But this is impossible. After you count the years you will find that Chizkiyahu would have been born nine years before his father’s kingship began. And there are some who interpret this to mean that this is the sign, that she was an *almah* for whom it was not appropriate that she give birth — or, with Hebrew *r.uyah* translated differently, the *almah* was not suited to giving birth, i.e., she was too young.

Contrary to the Buksbazen citation, Rashi never explicitly says that the *na.arah* has never in her life had intercourse with any man (i.e., is a virgin). Rather, he simply defines the *almah* as a *na.arah* and then says that some interpret this to mean either that it was improper for her to give birth (presumably because she was unmarried, in which case what would be proper is that she would be a virgin) or that she was too young to be physically capable of giving birth (in which case, unless she had been abused, she would be a virgin).

I regret misrepresenting Rashi. Nevertheless, even without the Rashi paragraph, I believe the overall case I have made for understanding the *almah* of Isaiah 7:14 as a virgin remains convincing.

(A friend says that Rashi did write the paragraph as quoted, but it is not in *Mikra3Cot G.dolot*. However, until someone directs me to a genuine Rashi source for it, the matter remains as I have left it in this note.)

Also in the earlier editions I referred to a 1953 article in the *Journal of Bible and Religion*, in which the Jewish scholar Cyrus Gordon held that cognate languages support translating “*almah*” in Isaiah 7:14 as “virgin.” However, Michael Brown, a Messianic Jewish scholar with a Ph.D. in Semitics, informs me that Gordon’s observations were

based on an early incorrect reading of a key Ugaritic text. In this case, my error stemmed from unfamiliarity with recent scholarship.

However, the Bible itself shows us how we can know when an *almah* is a virgin. Rivkah is called an *almah* at Genesis 24:43, but it can be deduced from Genesis 24:16 (“Neither had any man known her”) that she was a virgin. In the same way, we know that the *almah* Miryam was a virgin from Lk 1:34, where she asks the angel how she can be pregnant, “since I am a virgin?”

A possible reason for Isaiah’s using the word “*b.tulah*” instead of *b.tulah* is that in Biblical (as opposed to later) Hebrew, “*b.tulah*” does not always unambiguously mean “virgin,” as we learn from Joel 1:8: “Lament like a *b.tulah* girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.” Deuteronomy 22:19 speaks of a woman after her wedding night as a *b.tulah*.

(3) *Objection:* In Isaiah the context (vv. 10–17) shows that Isaiah was predicting as a sign to King Achaz that before the *almah*’s as yet unconceived and unborn child would be old enough to choose good and refuse evil, Syria and the Northern Kingdom would lose their kings, and Assyria would attack Judah. This prophecy was fulfilled in the eighth century B.C.E. Therefore the prophet was not predicting an event some 700 years in the future.

Reply (for which I am grateful to the Jewish believer Arnold Fruchtenbaum): On the contrary, the context, which includes all of Isaiah 7, not just eight verses, shows that the “sign” of v. 14 was not for King Achaz, who is referred to as “you” (singular) in vv. 11 and 16–17, but for the entire “House of David,” mentioned in v. 13, and referred to as “you” (plural) in vv. 13–14.

The sign for Achaz was that before the *na.ar* (“child,” at least a toddler, never a newborn baby) should know how to choose good and refuse evil, the events of vv. 16b–17 would occur. That child was Isaiah’s son Sh’ar-Yashuv (v. 3), who was with him as he prophesied and at whom he was probably pointing, not the son (Hebrew *ben*) of v. 14. This leaves v. 14 to provide a sign to the whole House of David, including all the descendants of David from that time onward until the prophecy should be fulfilled—which it was by Yeshua’s virgin birth.

Occasionally persons unacquainted with Christian tradition, specifically Roman Catholic tradition, confuse the term “virgin birth” with “immaculate conception.” The virgin birth of Yeshua—his being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit of God in Miryam before she had ever had sexual contact—is accepted by all Bible-believing Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians. The immaculate conception, the Roman Catholic doctrine (first taught by the Church Fathers) that Miryam herself was sinlessly conceived, is not accepted by Protestants because the New Testament makes no mention of it.

Immanu’el is the name given to the Messiah at Isaiah 7:14, 8:8. As Mattityahu himself explains, it means “**God is with us**”—which is how Hebrew *immanu El* is translated at Isaiah 8:10. However, Yeshua was not known by that name during his life on earth; rather, the name gives a hint (*remez*; see 2:15N) at who he is by describing him: he is God-with-us. God’s people experience the final fulfillment at Rv 21:3, where in the new heavens and new earth “God-with-them” dwells among them.

In the *Tanakh* names frequently describe an aspect of the person named. In fact the *Tanakh* uses several names to refer to the Messiah, including “Shiloh” (Genesis 49:10), “Branch” (Isaiah 11:1), “Sprout” (Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15), and the longest, “Wonderful

Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:5–6(6–7)). All describe the Messiah, yet he was known by just one name, Yeshua⁴⁰

Matthew 1:24

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

Matthew 1:25

And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

[knew her] Hebrew idiom for cohabitation and fatherhood (Genesis 4:1,17,25; Genesis 19:5).

[till she had brought forth her firstborn son] She had other sons (Luke 8:19).

(Luke 8:19-21) ¹⁹Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press. ²⁰And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

²¹And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

(Matthew 13:55-56) ⁵⁵Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

(Mark 6:3) ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Jewish New Testament:

Yosef’s behavior shows that he accepted Yeshua as his son. According to the Mishna, “If one say, ‘This is my son,’ he is to be believed” (Bava Batra 8:6). The Gemara explains that he is believed “as regards the right of inheritance” (Bava Batra 134a). Thus Yeshua, as a legally acknowledged son, is entitled to inherit the throne of King David from Yosef, a descendant of David (v. 8). (This point is made in Phillip Goble, *How to Point to Yeshua in Your Rabbi’s Bible*, New York: Artists for Israel, 1986.)

Until she had given birth. Protestants generally affirm that Miryam was a virgin when Yeshua was born, but that “his sisters” (plural: at least two) and four brothers (13:55–56, Mk 6:3) were Miryam and Yosef’s natural children. The Roman Catholic Church teaches

⁴⁰Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:23). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

that Miryam remained a virgin all her life, and that the terms “brothers” and “sisters” are used loosely to refer to more distant relatives (compare Genesis 14:12–16, 31:32, Leviticus 10:4). The Greek phrase “*eōs ou*” (“until”) is inconclusive because it does not necessarily imply a change; that is, the Greek could mean either that they did not have relations during the period before she gave birth but did afterwards, or that they remained celibate afterwards as well. But celibacy in particular and asceticism in general, though regarded by pagans as spiritually meritorious, were and are the exception in Judaism and in New Covenant faith, as both Yeshua and Sha’ul teach (see 19:10–12&N, 1C 7:1–40&NN, Co 2:18–23&NN, 1 Ti 4:3a&N).⁴¹

IVP: Joseph acts like Old Testament men and women of God who obeyed God’s call even when it went against all human common sense. Marriage consisted of covenant (at the betrothal; the marital contract also involved a monetary transaction between families), a ceremony and consummation, which ratified the marriage, normally on the first night of the seven-day wedding. Joseph here officially marries Mary but abstains from consummating the marriage until after Jesus is born. Jewish teachers thought that men had to marry young because they could not resist temptation (many even blamed a woman’s uncovered hair for inducing lust). Joseph, who lives with Mary but exercises self-control, thus provides a strong role model for sexual purity.⁴²

⁴¹ Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 1:24-25). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

⁴² Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Mt 1:24). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

The Prophecies of Jesus' Birth

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. Many of these prophecies involved the circumstances surrounding His birth. Below is a list of several such prophecies. Note the irrefutable similarities between the Old Testament predictions and their New Testament fulfillment.

Prophecy	Old Testament Prediction	New Testament Fulfillment
The Messiah would be the seed of a woman.	Gen. 3:15	Gal. 4:4
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Gen. 12:3	Matt. 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Gen. 17:19	Luke 3:34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Num. 24:17	Matt. 1:2; 2:2
The Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah.	Gen. 49:10	Luke 3:33
The Messiah would be an heir to the throne of David.	Isa. 9:7	Luke 1:32, 33
The Messiah would be anointed and eternal.	Ps. 45:6, 7; 102:25-27	Heb. 1:8-12
The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.	Mic. 5:2	Luke 2:4, 5, 7
The Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Isa. 7:14	Luke 1:26, 27, 30, 31
The Messiah's birth would trigger a slaughter of children.	Jer. 31:15	Matt. 2:16-18
The Messiah would also come from Egypt.	Hos. 11:1	Matt. 2:14, 15



The decree of Caesar Augustus required Mary and Joseph, who were from Nazareth, to register for the census in the Judean city of Bethlehem (Luke 2:1–5). After the wise men from the East had visited to worship the Child, Joseph heeded the warning of the angel of the Lord and took his family to Egypt, where they remained until the death of Herod the Great.