

December 23, 2007 (LS)

**GREAT EXPECTATIONS
MATTHEW 1.1-17**

1. THE BOOK OF GENESIS (1)

The genealogy of Jesus Christ: Davies & Allison suggest translation, “the Book of Genesis of Jesus Christ.”

There is this new creation theme from the outset. That is, God is making a new world. This new world is formed by and in the man Jesus who is called “the Christ,” or “the Messiah.”

Cp. the relationship to Gen 2.4 and 5.1 where same construction is used in Greek OT (LXX). (Genesis is structured internally around 10 “these are the generations of ‘x’” statements.)

Gen 2.4 - the “generations of heavens and the earth.” The creation/birth of Adam from the creation. God makes him from the dust of the ground and breathes into him the breath of life.

Gen 5.1 - “the generations of Adam” through his son Seth.

Oddity: “book of the generation of Jesus Christ.” Genealogies always begin with the progenitor; i.e., the first in the line of the generation. Why then is this the generation of “Jesus Christ” and not of Abraham?

Leithart - Matthew is presenting Jesus not only as the descendant of those named in the genealogy (cf. v. 16), but he is also the progenitor of those named. History of the world and Israel begins and ends in Jesus.

First and last Man. Note chiasm: Jesus-David-Abraham (v. 1) and then through Abraham (v. 2) - David (v. 6) - Jesus (v. 16).

“Jesus is the heavens-and-earth that generates a new world, a new Adamic race, a new Bride; Jesus is the Adam who gives birth to a race of true Sethites.” (Leithart)

Son of David: The son of David is also the son of Abraham (as is indicated in v. 1 as well as the genealogy). There is a continuity between the two not only in bloodline but in purpose. The son of David fulfills the mission of the son of Abraham.

“Son of David” - cf. 2 Sam 7.14; covenant with David in which promised David a son/seed who would not only be David’s son but would be the “son of God,” a title given to Israel as a whole and now to David’s son in particular. Build the Temple. Throne established forever.

Who is the son of David? Solomon. Solomon = “peace,” settles the kingdom of Israel and builds the Temple. Solomon, as Abraham’s son as well, draws in the Gentiles who come to seek his wisdom and incorporates them in through marriage.

Son of Abraham: cf. Gen 12.3, “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Abraham = a Gentile who becomes the father of Israel. Cp. Rom 4; Abraham was justified while being in uncircumcision—a Gentile. Later he was circumcised and became this separated nation. He is the father of all who believe—Gentile or Jew.

Abraham was separated from the nations *for the sake of* the nations. This summarizes Israel’s purpose as Abraham’s seed.

Who is the son of Abraham? Isaac. Isaac, born to a barren wife; son of promise; obedient son who was taken to Mt. Moriah to be sacrificed. He was received back from the dead in a type of the resurrection (Heb 11.19). After resurrection blessed by God and makes a covenant of peace with the Gentiles (Gen 26).

Putting it all together: Matthew will trace history of Israel in 1.1-17. Israel—embodied in the son of David, the son of Abraham—is not to be seen in exclusion from the rest of the world. This is the book of Genesis of Jesus Christ. This is the new creation which encompasses the entire created order—heaven and earth.

Fulfills Israel’s mission and destiny. What is that destiny? To be the obedient son who dies and rises again in order to be the king of the world and build the Temple of God on the earth. Separated from the world *for the sake of* the world.

2. FROM ABRAHAM TO CHRIST (2-16)

Summing up Israel's history: 3 periods of Israel's history: patriarchal, kingdom, Babylonian exile.

Shape of genealogy: Jesus is the consummation, the summation, the culmination of Israel's history. That which begins with Abraham and moves through David finds its fulfillment in Jesus who is the Christ.

Why does he begin with Abraham and not with Adam (as in Luke)? Matthew's purpose is one of *emphasis* not of *scope*. That is, Matthew is still dealing with the history of the world—the heavens and the earth—but he understands Israel's particular mission to be the representative—the priestly nation—for the sake of the world.

The *scope* - the world (note 28.18). *Emphasis* - how Jesus accomplishes this end as the seed of Abraham.

Gospel as *history*. Not merely a conglomeration of ideas. Earthy. Deals with will flesh and blood messy people. Not an escape.

In Jesus Christ history finds its meaning, purpose, and culmination.

The brothers: vv. 2 & 11. Judah and his brothers, Jeconiah (also Jehoiachin, 2Kg 24.8ff./2Chr 36.9ff.) and his brothers.

Judah = fourth son born to Jacob. Becomes a firstborn replacement. Saves his brothers before Joseph.

Jeconiah/Jehoiachin = king of Judah when Nebuchadnezzar comes 2nd time to Jerusalem because of his Jeconiah's rebellion and takes the vessels from the Temple. Nebuchadnezzar replaces Jeconiah with his brother Zedekiah to rule over Judah.

Emphasis: replacement of firstborn. At this point in history the line of Judah—the Jews, short for Judah—needs to be replaced because of their rebellion. Embodied in one of Jesus' disciples by the same name: Judas/Judah.

Note also Judah's sons, Zerah and Perez (Gen 38). Younger replaces older. Line is traced through Perez.

Jesus will redeem his brothers and create a new brotherhood that is centered around him. Brotherhood emphasized in Matthew; cf. 10.37; 12.50; also 18.15-17.

The women: Don't read of Sarah, Rebekah, or Rachel but Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and 'wife of Uriah' (Bathsheba).

Emphasis: Inclusion of the Gentiles. Tamar from land of Canaan. Rahab from Jericho in Canaan. Ruth was a Moabitess (descended from the incestuous relationship of Lot and his daughter). The "wife of Uriah," a Hittite. Emphasized by not saying 'Bathsheba.'

Gentiles have been incorporated all throughout Israel's history. What has been done in part will now be done on a grander scale.

Included through most unlikely manner: Tamar playing the prostitute. Rahab a prostitute. The wife of Uriah through adultery. Leads us to Mary who becomes a major player in the story through unlikely conception and birth.

Creation - De-creation - Re-creation: The 3-fold pattern in the history given: new world in Abraham, fall in line of David, restoration/re-creation in Jesus.

The Christ: Christ = Messiah = anointed one. Note the parallel with Cyrus in Isa 45.1 who is God's 'messiah' (anointed).

Cyrus = Gentile king who was raised up to send God's people back to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. His decree to do so has great affinity with what we call the Great Commission, the last words of Matthew's gospel.

3. FOURTEEN GENERATIONS TIMES THREE (17)

"David" (name) = 14 in Hebrew (where letters also = numbers; like Roman numerals). Also 14th in the list.

14 x 3 = 7 x 6. Jesus comes as 7th 7. Brings old creation to its Sabbath (in the tomb on Sabbath) and brings in 8th day and Jubilee.

- (1) God is concerned about real life.
- (2) God is a God of surprises.
- (3) History has come to its end in Christ.