

“Ancestry of the King” (Matthew 1:1; Galatians 4:4; Isaiah 7:14; 9:1–7)

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (12/22/2019)

Introduction

1. One error in the celebration of Christ’s advent is seeing it as *primarily* benefiting individual believers.
 - a. Jesus came to fulfill God’s purpose to take the place of the first Adam and, through obedience, restore God’s original mandate that mankind should have dominion over the works of His hands in the kingdom of God.
 - b. In order to accomplish this mandate, Messiah was sent to redeem a new race of people who will glorify God in every part of their existence.
 - c. Matthew’s gospel demonstrates that Jesus was indeed the King of the Jews. The people of Israel had rejected their theocracy and demanded of Samuel a human king like the other Gentile nations (1 Samuel 8:4–9). God allowed for Saul’s installation, then removed him for his disobedience, and established His own choice, David, whose dynasty ends in Jesus Christ (1 Samuel 16:1–13). The Babylonian exile ended the monarchy in Israel but built anticipation for the coming Messiah.
 - d. Christ’s first coming was necessary to His being King because His cross work made that enthronement possible. The cross redeemed people who would be the kingdom’s citizens. The Holy Spirit transforms and prepares these citizens for the kingdom. Church life develops these kingdom citizens. The second coming will complete the preparation and unveil the finished product (Revelation 5:9, 10).
2. The *church* is God’s instrument with a glorious destiny in realizing God’s purpose.
 - a. As promised Messiah, King Jesus is also Lord of the church.
 - b. The importance of individual believers is recognized in their role in the church and submission to the Lordship of Christ.
3. The focus of this message is to demonstrate the importance of this insight as revealed in Christ’s genealogical record in Matthew and Luke.

I. The Genealogy of Jesus

1. Two genealogies of the Christ appear in Scripture, one in Matthew, the other in Luke, and both differ.
 - a. Some differences can be attributed to the law of levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5).
 - b. Other differences are attributed to the variance between His legal and physical descent.
2. Matthew traces Jesus’ line *forward* from Abraham, emphasizing His connection to the nation of Israel.
 - a. Matthew segments the line into three divisions, Abraham, David, and Messiah (v. 1). *Abraham* begins the line, being separated by covenant, designating his physical descendants as the *nation* of Israel (Genesis 12:1–3). Nevertheless, the Lord made it clear in Genesis 12:3 that in Abraham “*all the families of the earth shall be blessed,*” not by Israel, but in Jesus Christ.
David represents the line designating God’s covenant with David and His greater Son, the King of kings and His eternal dynasty (2 Samuel 7:11–17).
Messiah is the third designation, the root of Jesse, the Servant of Yahweh given as “*a covenant for the people, a light for the nations*” (Isaiah 42:6, 9).
 - b. Matthew traces the legal line of David through Solomon (Matthew 1:6) to Joseph, the husband of Mary and legal father of Jesus. The amazing strategy of infinite wisdom is seen here in eliminating

all contenders but Jesus to the throne of David due to the curse of Coniah (Jeremiah 22:24–30; 1 Chronicles 17:14).

- c. Matthew closes his genealogy with a cryptic word (v. 17). Fourteen is symbolic language designed to convey a powerful truth—the number repeated three times. Fourteen is the number of *deliverance* or *salvation*. Three is the number of *resurrection* and *divine completeness*. These numbers are illustrated in the exodus of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 12:18; 13:3, 9, 10; 14:13; 15:2).
3. Luke’s genealogy traces Jesus’ ancestry back to Adam, emphasizing His connection to *humanity* as the second Adam.
 - a. Adam was the son of God because Adam was directly created by God as were the heavenly host. Jesus is the Son of God by virtue of the virgin birth and His eternal Sonship (Psalm 2:7; John 1:1–4). Luke’s gospel follows the genealogy with the temptation of Jesus in which the devil asks “*If you are the Son of God . . .*” (Luke 4:3, 9). The significance of a believer’s being called a *son of God* (1 John 3:1; John 1:12, 13).
 - b. Luke traces Jesus through Mary to demonstrate Jesus’ blood right to the throne of David, tracing His lineage, not to Solomon, but to Nathan (Luke 3:31). The virgin birth was necessary to avoid the curse of Coniah, the only true and legitimate heir to the throne of David (Daniel 2:44; 7:27).

II. Great Significance

1. Matthew’s reference to the deportation to Babylon is significant (Matthew 1:14).
 - a. Observe that Abraham’s and David’s names appear in the first two generational divisions, but no name is listed in the third, only a reference to the deportation.
 - b. Jesus Christ came and, as we saw last week, was sought out and worshiped as King of the Jews by the Gentile magi from the east (Matthew 2:1–12). Yet, this kingship has much broader implication than is often supposed (Revelation 5:9, 10; John 18:36–38; Matthew 3:1).
2. We tend to limit our understanding of salvation and the Christian life to living for Christ here and waiting for some kingdom at the end of the age.
 - a. In Psalm 2, in the face of nations in rebellion, God declares His victory and intention (vv. 6, 8). This is what this age is all about.
 - b. Paul explains that the risen Christ is now ruling, and at the end He will surrender the kingdom to the Father after He has destroyed all rule, authority, and power (1 Corinthians 15:24; Psalm 110:1, 5).
 - c. The major work of the King is the transformation of a people who will worship and serve Him with all their hearts (Acts 5:30–32; Colossians 3:1–4). This is what Christ’s Advent is really all about!

What to Take Away

1. As stated in the introduction, the *church* is God’s instrument for His kingdom work in this age.
 - a. The great multitude seen in Revelation 5:9 came to salvation through the work of the church (Acts 2:47).
 - b. The first place where all rule, authority, and power are destroyed is in the lives of the redeemed as they grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.
2. As Trueman wisely observed, “My special destiny as a believer is to be part of the church, and it is the church that is the big player in God’s wider plan, not me.” Support for this observation is Christ’s instruction for kingdom citizens in His Sermon on the Mount:
 - a. We are to “*seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you*” (Matthew 6:33). These things refer to what makes us anxious about our life (vv. 25–32).
 - b. We are taught to pray in Matthew 6:9–13; so, please observe for what we are to pray in the order of importance. The kingdom comes first, then the cares of life.