

JESUS
13. THE BIRTH OF JESUS:
Son of David – Son of God

STUDY AHEAD

Only Matthew and Luke have infancy narratives. They focus on different aspects of Jesus' birth, based on their unique interests as writers. The two genealogies (Matt.1 & Luke 3) differ at points because Matthew was tracing the *legal line* of Jesus through the father, Joseph, while Luke was tracing the *physical line* of Jesus through the mother, Mary.

Matthew: Writing as a Jew, to the Jews, about the King of the Jews.

1. Matt.1:1 Notice the key people that Matthew traces Jesus' line back to. Read 2 Samuel 7 For God's promise & David's response!
Isaiah 23:5; Jeremiah 23:5
Read Genesis 12:1-7; 15:1-6; 22:15-18; 20:7; Matt 3:9; 8:11

Why are these two people important to a Jewish reader?

2. There are **5 women** listed in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. Jews typically listed only the fathers in their genealogical lists. Read their place in Matthew's genealogy and their story in the O.T.
Tamar: Matt 1:3 (Gen Ch.38; Gen 49:10); **Rahab:** Matt 1:5; (Jos Ch.2; Jos Ch.6) **Ruth:** Matt 1:5 (Ruth 4:8-22); **Uriah's wife,** (Bathsheba) Matt 1:6 (2Sam Ch.11; 12:24); **Mary:** Matt 1:16; (Lk 1:26-38; 2:5-19)

Why are these women important? What is the common theme in their back stories?

3. Matt.1:18-25 Notice that the story focuses on Joseph, not Mary. To a Jewish reader, God's activity in the *father's life* was of major significance.

What do you see here about God's activity in Joseph's life, and how did Joseph respond to God? What do you learn about his character?

4. Matt.2:1-12 Matthew focuses on the visit of Persian royalty to meet the newborn King of the Jews to honor and worship Him.

How does this fit in with Matthew's overall portrait of Christ?

5. Matt.2:3 What was Herod's reaction when he heard about a "newborn king?" Look back at the bottom of pg.908 in your study notes for a bit more insight on Herod the Great.

6. Matt.2:11 Notice the 3 kinds of gifts that the Persian Wise men brought. Gold was for kings. Frankincense was used in the worship of gods in temples. Myrrh was used as a burial spice.

How were these 3 gifts fitting symbolic gifts for Jesus?

Luke: Writing as a Gentile about the Savior for all of humanity.

1. Luke 3:38 How far back does Luke trace Jesus' genealogy? Why is this significant in light of Luke's portrait of Jesus?

2. Luke 1:26-38 Luke focused on God's activity with Mary. Why do you think he did this? Why is it important?

3. Luke 1:39-56 Luke also records the visit Mary made to Elizabeth, her relative and the mother of John the Baptist.

As you read about their meeting (1:39-45) what stands out most to you?

4. Luke 1:46-55 This song of praise from Mary is called "The Magnificat." This title comes from a word in the first line: "My soul magnifies the Lord ..." Study this song of praise.

What do you learn about Mary's heart from her song of praise to God?

5. Luke 2:1-7 The actual birth of Jesus is only recorded here in Luke. *What hits you the most as you read this familiar story?*

6. Luke 2:8-18 *Why is it significant that shepherds were chosen to be the first recipients of the news of Jesus' birth . . . and the first ones to actually go and visit the newborn Savior?*

7. Luke 2:19 Mary's own heart became a treasury of memories concerning all the events surrounding the birth of Jesus. It is likely that the gospel writers leaned heavily on her for the details that we have in the infancy narratives (both Matthew and Luke).

Why do you think God chose a mother's heart to be the place where all of these precious stories were stored up?