

## Let's Think this Through

### **Matthew 1:1 – 15**

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~ It's more important for God to speak to us than it is for us to speak to God today, friends. Most of us don't have anything good to report to Him – and the rest don't seem to feel the need to confess their sins to God in prayer anymore – and making a laundry list of demands and begging and claiming things in Jesus Name that He has no intention whatsoever of doing is an absolute exercise in futility. God says specifically He doesn't answer those prayers by giving us those things that we desire to consume in our own lusts. See, God only speaks to us in His Word. Even with as carefully and as closely as we have examined Scripture so far in this Spiritual Safari there are so many things He has said that we have missed. The understanding of the Gospel of Matthew in our Spiritual Safari and its very definite movement is critical to remain aware of. If we miss this "movement" we risk missing everything about this message and, indeed, Holy Writ in its entirety.

Our first movement is the record and genealogy of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the single most valuable document possessed by mankind. In many respects, this opening genealogy is the most important document in the Scriptures. Heavenly Father, please make Thy Word real and active as you speak to all who read this report; and open our eyes very clearly to Whom the subject of the Bible is - because we want to see Him, the Lord Jesus. I pray we will all cry out in Revelation like Philip, "...I found Him!" Reveal Jesus to us on every page of Scripture as we study and pray – and we pray and study – to show ourselves approved - in His Name ~

The genealogy from Abraham to David to Solomon to Joseph to Jesus cannot help but be noticeable to anyone who opens the New Testament. Genealogies are always very boring to read - but they are very important when they are in the Bible. This genealogy is the most interesting of them all, by far. We stressed the same importance of lineage back in Genesis. The family is important to God and that's why we see these genealogies in the Bible. God used a lot of ink and space and a lot of my time dealing with

these different lines and names of people; so I think it's important to Him. However, anyone that takes the Bible for the first time and opens the New Testament to this place is not likely to succeed in their reading for very long without competent instruction.

Different organizations give away millions of New Testament Bibles every year; and most of those people who open to page one might read for about ten seconds before deciding it's not their cup of tea. I don't blame them because this is not the appropriate place to start for a new Christian. Actually, ANYWHERE in the Bible is a better place to start than right here with a baby Christian. The more mature self-professing believer just isn't going to accept my theology in this so-called safari – mainly because it's just not interesting to them - and we should be a little smarter than most people are when giving out the Word of God like that.

However, just because this isn't the ideal place to start a Bible study does not take away from the importance of this genealogy. The entire New Testament rests upon the accuracy of this line that leads to Christ and establishes that Christ is in the line of both Abraham and of David. The line of Abraham puts Christ in the nation Israel and the line of David places Christ on the throne! In Israel, in Matthew's day, your family tree was very important to you. Remember, in Ezra, when they returned from captivity, the Levites were reckoned only by their genealogy; and if you didn't know your genealogy and you couldn't correctly state who your parents were, then you were counted as polluted and summarily put out. You could never be accepted in Israel if you weren't aware of your family history.

The genealogy we have here was on display for public inspection in Israel. It was likely located in the temple and was probably available until 70 AD when the temple is destroyed. We are talking about a theocracy where the church and state were more than united; religion and state were one in the same. This genealogy would have been made available and would certainly have been on display. This genealogy has been challenged and attempts have been made to change it down through recent history; but it was not challenged in Israel in the time period we are studying. It wasn't challenged in Israel at that time because they knew it was accurate!

It is the accuracy of this document that places Christ in a unique position. Remember, the shepherd came in at the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem. The thief and robber crawled over the wall to get to the fold some other way; and the “fold” is the nation Israel. Christ didn’t jump the fence in the backyard to get into Israel through the alley; He came right through the gate because He was born in the line of Abraham and David. Matthew places here before us proof that Christ is the fulfillment of everything that is mentioned in the Old Testament.

This is where we begin to learn about the virgin birth. I don’t worry about the newborn babe who says he cannot believe the virgin birth. A preacher or anyone attempting to teach the Bible shouldn’t deny the virgin birth, though. A preacher that denies the virgin birth should be selling automobiles or insurance. They can deal with birth differently in those professions. A new believer, however, does have the right to question the virgin birth, according to my estimation.

What I vehemently object to is when people say the Bible doesn’t teach the virgin birth because the Bible teaches the virgin birth right here. You can reject this and say you don’t believe the record in the Word of God but you’re just as ignorant as a goat with a carrot in its mouth if you say the virgin birth is not taught in the Bible. It is either willful antagonism of the Word of God or the rejecter has some type of comprehension deficit and/or intends to deny what is written irrespective of black and white proof. Luke was a doctor and he’ll give us a detailed lesson in obstetrics when we get to his Gospel record regarding a virgin birth. We’ll get back to the virgin birth shortly in Matthew, too.

The phrase used here to open “the book of the generation” is unique. It’s not found elsewhere in the New Testament. The only other place we have seen – or will see – this phrase was in Genesis chapter five, the Book of the Generation of Adam. So, we have two books: the Generation of Adam and the Generation of the Lord Jesus Christ. We get into the generation of Adam by natural birth; of which you had no choices and in which you will die. We get into the generation of Jesus Christ by being born, also, but not a natural, physical birth. The Lord said we must be born again. That’s the spiritual birth into the lambs Book of Life. We are born again spiritually into

the Lambs Book of Life by accepting and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ. Every person on the earth can be found in the first book of Adam. If you are still reading at this point in this report I feel safe to say your name is in the Lamb's Book of Life!

This Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ tells us He is the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Christ must be in the line of David for prophecy to work out correctly and Christ must be in the line of Abraham to be a Son of this nation. After you read this genealogy I would like to know how many of you think it's interesting. I'm sure someone will find it interesting. Well, by the time I get down around verse twelve the names are so difficult to pronounce I just skip to the end from there. I suggest we all take a moment and pray and then read it in its entirety! ~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

~ Notice four names that stand out as if highlighted. They all happen to be Gentiles; which most people thought wouldn't be found in a record like this – but they are! David's line certainly has Gentiles in it. The four Gentiles we're talking about just happen to be women; and women were inferior, in this society, and simply didn't count as a person in the time in which we are studying. I guess times have changed. We still have a carry-over cultural custom that when a couple marries they usually take the man's name. The name of the man is carried on – not the woman. That's just the way we do it. There's no law that says we have to do it this way - and some don't – but this was the custom back then and it's the custom, by and large, today.

Okay, we have Tamar listed here – you'll remember her from the worst chapter in the Bible – chapter thirty-eight in Genesis. Rahab is also on the list and she won't be very pretty when we meet her, either; although she turns out to be a very beautiful person when she comes to a saving knowledge of the Living and True God. Remember, it was by faith that

Rahab perished not when she received the spies in peace. Rahab is here simply because she believed she had faith. We have Ruth mentioned; a lovely, beautiful woman all the way around. However, the law would have kept all of these women out because the law says a Moabite and an Ammonite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord. The fourth woman not mentioned by name but called out is the wife of Urias – we know her as Bathsheba. Her name is not mentioned because what happened with David was not her sin – it was David’s sin – as we’ll see in our consideration of David’s account.

Of course, this isn’t an exhaustive lineage and I believe there could be many gaps and missing people. Frankly, I think there are gaps and missing names in both this genealogy and the Genesis genealogy we examined; because I am quite sure the world has been around a whole lot longer than the dating we get from the Bible and from Dr. Ussher’s dating method. The timeline man builds from dates in the Bible are positively absurd. Candidly, I feel it’s more like millions of years, at least; and now that science has begun talking in terms of billions – well, I think they have a little bit more credibility! They’re getting close if they’ll start at around fifty trillion. There is so much more gold and precious jewels than we have unearthed here in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Word of God. We’re going to slow down now in our expedition and really start taking a close look at all things spiritual – and – thinking them through to their final conclusions ~

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