

Introducing Jesus Christ – Part 2

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:17-25

As we continue the theme of introducing Jesus Christ, we go to the four Gospels and notice the unique way each one of them begins. Here is a basic outline of the general emphasis of each of the four Gospels:

- Matthew – The Messiah: The King of the Jews
- Mark – The Ministry of God’s Righteous Servant
- Luke – The Ministry of The Son of Man
- John – The Ministry of The Son of God

Now let’s look at the opening statements in the first chapters of Matthew and Mark. We will save Luke and John’s Gospel for the next message.

Matthew – The Messiah: The King of the Jews

“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

(Matthew 1:1)

The Pedigree of The King

In Matthew’s Gospel, a long genealogy is established first. It is necessary to establish the bloodline of a king of Israel. This is technically the genealogy of Christ through His adoptive father, Joseph. Mary’s genealogy is in Luke 3:23-38 (Note: Joseph is son-in-law to Heli in Luke 3:23). From the Jewish perspective that Matthew is presenting, we are able to see that Scripture must be fulfilled in order to establish Jesus’ right to be The Messiah. The promise comes through Abraham’s descendants (Genesis 12:1-3). From there, if Christ is going to be The King, He must descend through Jacob’s Son, Judah (Matthew 1:2 cp. Genesis 49:9-10), and then through David (Matthew 1:6 cp. II Samuel 7:4-17; Romans 1:1-4).

The Purity of The Savior

See Matthew 1:18-23. Jesus is not just a good man from proper bloodlines. He is born of a woman, but not from the seed of a man. God is literally His Father (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 9:6; Galatians 4:4-5 cp. Luke 1:26-35). If Joseph were the actual physical father, Jesus would have inherited a sinful nature (Romans 5:12 cp. I Corinthians 15:22 – “in Christ” qualifies who is intended in the second “all.”). So, Jesus must not only have a proper pedigree. He must also have a perfect, sinless nature (II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:25-26).

The Prophecies Fulfilled

As the genealogy was important to connect Jesus with the narrative of the Old Testament Scriptures, so there is a vast amount of promises / prophecies in Scripture that create a wonderful link of fulfillment, verifying that Jesus truly is The Christ, The Messiah, The Chosen One, The Holy One. Matthew sets the stage in the first chapter to show what will be a long line of Scriptures fulfilled (Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 7:14 cp. Matthew 2:5-6,14-15,16-18,19-23, etc.).

Mark – The Ministry of God’s Righteous Servant

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

(Mark 1:1)

Mark wrote a shorter gospel. He is known for getting right to the point. It is thought that he wrote with the Roman mindset in view. His description of Jesus’ ministry is full of action. As Matthew used the word “fulfilled” a lot (16 times), Mark uses the word “straightway / forthwith / immediately” (39 times). Before Mark starts his narrative, he “straightway / forthwith / immediately” clarifies his purpose: the story of Jesus is **gospel** – good news! This is the most important news. God has brought us into a new era. This message is of world-wide and eternal importance. It is written with purpose and it should be read with purpose – i.e., it is to be believed and obeyed. Truth requires action (Mark 10:45; 16:15 cp. John 3:20-21; 20:21).

Attention is still given to the authority of this gospel, as revealed by the Old Testament Scriptures (Mark 1:2-3; 7:6; 9:13; 13:4; 14:21,49; 15:28). God planned a special man to be the official announcer (herald / forerunner) of the Messiah. Therefore, the ministry of John the Baptist is also foretold in the Scriptures (**Mark 1:2-8** cp. Malachi 2:1; Isaiah 40:3). Mark quickly gets to the beginning of Christ’s ministry (**Mark 1:9-45**) without the details of Christ’s birth and early years.

What are we learning about introducing Jesus Christ?

- It takes many words and titles to try to explain the wonderful complexity of who He is – i.e., Prophet, Priest and King (Revelation 1:5-6).
- It took many years and many prophecies to prepare a way to verify that Jesus is the Christ, The King of the Jews, The Son of God (Matthew 1:1-25). This not some cleverly devised conspiracy invented by men (I Peter 1:10-12,23-25; II Peter 1:16-21).
- It took Jesus a lifetime of righteous and loving service to fulfill His calling. Yet that righteous, loving life was laid down as a sacrifice and a substitute for our sinful selves. He was treated as a sinner and paid the price for sin that He did not commit (Mark 10:45).
- Consider Luke 24:44-48