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Bloodlines: The Genealogy of Jesus / Genealogy of Jesus Christ; Mission; Messiah; Christ; David; Abraham / Matthew 1:1–17

In Matthew 1:1-17, we learn that Matthew summarized the entire history of God's people because he believed it all climaxed in the mission of Jesus.

Introduction

We are concluding our sermon series today that I am calling, “Bloodlines: The Genealogy of Jesus.” I hope you have come to see that the genealogy of Jesus is far more than merely a list of names. It contains some very significant truths that help us to understand better the meaning of the Bible.

Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare somewhere between 1591 and 1595. Along with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, it was one of the most popular plays of his lifetime and remains so today.

Romeo and Juliet is about forbidden love. Juliet is the daughter of Lord Capulet and Romeo is the son of Lord Montague. The houses of Capulet and Montague are sworn enemies. Shakespeare uses dramatic turning points in the play to build tension between the two houses—and the two lovers, Romeo and Juliet.

Some of the dramatic turning points are sometimes mistaken for the climax of the play. For example, when Romeo avenges the murder of his cousin Mercutio by killing Juliet's cousin Tybalt and is banished from Verona, that is a dramatic turning point but it is not yet the climax of the play.

However, the tension continues to build until it arrives at the true climax of the play. To reunite with Romeo and avoid an arranged marriage, Juliet feigns her death.

Unfortunately, Romeo is unaware of Juliet's plan. He discovers Juliet's seemingly lifeless body. He is grief-stricken. He believes that Juliet is dead. Unwilling to live without Juliet, Romeo drinks the real poison and dies.

Then Juliet wakes up from her feigned death. She discovers that Romeo is dead beside her. So she stabs herself to death with his dagger and dies beside him.

This infamous climax of *Romeo and Juliet* leads to reconciliation between the Capulets and Montagues and they agree to end their long, violent family feud.

In literary terms, the definition of a climax is “the highest point of tension in a storyline, often depicted by a confrontation between the protagonist and antagonist. A climax resolves the main conflict of the story and is the moment the main character reaches—or fails to reach—his or her goal.”

Gustav Freytag, a nineteenth-century German writer, defined the five progressions of a story, which have come to be known as Freytag’s Pyramid. The five progressions are exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement. Those structural pillars are still the defining elements of a story arc, with the climax at the peak.

The placement of a climax is essential to a good story. It typically occurs around 90% of the way through the narrative to have the greatest impact. Once the climactic moment happens, the story should be resolved quickly. If the climax happens too soon, the resolution will be too long, and readers will become disengaged. If a writer places the climax too late in the story without enough of a wrap-up, it creates an unsatisfying conclusion (see <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-structure-a-climax#79JBUzWtffIYFdhYQ5K79P>).

In the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, the climax occurs right near the end of the play when Romeo discovers Juliet, and thinking that she is dead, he kills himself.

The Bible is a grand example of God’s story of redemption. In his Gospel, Matthew is masterful in the way in which he introduces Jesus as the climax in God’s plan of redemption.

The entire Bible can be seen in three acts. First, there is creation, including the creation of mankind (that is found in the first two chapters of Genesis). Second, there is the fall of mankind (in [Genesis 3](#)). And third, the rest of the entire Bible is about God’s redemption of sinful men and women.

The Old Testament is an exposition and rising action about creation, fall, and redemption. God promises that he will save a people but people continually rebel against God and his promises.

Matthew presents Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as the climax of the biblical story because it is the dramatic turning point of the story. Matthew did so masterfully in the lives of two key individuals: David and Abraham. And he hints at that right in the first verse of his Gospel as he writes about the mission of the Messiah.

Scripture

Let's read [Matthew 1:1-17](#):

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³ and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴ and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵ and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, ⁷ and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, ⁸ and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, ⁹ and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, ¹⁰ and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, ¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

¹² And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, ¹³ and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, ¹⁴ and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, ¹⁵ and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and

Matthan the father of Jacob,¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Lesson

In [Matthew 1:1-17](#), we learn that Matthew summarized the entire history of God's people because he believed it all climaxed in the mission of Jesus.

In Matthew's Gospel, Abraham and David figure prominently in the history of Jesus. That is why the genealogy of Jesus includes these two ancestral giants.

Let's use the following outline:

1. Jesus Is the Son of Abraham
2. Jesus Is the Son of David
3. Jesus Is the Christ

I. Jesus Is the Son of Abraham

First, Jesus is the son of Abraham.

We read in [Matthew 1:1](#), "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." And we read in verse 17a, "So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations...."

Jesus was of course a direct descendant of Abraham. But that is not the reason Abraham is mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus. The reason Abraham is mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus is that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham. God said to Abraham in [Genesis 22:18](#), "... and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The offspring through whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed would be Jesus.

"All the nations" would be blessed through Jesus. Matthew hinted that "all the nations" were already blessed by the inclusion of the four Gentile women in the genealogy of Jesus: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah.

Then, after the birth of Jesus, Matthew noted that the first to come and worship Jesus were Gentiles, “wise men from the east” ([Matthew 2:1](#)).

Later, when Jesus grew up and began his public ministry, he did so in “Galilee of the Gentiles” because his ministry was to bring blessing to “all the nations” ([Matthew 4:12-17](#)).

Among Jesus’ very first miracles is the healing of a Roman centurion’s servant ([Matthew 8:5-13](#)). Later, Jesus healed a Canaanite woman’s daughter who was severely oppressed by a demon ([Matthew 15:21-28](#)).

Matthew recorded that Jesus fed five thousand people who were Jews ([Matthew 14:13-21](#); [15:32-38](#)). However, we learn in Mark’s Gospel that Jesus fed four thousand Gentiles ([Mark 7:31](#)).

In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus revealed that before the end would come, the good news of the Gospel must be proclaimed through the entire world as a testimony to “all the nations” ([Matthew 24:14](#)).

Finally, Matthew concluded his Gospel with Jesus’ command to his apostles that they were to make disciples of “all the nations” ([Matthew 28:18-20](#)), to which we shall return later in this message. This points to the consummation of the promise that was made to Abraham.

So, Jesus is the son of Abraham.

II. Jesus Is the Son of David

Second, Jesus is the son of David.

We read in [Matthew 1:1](#), “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” And we read in verse 17b, “... and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations...”

When David became king, he did not at first have a united kingdom. He ruled as king for 40 years. But the first 7 years of his reign were over only the area of Judah. Finally, the kingdom united and David ruled over united Judah and Israel for 33 years. He set up his palace in Jerusalem. He defeated all his surrounding enemies.

Then he realized that he wanted to build a “house,” that is, a temple, for God. But God sent a message through Nathan the prophet that David would not build him a house. Instead, God was going to build a “house,” that is, a dynasty, for David.

This is how God expressed it in [2 Samuel 7:12-13](#), “When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

That offspring was Jesus. Matthew provided Jesus’ royal genealogy by tracing Jesus’ descent in three stages from Abraham to David, from David to Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon, and then from Jechoniah down to Joseph the son of David, who was the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born ([Matthew 1:2-17](#)).

By taking special notice of the deportation to Babylon, which he mentioned twice ([Matthew 1:11-12](#)), Matthew showed that God’s promises to David did not come to an end with the deportation to Babylon. Matthew has thus picked up on the final words of 2 Kings, which tell us that the line of David (despite the slaughter of Zedekiah’s five sons) was preserved during the exile to Babylon through Jechoniah (also called Jehoiachin; [Jeremiah 24:1-2](#); [2 Kings 24:6-17](#); [25:27-30](#)).

Second Kings ends by anticipating the Messiah’s reign, telling us that Jehoiachin was released from prison and given a seat above all the other kings who were in Babylon.

Matthew ends with the fulfillment of that passage, showing that Jesus, the son of David, is given all authority in heaven and on earth in [Matthew 28:18](#).

So, Jesus is the son of Abraham. And Jesus is the son of David.

III. Jesus Is the Christ

And third, Jesus is the Christ.

Three times in these opening verses of his Gospel, Matthew referred to Jesus as “Christ.” He did so in verse 1, where we read, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus *Christ*, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” He did so again in verse 16,

where we read, "... and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called *Christ*." And then he also did it in verse 17c, "... and from the deportation to Babylon to the *Christ* fourteen generations."

The Gospel of Matthew is a book about Jesus "the Christ." You recall that the New Testament word for "Christ" is the same as the Old Testament word "Messiah." It means "anointed" or "anointed one." Specifically, it refers to God's promise throughout the Old Testament to send his "anointed one" who will fulfill his plan of redemption for his people (see [1 Samuel 2:10](#); [Psalm 2:2](#); [Daniel 9:25ff](#); [Matthew 2:4](#); [16:16](#); [16:20](#); [22:42](#); [23:8-10](#)).

Matthew's Gospel is the dramatic turning point in the story of God's plan of redemption. Matthew was saying that Malachi was not the end of the story. Even though there had been 400 years of silence from God, God was now bringing his story of redemption to a glorious climax—and it is being fulfilled in the person of his Son, Jesus the Christ.

That is why Matthew so repeatedly referred to the Old Testament in his Gospel. He pointed out in so many ways that Jesus was the climax of God's story of redemption.

For example, Matthew pointed out ten times that what happened in Jesus' life was the fulfillment of what the prophets in the Old Testament had foretold. Let me give you several instances of this.

When Jesus' father was struggling with the fact that his wife-to-be Mary was pregnant, he had a dream. In this dream, the angel told Joseph that Mary "will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" ([Matthew 1:21](#)).

Then Matthew recorded these words in [Matthew 1:22-23](#), "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel' (which means, God with us)."

Another instance of Matthew recording what was spoken by the prophets in the Old Testament was when Jesus and his family fled to Egypt to escape Herod's murderous wrath. Once again, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. Matthew writes in [Matthew 2:13-15a](#):

¹³ Now when they [that is, the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod.

Then Matthew notes in verse 15b, “This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’ ”

Instances like this occur another eight times in Matthew’s Gospel ([Matthew 2:17-18](#); [2:23](#); [4:14](#); [8:17](#); [12:17](#); [13:35](#); [21:4](#); and 27:9).

But that is not all. Matthew records ten miracles in chapters 8-9. These miracles demonstrate that Jesus has complete power to bring to his people the healing and salvation promised by the prophets.

For example, Matthew recorded the following miracle in [Matthew 8:14-16](#):

¹⁴ And when Jesus entered Peter’s house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. ¹⁶ That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.

Then Matthew recorded in verse 17, “This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: ‘He took our illnesses and bore our diseases’ ” (cf. [Isaiah 53:4](#); [35:5](#)).

Earlier, Matthew noted in [Matthew 4:23](#) that Jesus “went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.” Matthew did not say that Jesus healed “every disease and affliction.” Matthew wanted to emphasize that nothing could thwart Jesus’ power and so he repeated the adjective twice: “every disease and every affliction.” Matthew repeated this statement in [Matthew 9:35](#) and [Matthew 10:1](#).

Finally, Matthew used the term “son of David” ten times in his Gospel. Matthew used it often in connection with the healing done by Jesus ([Matthew 9:27](#); [12:23](#);

[15:22](#); [20:30](#)). Matthew wanted to show that Jesus' kingdom is one of complete blessing and deliverance for the people of God.

Truly, Jesus is the anointed one, the long-awaited Messiah, the Christ, the fulfillment of all that the prophets had foretold.

Jesus is the dramatic turning point in God's story of redemption. Jesus is the climax of the way by which God brings sinners back into a right relationship with himself.

So, Jesus is the son of Abraham. Jesus is the son of David. And Jesus is the Christ.

Conclusion

Since Jesus is the Messiah sent by God, let us faithfully complete the mission he has given us to make disciples of all nations.

Earlier, I mentioned Freytag's Pyramid. The five progressions of a story include exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement.

The story of redemption in the Old Testament has exposition and rising action. The climax is found in the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and present reign of Jesus.

What remains is the falling action and the denouement (that is, the final act).

The falling action began when Jesus ascended into heaven. It will continue until Jesus' return, at which time there will be the denouement, the final act when Jesus establishes his kingdom on the new earth and sits on his throne in the new Jerusalem.

So, what does that mean for us today? It means that we know the outcome of the story of redemption. There will be no twist that will change the outcome. Jesus has won the victory over Satan and sin.

In the last recorded act in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus gave a commission to his apostles. In a very real sense, you and I have a vital part to play in the conclusion of God's story of redemption. Jesus said in [Matthew 28:18-20](#):

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Let us then faithfully complete the mission that Jesus has given to us to make disciples of all nations. Amen.