

Then Darkness Turned to Dawning #1

December 17, 2023

Series Title: Then, Darkness Turned To Dawning!

Today's Message: The Genesis of Jesus Christ! Matthew 1:1-25

Ruth concluded on a high and hopeful note. For us as Christians the reading of the genealogy of David aroused our messianic senses for we know that the long expected messiah would come through the line of David. The story of Boaz as kinsman-redeemer provided us a shadow of our redeemer, Christ Jesus! As Boaz would redeem land and name, so our Lord Jesus came to reclaim the earth and to redeem a people for Himself—a people, chosen of God, but hopelessly captive to sin and death.

That genealogy in Ruth might lead us to believe that things were looking up for mankind. In one sense, there is hope. But with the subsequent generations things did not improve. Matthew 4:15-16 paints a bleak picture for the people of Israel at the time when Christ came on the scene. Concerning the people in the outer reaches of Israel life is described as “living in darkness,” and “in the shadow of death.” In fact, the whole of humanity was immersed in darkness, gross darkness, as Isaiah 60:2 says,

“For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.”

The only hope for humanity was tucked away in that verse in Isaiah: “But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.”

Indeed, the Christmas story, as we often refer to it, is one of hope as the Light of God breaks forth as the dawning of a divine day, when the Christ of God comes! The only one, who can meet the needs of sinful people, is born. And His birth is not ordinary and it is not common.

Matthew's origin story, or the *genesis* of Jesus Christ, as he phrases it in the Greek reveals both the humanity and the deity of Jesus Christ. And although time won't permit us to explore the fulness of this essential Christian doctrine, let us understand that God's Messiah must be fully man and fully God in one person, forever! (Maybe next week we will answer the question, “why does Christ Jesus have to be fully and God and fully man!”)

Matthew 1:1-17 tells us of His human origin (genesis) and 1:18-25 reveals His deity, God in flesh, living among us. In summary, His humanity had a beginning, but His deity is eternal, without beginning or end!

I. (1:1) The Genesis of Jesus Christ

A. NIV: “The record of the genealogy (generation, KJV) of Jesus Christ...”

1. Or, in the Greek, *biblos genesis iesous christos*, or, “the book of the genesis of Jesus Christ...”
 - a) The OT begins with the *genesis or generation* of the world;
 - b) The NT begins with genesis or generation of Him who made the world, who becomes flesh and dwells among us, becoming the Savior of His people through His life and death, and having accomplished the work of salvation and destruction of the works of the devil, is exalted by God to the highest place having been given the name above all names—Jesus Christ the Lord!
- (1) Yes, it is all there in promise form in Matthew 1!

- B. Jesus is His human name, the name of a man.
 - 1. And we know the meaning of that special name by way of the OT
 - a) Joshua (Yehoshua, or we hear it often as Yeshua)
 - (1) Yahweh is salvation
 - 2. And we know the meaning of the name as found in Matthew 1:21
 - a) "And He shall save His people from their sins!
 - 3. If Matthew stopped right there, we would conclude that this Jesus is a human being.
- C. Christ is His royal title
 - 1. Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *Messiah*
 - a) This word refers to the special anointing of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' humanity.
 - (1) When he entered history, He was both fully God and fully man
 - (a) Theologians call this the *hypostatic union*.
 - (2) When he entered history the "God-man" He was capable of suffering death yet equally capable of raising Himself out of death to prove His deity and to effectually redeem His people.
 - (a) See John 10:17-18; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Heb. 9:12
- D. His human lineage
 - 1. The son of David
 - a) David is the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz
 - b) It was to King David that God promised a "forever son who would sit on a forever throne, ruling over a forever kingdom." (2 Samuel 7)
 - (1) And, while there were many sons of David, there is only one to whom the promises to David would find their fulfillment, and that is, Jesus, who is both Lord and Christ by the will of God (Acts 2:36)!
 - (2) But, the fact that Jesus descended from David is key in understanding His human *genesis*! See Romans 1:3
 - 2. The son of Abraham
 - a) God had promised Abraham that through him the nations would be blessed. (Genesis 12:3)
 - (1) God had promised Abraham a seed (one offspring) who would fit the bill as the one who would be a blessing to the nations
 - 3. Consider then,
 - a) Son of David says, "Israel, here is your King!"
 - b) Son of Abraham says, "Nations, here is your hope!"
- II. (1:2-17) The genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:
 - A. The genealogy recorded by Matthew demonstrates how God shaped Israel's history to fulfill His promises both to Israel and the nations!
 - B. A summary and application of the genealogy of Matthew 1:2-17
 - 1. God is almighty in mercy
 - a) Read the list. He did not exclude sinners from the genealogy of Jesus
 - b) Even in judgment against sinful men included in the genealogy God acted favorable toward Israel in order to bring about Messiah
 - 2. God is almighty in promise keeping
 - a) Though God was often silent, in the fullness of time He brought forth the Seed of Abraham (for all peoples of the earth) and The Son of David (to

rule forever and ever), born of a virgin, at just the right time! (See Gal. 4:4)

- C. (1:16) A hidden jewel in the genealogy concerning the God and Father of the Jesus Christ
 - 1. "...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."
 - a) Jacob generated/ begat Joseph
 - b) But, Joseph is listed only as the husband of Mary, **not the generator of Jesus**. Joseph did not begat/ generate Jesus.
 - c) "Mary," it simply says, "of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."
 - (1) No earthly father is mentioned.
 - (2) That story of the *generation*, or *genesis* of Jesus is what follows in 1:18-25

III. (1:18-25) Matthew tells the story of the *genesis* and *birth* of Jesus Christ.

- A. First, notice the emphasis on the person of the Holy Spirit and His work in the *genesis* of Jesus.
 - 1. (1:18) "...but before they (Mary and Joseph) came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit."
 - 2. (1:20) In this verse the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph 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."
 - a) Notice that Joseph is a descendent of David. He will be Jesus' earthly father, but he is not the one from whom Jesus is generated.
- B. The work of the Spirit as the Source of generation of the human life of Jesus teaches us a great Gospel truth!
 - 1. He made Jesus a real person. He generated life in her womb.
 - a) Mary did nothing to cause this initiative, it was a work of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. And just like the Spirit's work to bring about the conception and life of Jesus in her was not brought about by her initiative and will, but by the Spirit's will,
 - a) So it is when someone is born again.
 - (1) The Spirit plants the imperishable seed of eternal life in whomsoever He wills!
 - (2) New life begins in us as the Spirit plants the life of Christ in us!
 - b) As one writer put it, "Every new birth is a virgin birth." And I would add, "produced by the Holy Spirit."
 - (1) Only the Spirit can produce eternal life in a human being!
- C. (1:21-23) How Matthew announces the Names of the one conceived in and born of Mary.
 - 1. The two names announced by the angel of the Lord by which we learn of the essential humanity and deity of the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - a) First, His essential humanity is understood by His name, Jesus.
 - (1) Jesus, we are told, means, "He shall save His people from their sins."
 - (a) He was given a human name, indicating His humanity.
 - (b) This person will be the Savior of His people.
 - (i) He will save by becoming both our representative in righteousness and in sacrifice.
 - (a) More on this next week.
 - (ii) He will save by becoming our High Priest and mediator.

- (a) In other words, He will stand on our behalf before God as our righteous representative and sacrifice for our sins.
 - (b) 1 Timothy 2:5: "There is only one God, and only one Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ."
 - (c) His name is Jesus, meaning, "God save"!
 - (i) **Jesus is the God who saves!**
 - (a) He is fully man and fully God!
 - b) (1:22-23) Second, His essential deity is announced by the name *Immanuel*.
 - (1) (1:22) Everything concerning His humanity and deity was announced by the Lord through the prophets
 - (a) Lord: the pre-existent, pre-incarnate Christ spoke through the prophets.
 - (i) 1 Peter 1:10-11 tells us that it was the Spirit of Christ speaking through the prophets concerning the the person and work of Christ, which we see unfold in Matthew 1:18-25
 - (2) (1:23) Immanuel.
 - (a) Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14, "The virgin shall be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel"-- which means, 'God with us.'
 - (i) This name is a miraculous name: God with us!
 - (ii) "They": *They* are those who Jesus came to save.
 - (a) If you know Him today, you know the miracle of *Immanuel*— God with us!
 - (b) And you treasure Him!
 - (i) Jesus, God save
 - (ii) Immanuel, God with us!
 - (iii) Do you know Him?
- D. (1:24-25) Jesus is born
 - 1. In the fullness of time Mary gives birth to a son and names Him Jesus!
 - 2. Salvation is a miracle work of God in the life of everyone who believes.
 - 3. This work of salvation, of new life, is a gift of God, which comes by faith.
 - a) Will you thank Him today for His divine work, which brought new birth and new life to you? Will you thank Him for working a *divine-genesis* in you?
 - b) Will you receive this miracle of God with us, God with you today?