



Study Guide: Matthew – Chapter 1

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This study guide provides an educational overview of Matthew Chapter 1 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

Matthew Chapter 1 serves as the foundational opening to the Gospel according to Matthew, establishing Jesus' identity and mission through His genealogy and birth narrative. This chapter bridges the Old Testament promises with their fulfillment in Christ, setting the tone for the entire Gospel. Readers are invited to watch for how Matthew connects Jesus to David and Abraham, emphasizing His rightful place in Jewish history and prophecy, and to observe the divine orchestration surrounding His birth, highlighting both human and heavenly involvement.

Context

The immediate literary context of Matthew 1 is the introduction to the Gospel, which aims to present Jesus as the Messiah promised in the Hebrew Scriptures. The genealogy traces Jesus' lineage through Abraham and David, anchoring Him in the covenantal history of Israel. Historically, this chapter reflects the Jewish expectation of a Messiah who fulfills God's promises to His people. The key figures include Joseph, the legal father of Jesus, and Mary, His mother, whose virgin conception is highlighted. The setting is primarily theological and genealogical, preparing the reader for the narrative of Jesus' life and ministry that follows.

Outline

The chapter divides naturally into two main sections. The first section presents the genealogy of Jesus, tracing His ancestry from Abraham through David to Joseph, emphasizing His royal and covenantal heritage. The second section narrates the birth of Jesus, focusing on Joseph's perspective, his initial doubts, and the divine reassurance through an angelic message. This outline highlights the continuity of God's plan from the patriarchs to the Messiah and the miraculous nature of Jesus' birth.



Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1-3: These opening verses introduce the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham, immediately connecting Jesus to two pivotal figures in Jewish history, underscoring His messianic credentials.

Verses 4-6: The genealogy continues through the line of Judah, highlighting key ancestors such as Boaz and King David, reinforcing Jesus' royal lineage and God's faithfulness to His covenant promises.

Verses 7-11: This section traces the lineage through the kings of Judah, including Solomon and Hezekiah, demonstrating the royal succession and the persistence of God's plan despite Israel's historical challenges.

Verses 12-16: The genealogy concludes with the post-exilic generations leading to Joseph, the husband of Mary, indicating the fulfillment of prophecy even after the Babylonian exile and setting the stage for Jesus' birth.

Verse 17: This verse summarizes the genealogy into three sets of fourteen generations, a structure that may symbolize completeness and divine order, reflecting Matthew's intentional design.

Verses 18-19: The narrative shifts to the birth of Jesus, focusing on Mary's pregnancy and Joseph's initial intention to quietly divorce her, revealing the human tension in the divine plan.

Verses 20-21: An angel appears to Joseph in a dream, reassuring him and explaining the miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit, emphasizing Jesus' divine origin and His mission to save His people from their sins.

Verses 22-23: Matthew highlights the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy about a virgin bearing a son named Immanuel, meaning "God with us," reinforcing Jesus' identity as the promised Messiah.

Verses 24-25: Joseph obeys the angel's command, taking Mary as his wife but refraining from consummating the marriage until after Jesus' birth, demonstrating his righteousness and submission to God's plan.

Key Themes



One key theme is the fulfillment of prophecy, as Matthew explicitly connects Jesus' birth to Old Testament promises, affirming the continuity of God's redemptive plan. Another theme is divine intervention, seen in the miraculous conception and angelic guidance, highlighting God's sovereignty in salvation history. The theme of righteousness emerges through Joseph's character, illustrating faithful obedience amidst uncertainty. Finally, the theme of Jesus as "Immanuel" underscores God's presence with His people, a central motif for understanding His mission.

Cross-References

Genesis 12:3 provides the foundational promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his offspring, which Matthew echoes by tracing Jesus' lineage back to Abraham. 2 Samuel 7:12–16 contains God's covenant with David, promising an eternal throne, which Matthew highlights by linking Jesus to David's royal line. Isaiah 7:14 is directly quoted in Matthew 1:23, clarifying the significance of the virgin birth and the name Immanuel. Luke 3:23–38 offers a parallel genealogy, enriching understanding of Jesus' human ancestry. Finally, Psalm 132:11 speaks of the Lord's oath to David, reinforcing the messianic expectation fulfilled in Jesus.

Application

Modern disciples can draw encouragement from Joseph's example of faith and obedience, trusting God's guidance even when circumstances seem confusing or difficult. The genealogy reminds believers of God's faithfulness across generations, inspiring confidence that God's promises endure through time. Recognizing Jesus as "God with us" invites believers to embrace His presence in daily life, fostering a deeper relationship with Him. Additionally, the chapter challenges readers to see God's hand in history and personal situations, encouraging a posture of attentive trust and submission to His redemptive purposes.

Summary

Matthew Chapter 1 establishes Jesus as the fulfillment of God's covenant promises through a carefully structured genealogy and a narrative of His miraculous birth. By connecting Jesus to Abraham and David, Matthew roots the Messiah firmly in Jewish history and prophecy. The chapter highlights divine intervention and human obedience, particularly through Joseph's response to God's revelation. Ultimately, it introduces Jesus as "Immanuel," God with us, setting the stage for the unfolding story of salvation that defines



the Gospel.