

MATTHEW 1:12-17 – HISTORICAL MESSIANIC CONNECTIONS

As believers in Christ, we have a faith that is both prophetic and historical. That which is first prophetic, then in fulfillment becomes historic (cf. Rev. 19:10). And Christ is the centerpiece of our faith. In order to meet the prophetic criteria, the Christ had to come in keeping with certain historical markers. Jesus Christ does this to perfection, as brought out by Matthew.

Matthew 1:12–16 (NKJV)

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel.

13 Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor.

14 Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud.

15 Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob.

16 And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

Verse 16 in the Greek is very clear that Jesus was born of Mary and not of Joseph. All the way through this entire section, it says so and so begot this person, and then that person begot so and so. That is the pattern. But here that pattern is broken. It does not say that Joseph begot Jesus. Rather, it simply says that Joseph was the husband of Mary.

And then it says it was of Mary “***of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.***” In the Greek this is all the more clear. “***Of whom***” is singular and not plural. And it is feminine not masculine, meaning this could only apply to Mary and not to Joseph.

Matthew 1:16 (NKJV)

16 And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, **of whom** [*singular/feminine*] was born Jesus who is called Christ.

This emphasis on Jesus being born of Mary (singular/feminine) is significant because it underscores the virgin birth. There was no human father involved. Jesus was born of the woman and not of the man. This is the fulfillment of prophecy stretching back to the very first Messianic prophecy in the Bible as found in Gen. 3:15.

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)

15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

The Messiah would be of the seed of the woman. And He was as seen in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ through Mary.

Matthew 1:17 (NKJV)

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.

Matthew, for his purposes, is merely drawing a sketch of the genealogical record in survey form. There are obvious omissions in the record and unusual inclusions.

“In addition to the confirmed gaps, there are implied gaps because of the unequal time spans involved: from Abraham to David is about a thousand years; from David to the Captivity in Babylon, about four hundred years; and from the Captivity to the birth of Christ, about six hundred years.” –

Howard Vos

The reason why the genealogy is arranged in three brackets of fourteen is not known, but it was customary for the Jews to arrange genealogies according to a scheme for memory purposes. So perhaps that is involved here.

There are lots of interesting details, but the main point is that in survey form Matthew is showing that Jesus has the exact right genealogical credentials as the Son of David to be the Messiah!

The story of Jesus has both a human side and a divine side. On the human side is His “natural” credentials that line up perfectly with the Messianic requirements of Scripture as presented in Matt. 1:1-17. On the divine side is His “supernatural” credentials that line up perfectly with the requirements of Scripture as seen in Matt. 1:18-25. Jesus is both man and God and His full story harmonizes BOTH perfectly in keeping with all the Messianic requirements presented in Scripture.