

## Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

 Conventions used in these StudySheets:

- † “Christ Jesus:” we in the United States are traditionally given birth names with a first, middle, and surname (last-name or family-name). Back in the time of Jesus, people were called ‘first-name, son of father’s first-name’ (e.g., Jesus, son of Joseph). Because “Christ” is Jesus’ title, these StudySheets will frequently refer to Jesus as ‘Christ Jesus’. The purpose is to avoid the American naming convention that might indicate “Christ” is Jesus’ last name (surname). By the way the Apostle Paul seems to use Christ Jesus or Jesus Christ interchangeably.
- † Pencil icon (): indicates comments or notes. Since commentary is not Holy Scripture, comments are purposefully less prominent (i.e., font-size is smaller).
- † Pronunciation helps: I have added some ‘helps’ to aid in pronouncing some of the more difficult names within the verses of this Book. While I am not attempting to provide a pronunciation key to the ancient dialect, I am hopeful the helps will provide a common pronunciation when reading some of these more difficult names.

 The Godhead: The best analogy I have heard to describe the Godhead of God the Father, Christ Jesus the Son, and the Holy spirit is to envision a three-fingered hand (or a three-leaf clover). While each finger has a separate name, the three-fingers are all part of the same hand – the Godhead. The Jewish faith is unfalteringly monotheistic (belief in one God), so the concept of Christ Jesus the Son is blasphemous to them. The Book of Genesis is the first book in the Holy Bible and is the first book in what Judaism calls the Pentateuch or Torah, which refers to the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). Within the pages of Genesis are three different verses that refer to God by using the pronouns of “us” and “we” and “our”. These words refer to two or more. That said, in his commentary on Genesis, Jewish Commentator Dennis Prager conveniently explained-away (or ignored) these plural pronouns of “us” and “we” and “our” that are written in Genesis 1:26 (“*Let us make man in our image, in our likeness*”); 3:22 (“*The man has now become like one of us*”); and 11:7 (“*Come, let us go down*”) [©2019 by Dennis Prager, The Rational Bible Genesis, published by Regenerey Faith, ISBN 978-1-62157-898-7. Pages 24-25, 59, & 150].

 “Christian” label: a Biblical student may notice that these StudySheets refer to a follower of Christ Jesus as a “Believer,” thus avoiding the “Christian” label. In our world today, Satan has poisoned the label “Christian” to such an extent that it is safest to refer to a follower of Christ Jesus as a Believer. If a student examines the writings, the actions, the speech, of many people today who declare themselves “I am a Christian!”, the student should be stunned by the hypocrisy, the judgment, the hate, the vitriol, the lack of empathy, the uncaring attitudes, and the plain, old evil actions of these so-called “Christians”. Jesus wants Believers to minister to nonbelievers so that they will come to Him in faith. These so-called “Christians” will cause many nonbelievers, with whom they come in contact through face-to-face or media encounters, to turn-away from Christ Jesus in confusion and disgust at their outright hypocrisy, saying “If that is Jesus, I want nothing to do with Him!” For me, I am a Believer in the saving grace of my Savior Christ Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the living God! And I pray for you, the student, to believe in the same Savior, with an even deeper faith and enthusiastic passion than I.

 Wrong teachings: We should be on-guard against wrong teachings. We do well to remember the praise recorded in Acts 17:11: “*Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*” The Bereans verified Paul’s preaching against the foundation of Scripture and found Paul’s teachings to be in harmony with what we now call the Old Testament. We, too, should verify sermons, teachings, and even these StudySheets against Scripture. The Holy Bible must be our rock, and our foundation of Biblical knowledge, of God’s character, of Jesus’ Gospel message and His servant-examples, of our behavior in the world, and of our interactions with other Believers.

 False Teachings: If it takes a great deal of effort (i.e., a convoluted explanation) to reach a certain Biblical conclusion, then it is probably false. I pray that this concept is readily apparent as you work through these StudySheet lessons. While the Bible is a wonderfully written, historical narrative, it also provides us with descriptions of God: His character,

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

His desire for all humanity, His agapé love for all, and His abhorrence of sin. By the way, sin is the barrier between God and humankind; Jesus destroys that barrier for all who believe in His saving grace – Jesus died for you, and for me. Praise God!!! Praise Jesus!!!

 ‘Cherry-picking’ verses: It is easy to take one verse or a partial verse, say it is God’s Word, and demand that others follow it because “God said!”. We, who believe, must always be on-guard against Satan and his minions and their messages of half-truths, lies, and discouragement.

These StudySheets will not ‘cherry-pick’, but will provide context from surrounding verses, scholarly commentators, and other verses in the Holy Bible, and will most importantly specify the author’s intended audience. Know the Bible! Be on-guard against those who twist the Word of God and, by so doing, demonstrate their ignorance in the Holy Bible and their ultimate subservience to the ‘prince of this world’ [NIV: John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11]!

In our present time, the Apostle Paul has come under scrutiny and ridicule for teachings in which he provides God-ordained guidelines for behavior . . . for Believers. Believers were (and are) the intended audience for Paul’s Letters.

Unfortunately, some so-called ‘Christians’ take Paul’s words, apply them to our society, and use them to dominate (or judge) others with their supposed God-ordained superiority or gender or skin-color. They judge (discernment plus punishment) the character of the world. They fail to remember the Apostle Paul’s admonition, “*God will judge those outside [the church]*” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:13<sup>a</sup>), which is to say ‘God will judge nonbelievers’ — it is not in the Believers’ job description to judge nonbelievers.

Believers are to encourage belief. Believers are to love by example. A command “You shall follow Jesus!” will not lead a soul to Christ Jesus — it will be head-knowledge at best, not heart-felt, not soul-indwelt. Faith in Jesus grows and blossoms in an almost-believer through the loving example of an authentic, caring, trusted friend who is then able to provide words and encouragement just as Paul observed in his Letter to the Roman church in Romans 10:17: “*So faith comes from hearing the Good News. And people hear the Good News when someone tells them about Christ.*” Faith is evolutionary, not revolutionary (unless the person has an encounter similar to the one experienced by Paul; see Acts 9).

And then some nonbelievers point to verses, declaring them hypocritical. An example is found in Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians (5:22), “*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*” To our present-day culture, to nonbelievers, this is akin to blasphemy! However, three verses later Paul goes on to say (5:25), “*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*”; and in (5:28), “*In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*” (See the [StudySheet for Ephesians 5:22-33](#).) In these verses, Paul places an extraordinary demand on husbands: be like Christ Jesus, and agapé love your wife with self-sacrifice, kindness, tenderness, thoughtfulness, mercy, and compassion; her work is your work; you are to lead, so lead by example. It is not dominance, but partnership.

I willingly submit to Christ Jesus, because of His example and His agapé love for me! I trust Him. I consider Him my BFF (my best friend forever). I want to be like Him. I love Him. I want to be with Him. That said, I am a work-in-progress. Do healthy people go to hospitals? No, the sick. I go to church, not because I’m perfect, but because I’m so terribly imperfect; I worship the Lord because He foreknew that I’m incapable of sinless perfection, so He died a horrible death to atone for my sins, for your sins; church helps me to become an incrementally better person. How about you: how do people see you? What does your example reveal to others about your core beliefs? (Looking in the mirror is scary; I know.)

 StudySheet questions: These StudySheets (lessons) are mostly self-contained with Scripture (using text primarily from the 1984 New International Version) and commentary that will provide you, the Bible Study student, with thought-provoking questions, and guidance to answers. These StudySheets may be used by students new to a Bible study or long-time students. While some questions may seem elementary, they serve to provide those who are new to Bible studies, with a foundation as all students move toward the more consequential questions.

## Introduction

 The Gospel of Matthew was written by one of Jesus’ original twelve disciples — Matthew (also called Levi). Matthew was an eye-witness to Jesus’ ministry, so his personal testimony forms the basis for this Gospel. In all likelihood — after all, he had direct access — he asked Jesus’ mother Mary to share anecdotes about Jesus’ early life, and those personal stories were woven into the early chapters of his Gospel.

Before he encountered Jesus, Matthew was a hated tax collector — a Jew employed by the Roman government to collect taxes from his fellow Jewish brothers. His brethren considered him a traitor to the Jewish faith, as well as to God.

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

Yet, Jesus selected Matthew — this imperfect man — to be one of his disciples. Jesus used this tax collector to further His ministry — to teach, preach, and outreach to the people, who “were like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36), wandering aimlessly through life.

Biblical scholars have difficulty in dating the precise writing of this Gospel, so the best analysis provides a broad date-range between 50 – 70 A.D.

Matthew wrote his Gospel in Greek. It seems likely that Matthew’s intended audience was his Greek-speaking Jewish brethren. Through the promptings of the Holy Spirit, He included more Old Testament references than the other Gospel writers (see Matthew 1:22-23; 2:15; 2:17-18; 2:23; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:17-21; 13:35; 27:9-10) in an effort to further prove through Scripture that Jesus was God’s fulfillment of prophecy — The Messiah (Hebrew) — The Christ (Greek)!

The five primary divisions in Matthew’s Gospel are:

| CHAPTERS | HEADING                                       | LAST VERSE OF THE DIVISION   |
|----------|---|--|
| 5-7      | Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount;<br>The Beatitudes | 7:28-29 <u>When Jesus had finished saying these things</u> , the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law. |
| 10       | Servant’s Attitude                            | 11:1 <u>After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples</u> ,  |
| 13       | Jesus Speaks in Parables                      | 13:53 <u>When Jesus had finished these parables</u> , he moved on from there.  |
| 18       | Jesus’ ‘Sin’ Teachings                        | 19:1 <u>When Jesus had finished saying these things</u> , he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan.   |
| 24-25    | Jesus Foretells The End Times                 | 26:1 <u>When Jesus had finished saying all these things . . .</u>  |

At least one commentator observed a parallel between the five divisions in Matthew and the five books of the Pentateuch (or the Torah; consists of the first five books of — what we consider — the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy): “[Matthew] may also be presenting the Gospel as a new Torah and Jesus as a new and greater Moses.” [©1991, *The Zondervan NASB Study Bible*, ISBN: 9780310910923, published by Zondervan, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI 49530. All rights reserved. Page 1364]

**Let’s begin:**

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

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### Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

#### *Genealogy of Christ Jesus*

<sup>1</sup> A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Q1. All these names! Boring! Why are all of these names included in Matthew's Gospel?

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 A commentator Albert Barnes wrote an explanation regarding the differing genealogies of Christ Jesus written in Matthew 1 compared to Luke 3. His analysis is thorough and recommended reading. Please click the link <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-11.htm>, scroll down, and find the section titled "Barnes' Notes on the Bible".

An excerpt: Mr. Barnes wrote, "No two passages of Scripture have caused more difficulty than these [chapters: Matthew 1 and Luke 3]. . . . Now it is to be remembered that the Jews were fully competent to show that these [genealogical] tables were incorrect, if they were really so; and it is clear that they were fully disposed, if possible, to do it. The fact, therefore, that it is not done, is clear evidence that they thought [the tables] to be correct. . . . [So, why did the Gospel-writer Matthew (as well as Luke), as prompted by the Holy Spirit, include these genealogies?] It was to prove to the satisfaction of the Jews that Jesus was descended from David, and therefore that there was no argument from his ancestry that he was not the promised Messiah." [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-11.htm>]

Q2. By stating that Jesus was "the son of Abraham," was Matthew noting any special honor? Or was Matthew simply stating that, since all Jews consider Abraham their ancestral father, Jesus was a Jew?

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#### **Genesis 12:1<sup>a</sup>, 3** [NIV-1984]

<sup>1a</sup> The Lord had said to Abram . . . <sup>3</sup> "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

#### **Genesis 21:12** [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

But God said to Abraham, "Don't be troubled about the boy and the slave woman. Do whatever Sarah tells you. The descendants I promised you will be from Isaac.

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

### Genesis 22:15-18 [NIV-1984]

<sup>15</sup> The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time <sup>16</sup> and said, "I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, <sup>18</sup> and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

### Luke 19:9-10 [NIV-1984]

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

### Galatians 3:16 [NIV-1984]

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

### Hebrews 11:1-3, 11-12, 17-19 [NIV-1984]

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. <sup>2</sup> This is what the ancients were commended for. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. . . .

<sup>11</sup> By faith Abraham, even though he was past age — and Sarah herself was barren — was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. <sup>12</sup> And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. . . .

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned [see Genesis 21:12 (↑)]." <sup>19</sup> Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

Q3. Was there significance in that Jesus was called "the son of David"?

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### Jeremiah 23:5 [NIV-1984]

[Jeremiah was a prophet of the Lord]

"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land."

### Micah 5:2 [NIV-1984]

[Bethlehem Ephrathah (Ephrathah implies "fruitfulness") joins the ancient name with the more common, and distinguishes between David's hometown and that of a Bethlehem in Zebulun. Source: ©about 1800, Commentary of the Old and New Testaments by Joseph Benson. Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/micah/5-2.htm>]

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

### John 7:42 [NIV-1984]

Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David's family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?"

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

### Psalm 132:10-11, 17-18 [NIV-1984]

[God through the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 16) directed him to anoint Jesse's son David king over Israel, so the "anointed one" in this Psalm refers to David; however, we can infer a double meaning — an implied reference to Christ Jesus, The Anointed One of God.]

<sup>10</sup> For the sake of David your servant, do not reject your anointed one. <sup>11</sup> The Lord swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: "One of your own descendants I will place on your throne . . .

<sup>17</sup> "Here I will make a horn grow for David and set up a lamp for my anointed one. <sup>18</sup> I will clothe his enemies with shame, but the crown on his head will be resplendent."

### Matthew 15:22 [NIV-1984]

A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession."

### Matthew 21:9 [NIV-1984]

[This verse highlights Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and which we commemorate today as "Palm Sunday" — this begins the weeklong observance that includes Jesus' crucifixion and ends with Jesus' glorious resurrection — Easter Sunday.]

The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

### Matthew 22:42 [NIV-1984]

[Jesus asked the religious leaders:]

"What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" "The son of David," they replied.

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## Day 3

✍ Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham [Ā-brā-hām] was the father of Isaac [ī-zāch],  
Isaac the father of Jacob [jāy-cūb],  
Jacob the father of Judah [jēw-dāh] and his brothers,

✍ In verses 3, 5, & 6<sup>b</sup> Matthew includes in Jesus' genealogy, either directly or by inference, four Gentile women. While Bathsheba may have been born into a Jewish family ("daughter of Ammiel", 1 Chronicles 3:5), she married a Gentile, a soldier, a Hittite named Uriah; so, she was considered a Gentile through her marriage to Uriah. Then, when Bathsheba became King David's wife (2 Samuel 11:27), she was considered a Jewess as his wife and as a member of King David's house.

Tamar (Genesis 38) resorted to subterfuge (she targeted her father-in-law Judah, who thought he was having relations with a prostitute) and 9-months later gave birth to twin boys Perez and Zerah; Rahab (Joshua 2) was a "prostitute"; and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11) was raped by her husband's military leader and their king — King David (how does a soldier's wife say "No" to her king?). Of the four women, the Moabitess Ruth (Ruth 1-4) was the virtuous one. By the way, a Moabitess is any woman from the Gentile region called Moab, which is located east-southeast of the Dead Sea (see map on Page 8, right-bottom corner).

<sup>3</sup> Judah the father of Perez [Pēr-ězz] and Zerah [Zěrr-ăh],  
whose mother was Tamar [Tāh-mār],  
Perez the father of Hezron [Hěz-rōn],  
Hezron the father of Ram,

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

<sup>4</sup> Ram the father of Amminadab [Ăm-măñ-ă-dăb],  
Amminadab the father of Nahshon [Năh-shŭn],  
Nahshon the father of Salmon [Săll-mŭn],  
<sup>5</sup> Salmon the father of Boaz [Bōw-az], whose mother was Rahab [Răy-ăb],  
Boaz the father of Obed [Ōh-bĕd], whose mother was Ruth,  
Obed the father of Jesse [Jĕss-ē],  
<sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of King David.  
David was the father of Solomon [Săh-lăh-mŭn], whose mother had been  
Uriah's [Yoū-rī-ăh's] wife [Bathsheba (Băth-shăē-băh)],

Q4. Why would Matthew include Gentiles in Jesus' genealogy?

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gen·tile (jĕn'tīl')

n. often Gentile (capitalized)

- 1. A person who is not Jewish.
- 2. (Archaic) A pagan or heathen.
- 3. (Mormon Church) A non-Mormon.

American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.  
Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/Gentile>

### Isaiah 42:1-2, 6-8 [NIV-1984]

<sup>1</sup> "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. . . .

<sup>6</sup> "I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup> to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

<sup>8</sup> "I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols."

### Isaiah 49:5-7 [NIV-1984]

<sup>5</sup> And now the Lord says — he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord and my God has been my strength — <sup>6</sup> he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

<sup>7</sup> This is what the Lord says — the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel — to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: "Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

### Isaiah 49:1-2 [NIV-1984]

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali [see map (↓)], but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan — <sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.



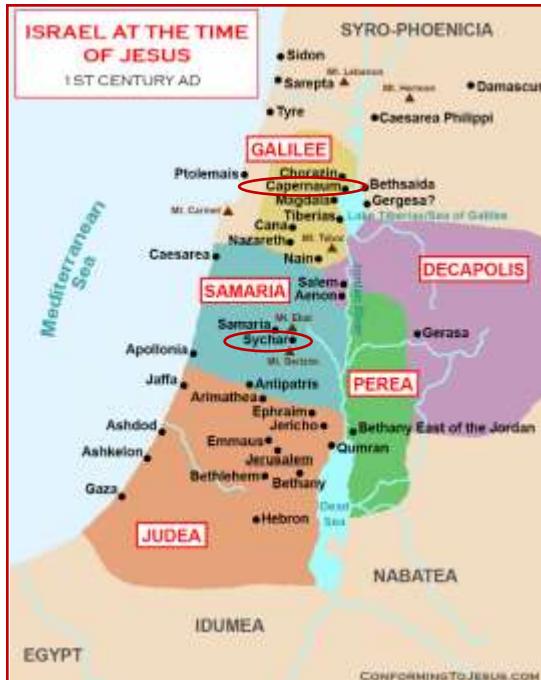
Map depicting the Twelve Tribes of Israel that show the approximate boundaries of Zebulun and Naphtali (at the top)  
Source: <https://emmausroadministries.international/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/zebulun-and-naphtali-map.jpg>, all rights reserved.

### Matthew 4:12-16 [NIV-1984]

<sup>12</sup> When Jesus heard that John [the Baptist] had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee.

<sup>13</sup> Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum [see map (↓)], which was by the lake [Sea of Galilee] in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali — <sup>14</sup> to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: <sup>15</sup> "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles — <sup>16</sup> the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25



[https://www.conformingtojesus.com/images/webpages/israel\\_at\\_the\\_time\\_of\\_jesus\\_christ\\_1.png](https://www.conformingtojesus.com/images/webpages/israel_at_the_time_of_jesus_christ_1.png) All rights reserved.

### John 4:3-8, 39-45 [NIV-1984]

[The story of the Samaritan (Gentile) woman at Jacob's well. An example of Christ Jesus ministering to Gentiles.]

<sup>3</sup> When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. <sup>4</sup> Now he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar [see map (↑)], near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour [noon].

<sup>7</sup> When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

<sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) . . . .

<sup>39</sup> Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him [Christ Jesus] because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."

<sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.

<sup>41</sup> And because of his words many more became believers. <sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

<sup>43</sup> After the two days he left for Galilee. <sup>44</sup> (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) <sup>45</sup> When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, for they also had been there.

### Acts 9:15-17 [NIV-1984]

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man [Saul / Paul] is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel [Jews]. <sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

<sup>17</sup> Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord — Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here — has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

### Acts 13:44-49 [NIV-1984]

[Paul and Barnabas in Pisidian Antioch]

<sup>44</sup> On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. <sup>45</sup> When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.

<sup>46</sup> Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

<sup>47</sup> For this is what the Lord has commanded us: " 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.' "

<sup>48</sup> When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. <sup>49</sup> The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.

Q5. Why would Matthew break "the father of" repetition and include women in Jesus' genealogy?  
(After all, the Jewish faith is extremely patriarchal (male-dominated/controlled) and Matthew's Jewish audience at the time was predominantly male. )

Thoughts?

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 "By including these women (contrary to custom) in his genealogy, Matthew may be indicating at the very outset of his Gospel that God's activity is not limited to men, or the people of Israel." [©1991, *The Zondervan NASB Study Bible*, ISBN: 9780310910923, published by Zondervan, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI 49530. All rights reserved. Page 1365]

Q6. Why would Matthew include people of questionable morals (both fathers and mothers) in Jesus' genealogy? (Wouldn't God want His perfect Son, at least in a publicized list, to come from a line of virtuous, moral, reputable ancestors? In this commentator's opinion, if it were a list of my ancestors, I would want my family's absolute best recorded for all history — fragrant blossoms and moral courage only — let's skip the blemishes. Thoughts?)

Why include people with questionable morals? (Why not virtuous ancestors only?)

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## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

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### Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>7</sup> Solomon the father of Rehoboam [Rē-ō-bōm],  
Rehoboam the father of Abijah [Āb-ÿ-jā],  
Abijah the father of Asa [Āh-sāh],  
<sup>8</sup> Asa the father of Jehoshaphat [Jē-hōe-shā-fāt],  
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram [Jē-hōrr-ām],  
Jehoram the father of Uzziah [Yoū-zī-āh],  
<sup>9</sup> Uzziah the father of Jotham [Jāh-thām],  
Jotham the father of Ahaz [Ā-hās],  
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah [Hēz-ē-kī-āh],  
<sup>10</sup> Hezekiah the father of Manasseh [Mā-nāss-āh],  
Manasseh the father of Amon [Āh-mōn],  
Amon the father of Josiah [Jōe-sīgh-āh],  
<sup>11</sup> and Josiah the father of Jeconiah [Jē-cō-nī-āh] and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon [Bāb-ÿ-lōn].

 [2 Chronicles 36:11-21](#) and [2 Kings 24-25](#) provides accounts of Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar's capture and devastation of Jerusalem, the severe punishment (2 Kings 25:7) imposed on the Jewish King Zedekiah (king of Judah), the burning (2 Kings 25:9) of the Temple of the Lord, and the exiles (2 Kings 24:14 & 25:21).

Additionally, the website 'Got Questions' (<https://www.gotquestions.org/King-Zedekiah.html>) has a thorough summary of the events and kingships that lead-up to the exile.

People sinned, God warned, people ignored, God judged, people punished.

The behavior of the unrepentant Jews was judged. The exile was God's punishment. Jerusalem was destroyed. God even allowed the opulent Temple to be plundered and burned. Leaders were maimed or killed. The people were forcibly relocated to a foreign land. The consequence of God's judgment was harsh. It was necessary to purge evil from His beloved people — the Jews.

We, who believe, are to discern, in that we are to determine right from wrong, and we are to act accordingly by approving that which is right, or by fleeing from that which is wrong. Judgment is defined as discernment, plus an imposed penalty, a consequence, a punishment. Simply stated, judgment = discernment + punishment. God judges.

However, Christ Jesus requires us Believers to hold other Believers accountable to the foundational / Scriptural principles of our faith. Jesus provided a carefully prescribed procedure for us to follow as we confront sin within the Church (Matthew 18:15-17). Additionally, as an example for us today, the Apostle Paul demanded the Corinthians to judge and remove an egregious sinner from their local church (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5). We are reminded of Jesus' Words, "*In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents*" [Luke 15:10].

Paul's teaching and demand of judgment within the Corinthian Church also applies to us Believers, today. Paul carefully taught that we are to hold other Believers accountable using Jesus' prescribed procedure; however, accountability that includes punishment (even the 'silent treatment') does NOT extend to nonbelievers. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 5:13 regarding nonbelievers: "*God will judge those outside [the church]*".

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

<sup>12</sup> After the exile to Babylon:

Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel [Shē-ă-tēl],  
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel [Zēr-rū-bāh-bēl],

<sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel the father of Abiud [Āb-ÿ-hōōd],

Abiud the father of Eliakim [Ē-lē-ă-kīm],

Eliakim the father of Azor [Ā-zōr],

<sup>14</sup> Azor the father of Zadok [Zāh-dōck],

Zadok the father of Akim [Āh-kīm],

Akim the father of Eliud [Ēl-ÿ-hōōd],

<sup>15</sup> Eliud the father of Eleazar [Ēl-ā-zār],

Eleazar the father of Matthan [Māth-ān],

Matthan the father of Jacob [Jāy-cūb],

<sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Q7. Does verse 16 explicitly name Joseph the biological father of Jesus? Thoughts?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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Q8. What does the title “Christ” mean?

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Q9. What does the title “Messiah” mean?

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Q10. What is the significance of the phrase “the Anointed One”?

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“It appears from Isaiah 61:1 (↓), that anointing with oil, in consecrating a person to any important office, whether civil or religious, was considered as an emblem of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. This ceremony was used on three occasions, [namely] the installation of prophets, priests, and kings, into their respective offices. But why should such an anointing be deemed necessary? Because the common sense of men taught them that all good, whether spiritual or secular, must come from God, its origin and cause.” [©Public Domain, *Commentary on the Bible* by Adam Clarke (b. 1760 or 1762, d. 1832). Published in 6 volumes during the period 1810-1826 in Liverpool. <https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/adam-clarke/557720>]

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

Additionally, Mr. Clarke observed that Christ Jesus is the only person in history who held the offices of prophet, priest, and king: “But as no man was ever dignified by holding the three offices, so no person ever had the title Mashiach, the anointed one, but Jesus, The Christ. He alone is King of kings, and Lord of lords: the king who governs the universe, and rules in the hearts of his followers; the prophet, to instruct men in the way wherein they should go; and the great high priest, to make atonement for their sins.” [Ibid.]

### Isaiah 61:1 [NIV-1984]

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,

<sup>17</sup> Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

Q11. There is symmetry in Matthew’s account of Jesus’ genealogy: 14 to 14 to 14. Did Matthew include the father from every generation? Or did Matthew omit some from this listing?

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The commentator Albert Barnes wrote, “This division of the names in the genealogical tables was doubtless adopted for the purpose of aiding the memory. It was common among the Jews; and other similar instances are preserved. The Jews were destitute of books besides the Old Testament, and they had but few copies of that among them, and those chiefly in their synagogues. They would therefore naturally devise plans to keep up the remembrance of the principal facts in their history. One method of doing this was to divide the tables of genealogy into portions of equal length, to be committed to memory. This greatly facilitated the remembrance of the names. A man who wished to commit to memory the names of a regiment of soldiers would naturally divide it into companies and platoons, and this would greatly facilitate his work. This was doubtless the reason in the case before us. And, though it is not strictly accurate, yet it was the Jewish way of keeping their records, and answered their purpose.

“There were three leading persons and events that nearly, or quite, divided their history into equal portions: Abraham, David, and the Babylonian captivity. From one to the other was about 14 generations, and by omitting a few names it was sufficiently accurate to be made a general guide or directory in recalling the principal events in their history.

“In counting these divisions, however, it will be seen that there is some difficulty in making out the number 14 in each division. This may be explained in the following manner: In the first division, Abraham is the first and David the last, making 14 altogether. In the second series, David would naturally be placed first, and the 14 was completed in Josiah, about the time of the captivity, as sufficiently near for the purpose of convenient computation, 2 Chronicles 35. In the third division Josiah would naturally be placed first, and the number was completed in Joseph; so that David and Josiah would be reckoned twice.” [©1834, Notes on the Bible by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-17.htm>]

The important thing to remember is that the Jewish religious authorities of the time did not refute Jesus’ genealogical record.

# Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

## Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

### **Stepfather Joseph Demonstrates Obedience to God**

<sup>18</sup> This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Q12. ***Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph:*** What does “pledged to be married” mean?

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 The commentator Charles Ellicott wrote: “Betrothal, among the Jews, was a formal ceremony, the usual symbolic act being, from patriarchal times, the gift of a ring and other jewels (Genesis 24:53). The interval between betrothal and marriage was of uncertain length, but among the Jews of our Lord’s time was commonly for a whole year in the case of maidens. During that time the bride-elect remained in her own home, and did not see the bridegroom till he came to fetch her to his own house. All communications in the meantime were conducted through “the friend of the bridegroom” (John 3:29).” [©about 1880, *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J. Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-18.htm>]

#### **Genesis 24:53** [English Standard Version (ESV)]

[The patriarch Abraham tasked his servant to return to his homeland and find a wife for his son Isaac. God miraculously identified Rebekah as Isaac’s bride-to-be to Abraham’s servant. The betrothal was formal and included gifts to the bride’s family.]

And the servant brought out jewelry of silver and of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave to her brother [Laban] and to her mother costly ornaments.

#### **John 3:29** [English Standard Version (ESV)]

The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore, this joy of mine is now complete.

 And commentator Albert Barnes provided this insight: “Betrothed, or engaged to be married. There was commonly an interval of ten or twelve months, among the Jews, between the contract of marriage and the celebration of the nuptials ... yet such was the nature of this engagement, that unfaithfulness to each other was deemed adultery.” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. [https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/1\\_timothy/2.htm](https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/1_timothy/2.htm)]

#### **Luke 1:26-38** [NIV-1984]

[Mary’s choice.]

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.

<sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

<sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month.

<sup>37</sup> For nothing is impossible with God."

<sup>38</sup> "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

 Sometimes a different Biblical version will provide additional understanding to a specific passage or verse:

**Luke 1:38** [J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)]

"I belong to the Lord, body and soul," replied Mary, "let it happen as you say." And at this the angel left her.

**Luke 1:38** [New American Standard Bible (NASB)]

And Mary said, "Behold, [I am] the Lord's bond-servant; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Q13. As you read the preceding Luke 1:26-38 passage, did Mary demonstrate faith (trust) in God?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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Q14. As you read the preceding Luke 1:26-38 passage, could Mary have said "No"? In other words, did Mary have a choice to be pregnant, or not?

Could Mary have said "No"? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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Did Mary have a choice in her pregnancy? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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 The angel waited for Mary's response. If Mary had no choice in her pregnancy, the angel would have made his proclamation and left. While God foreknew her agreement, the angel waited for Mary to choose; Mary expressed agreement with the Lord's plan and request. Then, the angel departed from her.

<sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

Q15. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man: What marked Joseph "a righteous man"?

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 "Justice consists in rendering to every man his own. Yet this is evidently not the character intended to be given here of Joseph. The meaning is that he was kind, tender, merciful; that he was so attached to Mary that he was not willing that she should be exposed to public shame. He sought, therefore, secretly to dissolve the connection, and to restore her to her friends without the punishment commonly inflicted on adultery. [It implies the] meaning of mildness, or mercy."

[©1834, Notes on the Bible by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-19.htm>]

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

Q16. ***He had in mind to divorce her quietly:*** Why did Joseph feel it necessary “*to divorce*” Mary?

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Q17. ***He had in mind to divorce her quietly:*** Why did Joseph want to divorce Mary “*quietly*”?

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 At this time in history, we must remember that the judgment for what today we might term ‘a moral lapse’ resulted in severe corporal punishment. As commentator Charles Ellicott wrote, “The glimpse given us into the character of Joseph is one of singular tenderness and beauty. To him, conscious of being of the house of David, and cherishing Messianic hopes, what he heard would seem to come as blighting those hopes. He dared not, as a ‘righteous’ man, take to himself one who seemed thus to have sinned [the evidence of Mary’s ‘infidelity’ was growing in her womb; her pregnancy was impossible to ignore; to some of Joseph’s family and friends it may have appeared as if Joseph himself had sinned and consummated his betrothal before they were truly married; to the culture Mary’s pregnancy was a smear; and, perhaps, because of the perceived ‘moral lapse’, some self-righteous Jews forever shunned Joseph and his carpentry business]. But love and pity alike hindered him from pressing the law, which made death by stoning the punishment of such a sin (Deuteronomy 22:21), or even from publicly breaking off the marriage on the ground of the apparent guilt. There remained the alternative, which the growing frequency of divorce made easy, of availing himself of a ‘writ of divorce,’ which did not necessarily specify the ground of repudiation, except in vague language implying disagreement (Matthew 19:3). Thus, the matter would be settled quietly without exposure. The ‘bill of divorce’ was as necessary for the betrothed as for those who were fully man and wife.” [©about 1880, Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers, edited by Charles J. Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-19.htm>]

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

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### Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>20</sup>But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

**Q18. But after he had considered this:** What was "this" that Joseph "considered"?

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**Q19. An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream:** What thoughts must have assailed Joseph's consciousness when he awakened? (Am I hallucinating? Was that really an angel? From God? Will people think poorly of me, because Mary is pregnant? What is the Holy Spirit? Could the baby boy be the Messiah? Other thoughts?)

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**Q20. Joseph son of David:** Is there significance in addressing Joseph as the "son of David"?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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 The angel's command, "do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife", further cements Joseph's relationship to Mary — she is "your wife". The angel's every statement, every phrase dictates to Joseph how he is to behave toward his wife Mary, and proclaims the divine — the miracle-baby growing inside of her.

**Q21. You are to give him the name Jesus:** Is there significance in the name "Jesus"?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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 "There is nothing strange in this being to Joseph the first knowledge of the name, which St. Luke tells us (Luke 1:31) had been previously imparted to Mary. The customs of the Jews were, as we have seen, against any communications between the bride and bridegroom during the period of betrothal, and the facts of the case (including Mary's visit to Elizabeth) would make it more improbable than ever.

"The name Jesus was one full of meaning, but it was not as yet [an especially] sacred name. In its Old Testament form of Jehoshua (Numbers 13:16 ↓), Joshua, or Jeshua (Numbers 14:6; Nehemiah 8:17), it meant 'Jehovah [God] is salvation'; and the change of the name of the captain of Israel from Hoshea, which did not include the divine name, to

## Lesson 1: Matthew 1:1-25

the form which gave this full significance (Numbers 13:16 ↓) had made it the expression of the deepest faith of the people.

“After the return from Babylon, [the name] received a new prominence in connection with the high priest Joshua, the son of Josedech (Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 3:1), and appears in its Greek form in Jesus the father, and again in the son of Sirach. In the New Testament itself we find it borne by others. . . . It had not been directly associated, however, with Messianic hopes, and the intimation that it was to be the name of the Christ gave a new character to men’s thoughts of the kingdom. Not conquest, but ‘salvation’ — deliverance, not from human enemies only or chiefly, nor from the penalties of sin, but from the sins themselves.

“As spoken by the angel to the dreamer [Joseph] it was the answer to prayers and hopes, going beyond the hope, and purifying it from earthly thoughts. As recorded by the Evangelist [Matthew] it was a witness that he had been taught the true nature of the kingdom of the Christ.” [©about 1880, *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J. Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/1-21.htm>]

### **Numbers 13:16** [The Message (MSG)]

These are the names of the men Moses sent to scout out the land. Moses gave Hoshea ([meaning] Salvation) son of Nun a new name—Joshua ([meaning] God-Saves).

**22** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:  
**23** “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” — which means, ‘God with us.’”

### **Isaiah 7:13-14** [NIV-1984]

[The Prophet Isaiah began his work for the Lord about 740 B.C. Therefore, his prophecy about the future Messiah is truly prophetic.]

**13** Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also? **14** Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and [they] will call him Immanuel [“God with us”].

**24** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. **25** But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

### Q22. Was Joseph obedient?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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