

Introduction to the Book of Matthew

There are approaches to the book of Matthew that I could take. I could cover all four Gospels at the same time, right, like a Gospel harmony? Here's why I don't want to do that because from what we understand, Matthew is probably the first Gospel written so the recipients of Matthew's Gospel didn't have Mark; they didn't have Luke, they didn't have John. So it's very important for us to understand the original understanding of the audience so I want us to hear the words in the way that the original audience would have heard the words. I have to think, "What did the writer expect the reader to already know?" He didn't know Mark. He didn't know Luke. He didn't know John. In order for us to truly appreciate what the writer is saying by aid of the Holy Spirit, we need to hear what the writer first wrote and hear it as the first hearers would have heard it.

So in your devotions you're going to be tempted to spend your time chasing Thompson's Chain References all over the place and let me just say to you that we should discipline ourselves to read what the writer wrote. This is not a topical study about why is it that Matthew and Luke have things in different order.

1:1

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. The Greek word behind "generation" is the word "genesis" in the Greek and it means "origin; beginning." So right away you know that genesis is not a Hebrew word and so it probably wasn't the title of the book Moses wrote it back there in Genesis. It means "the beginning." So you want to read it that way, we could read verse 1 as, "The book of the beginnings of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

How did he begin? The fact that he doesn't begin with God or he doesn't begin like John, or the fact that it doesn't go back to God like Luke should tell us that Matthew is talking about the human beginning of Jesus.

The word "book" there is where we would get our word "Bible" (*biblion*), and it is actually the word "scroll." So you could say that, "The scroll of the beginnings of Jesus reads like this: he's the son of David, the son of Abraham," and then for the next 16 verses or so, we find a scroll that Matthew had where it recorded the lineage of Jesus.

If Jesus gets his lineage and his namesake from Abraham and David, then the question is: who is carrying on his name? If Matthew begins with the book of the beginnings of Jesus, whatever happened to him because we don't see Jesus having a son. Now you say, "Well, of course he didn't." But the Mormons think he did. The Rosicrucians think he did. The Guardians of the Grail think he did. The Arians think he did. So there are lots of people on the planet that think that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had children but they didn't. Isaiah 53 says, "He should be cut off from the land of the living and who will declare his generation?" He was killed, Psalm 110, "with the dew of the youth upon him." He was killed as a young man and Isaiah 53 says before he could have kids; before he could be married and have children.

Jesus leaves and then what? Who carries on the name of Jesus? Well, the end of the chapter, the end of the book, chapter 28:20 says you and I do.

Then there are certain assumptions that Matthew comes with. Matthew comes with the assumption that you know your Old Testament, the book of the beginnings of Jesus Christ **the son of David**, The son of David? Why should I care? Seven brothers, and he was the least desirable, the least attractive of all of them. He's out watching sheep. He stinks horribly and Samuel comes to anoint a king and Samuel is so sure it's not him that he's actually kind of shocked and says, "Lord, are you sure?" And God says, "You look like a man looks, Samuel." But God doesn't look that way. You make an adjustment based on the cover of the book but God looks at the heart.

Think about this: David has been king for seven years now. He has been ruling in Hebron. He has been ruling primarily over one of the tribes of Israel: Judah. He is 30 years old when he becomes king. David is now 37 years old and it is time for him to capture Jerusalem and the Jebusites have control of Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 5 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except you take away the blind and the lame, you won't come in here, Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever gets up to the gutter, and smites the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are

hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

Think that through. This is 2 Samuel 5. Think that through. The king of the Jebusites in Jerusalem said, "We're going to put the blind and the lame by the gates and David won't be able to get in." Well, the result was that they actually did take the city and Joab became David's general in that episode. Meanwhile, David ends up hating the lame and the blind, the handicapped and the blind. You say, "Well, that's not nice." Yeah, I know. I didn't say it was nice, it's just part of the story and it happened this way.

Here's something that David loathed: he hated lame people and he hated blind people and the writer of 2 Samuel tells us the reason is because of this episode. He was taunted with them. David killed bears and lions with his bare hands, and crushed a pompous old windbag of a giant and then cut his head off and hung it on a wall somewhere and put his sword up on a wall. David was a man's man, so for David to be told, "You can't take the city. If you could send everybody, you've got to get through the lame and the blind to get to me," and David said, "I'll not only take the lame and the blind, I'll take your head too."

So David ended up hating lame people and blind people, but that's not the end of the story. Then David decides two chapters later that he wants to build a house for the Lord. A very admirable thing for him to do, but God shows up to him and says, "David, you've killed more people than anyone else I've had on the planet. You're a bloody man. You've crushed everyone I've put in your way. And David, you are so bloody I can't even let you build my house." But he makes a promise to David, "I will set up thy seed after thee which shall proceed out of thy bowels and I will establish his kingdom. He will build a house for my name," talking about who? Solomon.

He will build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father and he will be my son. If he commit iniquity I will chasten him with a rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men.

So we know it's not primarily Jesus because Jesus has never had to be whipped for his own sin. So there is a local fulfillment here in Solomon.

But my mercy shall not depart away from him as I took it from Saul whom I put away before thee and thy house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee. Thy throne shall be established forever.

So the Hebrew people are expecting—not because of their good conduct...the Hebrew people were expecting God to fulfill the promise to David, not because of David's good conduct, but because of God's good character.

Promises are fulfilled not because you're a good girl or I'm a good boy, promises are fulfilled because God is a great God. Not a single one of us deserves to enter heaven's gates other than in Christ, and since we're in Christ, we actually don't deserve hell.

*Romans 8:32-35 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is **God that justifieth**. Who is he that condemneth? It is **Christ that died**, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors **through him that loved us**.*

So you have a nation expecting a son of David to become a king. Why? Because God said so. In 1 Samuel: David and his best friend make a promise to each other. David and his friend Jonathan make a promise. Jonathan said, "David, when I'm gone, please don't kill all my children. Be kind to my children." And why should he be kind to his children? Because they were friends. And David said, "Because I love you, Jonathan, I will promise that I will take care of your offspring." It had nothing to do with the conduct of Jonathan's offspring. Zero.

But then, we're told of a man by the name of Mephibosheth. In 2 Samuel 9, we're finding out that David is going to be good to one of Jonathan's sons. Why? Because Jonathan was a good guy? No, because David made a covenant and David was a great friend. There is a Christ lesson there. There is a Christ lesson. David is a picture of Jesus there. Jesus doesn't die for us because we're super. He loves us and redeems us with his own blood because he loves his Father and made a promise and a covenant with his Father. The Son made the covenant with the Father and you and I are recipients of a covenant made between the Son and the Father. We've got no chips in this game, good neighbor. We had nothing to offer God. Jesus offered everything needed to God for us to get to God.

Mephibosheth, who even knows if he was even thought of. We're finding out that when Saul's whole household was killed, that the nurse taking care of Mephibosheth fled and dropped him and he was lame from then on. Now, wait a minute. There's something that David hates in his very soul in chapter 5: lame people. It's opposed to his character. He hates lame people. But because of a covenant, he takes a lame man into his house, that which is against his nature, because of a covenant that he made.

So, Mephibosheth "bowed himself," so you get the idea. Over in that town in Lodibar, David sends a messenger to go and get Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth shows up and says, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am? Then the king," that's David, "called to Ziba, Saul's servant," remember, Jonathan is Saul's son, that would have made Mephibosheth Saul's grandson. So he says to Ziba, Saul's servant, "I have given unto thy master's son," Saul's son, "all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. As for Mephibosheth, said the king," David, "he," the lame one, "shall eat at my table, as if he were one of the king's sons." Why? He hates lame people. This act of kindness has nothing to do with the condition of the sinner. It has nothing to do with the conduct of the sinner. It has everything to do with the covenant that David made. Oh, my, in your worst of days, it has nothing to do with how good you wish you were and your best of days, it has nothing to do with how good you think you are. It goes right on back to what did Christ do for me at Calvary.

*Matthew 9:27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of **David**, have mercy on us. And when he was come **into the house**,*

King David said, "I won't even sit in the same house with those men."

9:28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

Why? Because he's the son of David.

...Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straightly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

When there is something that is disgusting to the nature of God, God changes it in the man that has faith. You see Jesus, the son of David, he was better than David because he not only met in the same house with blind men, he left them seeing. So all that talk about God putting up with us who are opposed to his nature, guess what he does to sinful people? He sanctifies them and makes them less sinful than they were last week. He doesn't leave us in the mess we're sitting in. His name is Jesus and he saves his people from their sin.

*Matthew 12:22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, **blind**, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this **the son of David**?*

There is something about the son of David. He actually doesn't mind being around blind people.

12:23 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

You need to understand that the people in these accounts understand that Jesus is the descendent of King David, the one who restores lame people to his table.

*Matthew 15:21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, **thou Son of David**; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and, and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us." The disciples said, "Please make her shut up!" 24 But he answered and said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But Jesus answered and said "It is not proper to take the children's bread, and give it **to dogs**."*

She called him son of David, he called her a dog. Now, where do you think this story is going to go?

15:27 "And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs, eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

How do you know that, lady? Because I heard about your father David treating a lame man right and letting him who thought he was a dog eat from the master's table.

*Matthew 20:29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And, behold, two blind men, sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou **Son of David**.*

Now, why would these blind people think that the son of David cared about them? Because whoever the son of David is will live forever as the son of David and he has compassion on lame and blind people because he makes covenants and keeps his word.

*20:32 And Jesus stood still, And called them, and said, What would you like me to do?...34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. 21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass 6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, **Hosanna to the Son of David**.*

"Hosanna" is a word in the Hebrew, when it's used in the Old Testament, it's translated as "save us now."

Save us now, Son of David:** Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna, save us now, in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee ...12 And Jesus went **into the temple** of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. **And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple.

They don't meet David there but they meet his son there in the house of God. The lame and the blind that are disgusting to the soul of David, his son meets them in the house of God?

Matthew 28:18 Jesus came and spake unto [his disciples] saying, All [authority, all kingship, all reigning] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and [make disciples of all nations; make subjects of] all nations.

For 28 chapters, Matthew has been trying to get you to see that this is the son of David that rules everywhere and when he gets up from the dead, he says, "All ruling power is given to me in heaven and in earth so go and make disciples, make subjects, of the nations." Jesus has a right to rule and he's taking over the world. He's taking over the world.