

MATTHEW 1:1-17
DRAMATIC EVENTS IN AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY PLACE:
SETTING THE STAGE

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

“Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

“And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

“And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

“So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.”¹

Genealogies are readily ignored by modern readers of the Bible. The names presented in these genealogies sound strange to modern ears; we have difficulty pronouncing them. It is almost impossible for us to understand how these individuals who have long since passed from the scene could be important to contemporary worship. This may be because our culture has become egocentric. Godly curiosity is virtually unknown in contemporary culture. Perhaps we would have more interest if we could somehow connect with the individuals named. Perhaps we would be more inclined to read these genealogies if we only knew why they are included in the Bible. Perhaps we should ask why God did include them.

Levi opens his account of the life and ministry of Jesus, who is the Christ, with a genealogy spanning about four thousand years of history. That is not mere convention of an ancient writer. Prompted by the Spirit of God, Levi is making an essential point; he is setting the stage for all that would take place through the presence of Messiah with mankind. The whole of salvation history hinges upon this genealogy. Much as gaining an understanding of who we are through knowing where we came from, so gaining an understanding of what God has done for us results from knowing the lineage of His Anointed One.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible: English Standard Version**. Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers, 2001. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

I'm going to brag on my wife for a moment. Over the past couple of decades, my wife has become an accomplished genealogical sleuth; her research is most revealing concerning who she is and who the man she married is. What is fascinating about her research is discovering how so very often we unconsciously reflect our heritage. Her research into my family lineage has demonstrated that two occupational pursuits have predominated both in my paternal lineage and in my maternal lineage—warrior and preacher. Her research has pushed back out understanding of my lineage almost four hundred years, revealing that every generation appears to have been well-populated with warriors and preachers.

For my own part, I planned on being a warrior. I dedicated myself to prepare for a career as an officer in the United States Marine Corps. Little could I know, even when I was in my early twenties, that I would be a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Though an elderly evangelist had pronounced a prophesy when I was yet a child of about eight years of age, I had no desire to enter the ministry. Yet, when God appointed me to this service, the work seemed natural—as though I had been prepared all my life for this task.

Looking back from this vantage of many years of service before the Lord, it seems that my heritage may well have shaped my life more than I could imagine. To understand latent currents directing my life, it is helpful to understand the lineage that has shaped my life. Similarly, if we will understand what God was about in presenting His Son as the promised Messiah, understanding the human lineage will be revealing.

TWO GENEALOGIES FOR THE CHRIST — Even casual readers of the New Testament recognise that the Gospels provide two divergent genealogies for Jesus. Luke presents one lineage and Matthew (Levi) presents a different lineage. That there are two genealogies should not be a surprise; after all, each of us have a paternal lineage and a maternal lineage. Scholars are generally united in understanding that Luke gives the lineage of Jesus through Mary, and Matthew gives a genealogy listing Jewish kings and their descendants arriving at last at Joseph.

Though my focus today is not on the lineage of Jesus through Mary, the mother of Jesus, I do want briefly to take note of the genealogy that Doctor Luke has provided. Luke's Gospel begins the genealogy with Jesus at the time He began His ministry and continues back until it at last arrives at Adam. Doctor Luke wrote, "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God" [**LUKE 3:23-38**].

Luke emphasises that Jesus has a messianic claim through Davidic descent. Moreover, he links Jesus to God through Adam. In combination with the chapter preceding and the chapter following the Lukan genealogy, we are provided a strong connection between the baptism of Jesus, His genealogy through His mother and the temptation He endured. Jesus was declared to be the Son of God and equipped to do the work of the Son of God at His baptism, then He was demonstrated to hold a rightful claim as the Messiah because He is a descendant of David, and finally, He was put to the test as the Son of God. This is powerful symbolism concerning Jesus the Messiah. This is a powerful statement of who He is.

Let me address the issue of whether this is Mary's genealogy or whether it is possible that what Luke presents is something entirely different. Arnold Fruchtenbaum has performed yeoman's service in detailing why Luke's account presents Mary's genealogy.² Fruchtenbaum notes that the Talmud itself refers to Mary as the daughter of Heli.

Again, note how the genealogy begins: "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli," etc. This is the manner in which most modern translations begin this particular genealogy. Joseph was not Jesus' father, but he was commonly supposed to have been His father. Though Jesus was assumed to be the descendant of Joseph, He was actually descended through Heli. Jewish custom did not commonly give the mother's name on genealogies; it was not uncommon for the son-in-law to be listed in a wife's genealogy.

The third argument Fruchtenbaum presents is an argument from viewpoint. Levi writes from Joseph's viewpoint as becomes obvious as we read the remainder of the account of Jesus' birth. Mary's role in the Matthean account is passive, whereas she is key to the Lukan account. Matthew records the angelic annunciation to Joseph and the account of how the angel warned Joseph to flee from Bethlehem before Herod's soldiers carried out their mass slaughter. Thus, Joseph is emphasised throughout Matthew's account and the genealogy given is Joseph's.

Now, turn again to the text and consider Matthew's genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. What is essential to learn from Levi's genealogy is that Jesus has a valid claim to the throne of David through his lineage, but in appealing to that particular genealogy, He is disqualified from pressing that claim. This is not some sort of stultiloquy to make such divergent claims.

Before we tease out the reason that Levi's genealogy disqualifies Jesus as rightful claimant to the throne, though the Lukan genealogy establishes Jesus as rightful claimant to David's throne, we need to establish what these two divergent genealogies have told us. In these two genealogies, we are provided with four specific titles that are applied to Jesus of Nazareth. He is called the "Son of David." Matthew's Gospel begins with this affirmation, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David..." [MATTHEW 1:1]. Matthew immediately names Jesus as "the son of Abraham" [MATTHEW 1:1b]. Luke identifies Jesus of Nazareth as "the son of Adam" and as "the Son of God" [LUKE 3:38].

Fruchtenbaum notes that "by calling Jesus the 'son of David,'" we are to understand that He is a king through Mary. By identifying Jesus as the "son of Abraham," we are to understand that He is recognised as a Jew. Thirdly, when Jesus is called "the son of Adam," we are to understand that He is truly a man. Finally, when the genealogies identify Jesus of Nazareth as "the Son of God," we know that Jesus is God. Therefore, these genealogies provide a necessary and fourfold portrait of the Messianic King. Jesus of Nazareth is the Jewish God-Man King.

² Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, **The Messianic Bible Study Collection, vol. 25** (Ariel Ministries, Tustin, CA 1983) 7-9; the following discussion depends heavily upon Fruchtenbaum's analysis of the Matthean and Lukan genealogies.

A SURVEY OF BIBLICAL HISTORY — Fruchtenbaum is correct when he states, “The entire New Testament revolves around this opening statement of Matthew 1:1. It will be repeated, developed and enlarged upon by the various writers of the New Testament.”³ I commented that the Matthean genealogy excludes the possibility that Jesus could be the King of Israel, even as it demonstrates that He has the legal right to the throne. In order to understand the reason for this situation, it will be necessary to establish some aspects of Jewish history that are sometimes overlooked. To be certain, Jesus is the Anointed One, the promised Messiah of Israel. There shall never be another individual who can fulfil the conditions to be the Messiah as set forth under the Old Covenant. As an aside of some significance, Matthew begins the genealogy presented by noting Jesus as Messiah.

Consider the manner in which two recent translations have chosen to handle this initial verse of Matthew’s account. “This is the genealogy of Yeshua the Messiah, son of David, son of Avraham...”⁴ Another translation renders the verse, “The book of the genealogy of יהושע Messiah, Son of Dawid, Son of Abraham...”⁵ We see the title “Christ” [Greek for “Messiah”] and treat it as though it was a name. However, the first readers would have recognised this as a title. Whenever we see the word “Christ,” we would not be remiss in adding the definite article so that we understood it to mean “the Christ,” or “the Messiah.”

Of course, the New Testament is dependent upon and complements what is recorded in the Old Testament. Throughout the Old Testament are multiple promises concerning the Messiah who was promised to come.⁶ You will immediately recognise **GENESIS 3:15** which presents God as promising,

“I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

The ESV translation speaks of the woman’s “offspring.” What is significant about this is that the Hebrew word behind this English translation is the word *zera*, “seed.” Lineage in Hebrew culture is never determined by the woman’s seed. What we have is a clear statement that the coming Redeemer is reckoned by the woman’s lineage—His birth will take into account His mother only; the father will not be taken into account at all. This goes against the entirety of the biblical view regarding genealogies.

Much later, we come to **ISAIAH 7:14**, which presents God as prophesying, “The LORD Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His Name Immanuel.” That this birth is said to be “a sign” points to an extraordinary event; otherwise, this could not be a sign. Evangelical scholars are unanimous in their understanding that this prophecy outlines the virgin birth of the Christ. Of course, Messiah would be reckoned after the “seed of the woman” because He would not have a human father. Because of His birth to a virgin, His lineage could be traced only through His mother and not His father.

³ Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, **The Messianic Bible Study Collection, vol. 13** (Ariel Ministries, Tustin, CA 1983) 3

⁴ David H. Stern, **Complete Jewish Bible: An English Version of the Tanakh (Old Testament) and B’rit Hadashah (New Testament), 1st ed.** (Jewish New Testament Publications, Clarksville, MD 1998)

⁵ Institute for Scripture Research, **The Scriptures** (Institute for Scripture Research (Pty) Ltd, South Africa 2000)

⁶ For this historical review, I have relied on Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, **The Messianic Bible Study Collection, vol. 12** (Ariel Ministries, Tustin, CA 1983) 3-12

For completeness, I note that the Old Testament prophesies that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, wrote,

”But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.”

[MICAH 5:2]

Again, the Messiah would be a descendant of David the King. Numerous passages in the Old Testament point to this truth. For instance, Isaiah wrote,

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.”

[ISAIAH 11:1]

Shortly after writing these words, Isaiah wrote of the Messiah, “In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious” [ISAIAH 11:10]. Of course, Jesse was the father of David; thus, Messiah would come from the House of David.

These references do not begin to touch on passages that, to the Jews, were more controversial because they were so difficult to understand. Jewish scholars could not comprehend how Messiah could suffer; and yet, Scripture made it clear that He would suffer. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is central in presenting the Suffering Messiah. Also, the twenty-second Psalm is Messianic, presenting Messiah as One who suffers. You will recall that the opening words of this Psalm were quoted by the Master as He hung on the cross.

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

[PSALM 22:1]

Matthew and Mark record Jesus as crying out, “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me” [MATTHEW 27:46; MARK 15:34]. What was especially tragic concerning Jesus’ cry is that the Jewish leaders no longer spoke Hebrew; they thought He was calling for Elijah [MATTHEW 27:49].

The prophetic statements noted to this point each speak of a most human Messiah. Though he would be greater than His father, David, He would nevertheless be marked out as very man. He would be born of a virgin, a descendant of David the King. He would suffer, even to the point of death. No wonder the rabbis were confused about Messiah. Against this very human Messiah revealed in the prophecies already cited were other prophecies of Messiah as a conqueror. Messiah was prophesied not only to be a ruler, but He was divinely appointed to reign over a time when the earth would be transformed. One passage from Isaiah’s prophecy that is especially appealing to both rabbis and to Christians is that found early in that book.

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

“The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

“In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious” [ISAIAH 11:1-10]. Another portion of the Word that is similar to that which Isaiah wrote is recorded among the Psalms of David. **PSALM 72:1-19** presents the reign of Messiah. In His reign, all the nations will serve Him; He shall be victorious.

Other Scriptures speak of Messiah as God’s Son. Ancient rabbis puzzled over these passages of the Word, ultimately acknowledging that the passages did, indeed, speak of Messiah. It was only later when the Faith of Christ the Lord was established did they begin to seek an alternative interpretation. The second Psalm, for instance, speaks of Messiah as God’s Son.

“Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,
‘Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us.’

“He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.
Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
‘As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.’

“I will tell of the decree:
The LORD said to me, ‘You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.’

“Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”

[PSALM 2:1-12]

In this Psalm, God warns that all must submit to the Son of God, the Messiah. Those who refuse to submit to His reign will be punished, even while those who take refuge in Messiah will receive new life. Seeking refuge in Messiah is accomplished as people place faith and trust in Him as God’s Anointed One.

Again, Solomon, writing in the Proverbs, asks a series of questions at one point, the questions all pointing to an answer that is well-known.

“Who has ascended to heaven and come down?
Who has gathered the wind in his fists?
Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?
What is his name, and what is his son’s name?
Surely you know!”

[PROVERBS 30:4]

The first four questions are not answered because Solomon assumes that readers know the answer. Obviously, these first four questions assume the answer, “God” did this. Then come the fifth and sixth questions: “What is His Name, and what is His Son’s Name?” Readers would have no problem coming up with the answer to the first four questions; and the fifth question would be self-explanatory. The sixth question, however, would have given pause to those first readers. Solomon is indicating that the LORD God has a Son! What is His Name?

Of course, we find the justifiably exciting verses relating to Christmas in the Old Testament. I'm speaking of those verses that present the Messiah as the God-Man. For instance, can it really be Christmas without hearing Handel's Messiah? Those who are actually familiar with the oratorio will recognise that Isaiah's prophecy concerning the coming Messiah is central to the musical Handel presented. In particular, Handel referred to **ISAIAH 9:6, 7**.

“To us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

Isaiah writes of a child to be born, who is identified as a son given. This child is destined to rule, controlling the reins of government. Moreover, this child is identified with the Throne of David. Clearly, this is a Messianic prophecy. The child is given titles and names that belong to God alone—“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. As we saw earlier, this child is to be born of a virgin and called “Immanuel,” which means “God is among us!”

Likewise, Jeremiah looks forward to a day when a descendant of David shall reign upon the throne. “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness’” [**JEREMIAH 23:5, 6**]. Note, in particular, that the One who shall be seated on the throne is given the personal Name of God—Yahweh, our Righteousness! This is the Name by which God revealed Himself to Moses [see **EXODUS 3:14, 15**]; yet, God, speaking through Jeremiah, ascribes this Name to Messiah!

Permit me to refer to two additional portions of the Word that speak of Messiah as the God-Man. Micah, in a passage to which I have already referred speaks of this One who is to be born as God. Look again at the passage.

“You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.”

[**MICAH 5:2**]

We noted previously that Messiah's origin would be Bethlehem. However, I did not note earlier that Messiah is equated with God Himself. His "coming forth is from of old, from ancient days." The understanding of those first Hebrew readers was that Messiah would be from eternity. He is born in Bethlehem and He is from eternity. This can only mean that this child is both God and man. No wonder the Magi travelled so far to worship Him. As the saying goes, "Wise men still seek Him!"

It never ceases to amaze me when I read Matthew's account of the coming of the Magi to Jerusalem. "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.' When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.””

[MATTHEW 2:1-6]

Imagine! The religious leaders, when asked where the Messiah was to be born, did not hesitate to answer. Neither did they consult with one another or ask for time to Google the answer. Immediately they cited Micah's prophecy. These men knew where Messiah was to be born; they knew that He was identified as both God and man. Yet, they did not believe. Indeed, as Isaiah asks, "Who has believed what he has heard from us" [ISAIAH 53:1a]? How did these religious leaders differ from so many who stand in pulpits and deny the Lord Christ in this day?

Consider one final passage found in the Minor Prophets. Of Messiah, Zechariah writes,

“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,
against the man who stands next to me,
declares the LORD of hosts.

“Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered;
I will turn my hand against the little ones.””

[ZECHARIAH 13:7]

Zechariah writes of Messiah's work, suddenly writing that He shall be cut off. Zechariah is drawing the prophecy to a conclusion as he shall shortly address Messiah's return to punish the wicked and to redeem His people. Take special note of the phrase "stands next" in the verse cited. This is a translation of one Hebrew word which means "my equal."⁷ Thus, the opening strophe of the verse literally reads, "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My equal, says Yahweh of Hosts!" It is difficult to imagine a stronger statement of deity of this Messiah whom Zechariah prophesied.

This leaves just one issue for me to address before drawing the message to a conclusion. Remember that I said that Levi's genealogy disqualified the child as King, though Luke's

⁷ Ibid.

genealogy circumvented the problem Matthew identifies. Matthew named Jechoniah in the lineage of the Christ. Jechoniah is also known as Coniah. He is named in a negative fashion in Jeremiah's prophecy.

“As I live, declares the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. But to the land to which they will long to return, there they shall not return.’

“Is this man Coniah a despised, broken pot,
a vessel no one cares for?
Why are he and his children hurled and cast
into a land that they do not know?
O land, land, land,
hear the word of the LORD!
Thus says the LORD:
‘Write this man down as childless,
a man who shall not succeed in his days,
for none of his offspring shall succeed
in sitting on the throne of David
and ruling again in Judah.’”

[**JEREMIAH 22:24-30**]

God cursed Jechoniah, stating that none of his offspring shall ever sit on the throne of David. To circumvent this curse, Messiah (who is to sit on the throne of David) must be David's descendant. This is accomplished through Mary's lineage when she is revealed to be a descendant of David through another son named Nathan. Thus, Jesus the Messiah fulfils the requirement of being David's son, and also is the legal claimant to the throne through Jechoniah. God is in control.

We celebrate Christmas because God has fulfilled prophecy in sending His Son. The first coming of the Messiah was not a secret—it was an open event foretold long years before He was born. Though most of the world was willingly ignorant of His birth, that need not be the case for anyone today. If an individual fails to recognise the Christ as the Saviour of the world, it can only be because that person refuses to receive Him as Master as He truly is.

I pray that for you the truth revealed through the Apostle holds true. “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ So, you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God” [**GALATIANS 4:4-7**].

May the Christ of Christmas fill your heart with His love is our sincere prayer. Amen.