**Hope Has Come – I Usually Skip That**

**Ancestry – websites and DNA tests are fun! Who is my family?**

**I found out I am 26% Jewish - more important during Jesus’ time.**

**The Gospels tell the life of Jesus through different lenses. This year, Matthew - most quoted and circulated gospel by early church fathers**

**A well-educated former tax collector, some think Matt was the “recorder” of the disciples who took notes of Jesus’ teaching.**

**It has been said that when Matthew followed Jesus, he left everything behind – except his pen and paper.**

**The greatest and most important birthday ever told. Are you ready…**

**Matt 1:1 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.**

**That is our text for today. You might be thinking, what???**

**To understand this – let’s get into their mind. Background Check:**

**For 2000 yrs, the Jewish people awaited the promised Messiah, a savior to bring peace - a political leader. An earthly king. Why?**

* **A united Israel under one king (100 yrs)**

**- Then, civil war divided Israel into two areas (North & South)**

* **Assyria conquered/divided northern Israel (lasting only 200 yrs)**
* **Babylon conquered and took captive southern Judea (lasting 350)**

**- The Temple is destroyed, the ark is taken – never seen again.**

* **Persians conquered Babylon and allowed Israel to return - but**

**- Under Persian rule – w/ prophets, Jerusalem & Temple rebuilt**

* **Greece (Alexander) conquered the Persians (Macedonian Empire)**

**- Under Greek rule - no prophets. Began 300 yrs of silence.**

**- When Alexander died – the kingdom was divided up.**

**- Jerusalem was always in the middle of power struggles.**

* **Hasmonean Dynasty’s – semi-independent Jewish rulers (130 yrs)**

**- The Maccabean revolt against their Greek rulers. (Messiah?)**

**- Declared independence and fought for 130 yrs. (Kings)**

**- Had independence 40 yrs but is short-lived - conquered again**

**- Gruesome torture and oppression followed.**

**\*\* The Maccabean revolt became a national holiday - Festival of light- Hanukkah. Celebrates that in the silence, God is w/ us.**

* **Rome conquers the known Mediterranean world**

**- Takes control of Jerusalem and the regions around it.**

**- Just 60 years before Jesus' birth.**

**- Crucifixion is a normal part of intimidation and judgment.**

**Rome delegated local rulers. Jerusalem was led by a wealthy Jewish family who lived like Romans. The Herod dynasty.**

* **Israel was struggling with religious identity, taxes, & oppression.**

**For 900 years, they had been looking for a King to lead them to unity, national independence, and prominence again - another King David - a Messiah. They were looking for a military king.**

**\*\*\* This was the mindset, their history, and their prayers.**

**But God knew our biggest need was not an earthly king!**

**Matthew 1:1 (begins with) The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ…**

**Why a genealogy? Writing to a Jewish audience - very important.**

**Lots of OT references. Points to Jesus as the promised Messiah.**

**Notice the first verses of each Gospel:**

**Mark wrote for the Romans**

**Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

**The good news of Jesus the Messiah – God in the flesh. In direct opposition to Rome’s emperor worship – Jesus is God.**

**Luke wrote for the Greeks**

**Luke 1:1** **Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.**

**Directed to Greek intellects, Luke says the story you are about to hear has been extensively researched and true.**

**John wrote for the church**

**John 1:1** **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

**Speaking to the church – Jesus is God, the eternal creator in the flesh. Come to us and revealed to us.**

**Matthew wrote for the Jews**

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

**Matt is written to convince Jewish people that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Sites 42 generations divided into 3 sections – Abraham to David. David to the Exile. The Exile to Jesus.**

**It does not include every person – Jewish genealogies focused on highlighted characters. The genealogy says – Jesus is not a mythical figure – he was born, and he is real! We don’t just follow teachings – we follow a living person!**

**\*\* Luke also has a genealogy, (after the Christmas story – Luke 3). It is vastly different, with only a few names similar. Some contest this as proof of the Bible’s inaccuracy. Possible reasons for this:**

**- Eusebius (300 AD) suggests Luke follows the legal lineage while Matthew follows the biological.**

**- Others suggest Luke gives a genealogy that follows Jesus' bloodline in Mary – and Matthew follows Joseph’s legal family.**

**The Genes Preach! They are important and contain the gospel!**

**1. Jesus' legal right to the throne as Messiah is established**

**Matt gives 2 extremely important Jewish requirements for the Messiah.**

**\*\* Jesus is a legal member of the family of Abraham**

**The promise of Abe - the nations will be blessed through you.**

**9X - Gen 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, Ps 72:17, Acts 3:25, Gal 3:8,14.**

**This fulfills God’s promise to Abraham. Jesus indeed came for people from every tribe, tongue, and nation!**

**\*\* Jesus is of the legal and royal bloodline of King David**

**The Messiah will sit on the throne of David FOREVER**

**Repeated often - 1 Sam 7:12-13, 1 Chron 17:12, 22:10, 1 Kings 9:5, Ps 89, Is 9:7, Jer 33:17, Luke 1:32-33, Acts 2:30, 2 Pet 1:11.**

**Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.**

**In the genealogy, Matt is saying this is that! He is here! Jesus is God in the flesh – the eternal king!**

**The angel Gabrial speaking to Mary about her pregnancy says - Luke 1:32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”**

**- Matt speaks of Joseph's relation to Solomon (legal decent – but Solomon was told he would never have a decedent as king)**

**- Luke gives the line of Mary as from Nathan (David's youngest son)**

**\*\* Meaning – Jesus' virgin birth from Mary and the adoption from Joseph was the only way in which both prophecies could be fulfilled that a legal blood descendent would sit on the throne.**

**Regardless of what he did, if he was not from the royal family of David and the chosen family of Abraham, he could never be the Messiah. It is prophetically required. Jesus fulfilled both.**

**2. God is faithful to do what he promised (the faithfulness of God)**

**Promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and the prophets (including Isaiah and Daniel). God keeps his word!**

**Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.**

**Psalm 36:5 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.**

**Lamentations 3:22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.**

**2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, he remains faithful - for he cannot deny himself.**

**The genealogies preach that what God has said - he will do. What he has commanded is true - his promises are guaranteed.**

**3. God, in His timing, is always perfect**

**His first coming was prophesied / promised – and it happened.**

**2000 years after Abraham was promised – but right on time.**

**Romans 5:6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.**

**God knew the very moment and when He wanted it to take place.**

**1 Peter 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times (of their life) for the sake of you. (Jesus was before the foundation of the world - born to die for our salvation.)**

**Why then, why not now, why not earlier, why that day, that moment? Thanks to Alexander the great - roads, language barriers, government, society structure… the time was finally right.**

**As sure as he came, we were promised he would return. Do not lose heart; God always keeps his word.**

**4. God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines**

**I have used this point in other sermons – it is so true!**

**That genealogy tells the stories of God’s perfect plan in those who led to the Messiah - working all things (good and bad) for his perfect will.**

**The immoral kings and people of the genealogy: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Great kings and twisted leaders. Half of the ones listed were evil.**

**Their mention would have tainted another's story, but in reality, it speaks of Jesus humility and sovereignty.**

**5. Jesus, the Messiah, comes with grace and mercy.**

**Jesus, the Savior, has come to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19:10)**

**The unusual presence of 4 women (women not usually in genealogies)**

**Tamar (prostitute) - Rahab (prostitute) / Ruth (a homeless Moabite immigrant) / The wife of Uriah (Bathsheba, a Hittite – David’s mistress).**

**They demonstrate that Jesus identifies with sinners and outcasts in His genealogy, even as He will in His birth, baptism, life, and death on the cross between two thieves.**

**Writing of his own calling from Jesus, Matthew writes - Matt 9:9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.**

**10 And as Jesus reclined at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (Matthew was one of them) 12 But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ (temple rituals) For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”**

**Jesus is a merciful king in every status of life. The wealthy and influential, the poor and the homeless, the harlot and adulterer. The victim and the victimizer. The used and the user. To the Jew and the Gentile. No matter who you are – His grace is sufficient!**

**Romans 5:6 For while we were still weak, (powerless) at the right time (His timing is perfect) Christ died for the ungodly. (wicked) 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, (detestable/depraved) Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. (under judgement) 10 For if while we were enemies (haters of God) we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.**

**We were weak, powerless, wicked, ungodly detestable, deprived, sinners, haters, and hostile enemies of God under judgment – yet in all this… Christ died for us. Shed his innocent blood!**

**Jesus, though without sin - meets us in our sin to save us from our sin. He saves us from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and one day from the presence of sin.**

**6. Faith is not inherited**

**We see in this genealogy those who served the Lord faithfully and their children who did not.**

**It has been said, “God has no grandchildren” – only Children.**

**Being a child of God does not ensure your children will be. Having parents that are Christians does not mean you are.**

**(John’s Christmas Chap) John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, (born again) not of blood (family heritage – no one is born a Christian), nor of the will of the flesh (human decision – you don’t just decide I’m a Christian), nor of the will of man (the plans of another – by marriage or another's decision), but of God. (It is by the will of God – who draws you and your responding by grace)**

**Your family, spouse, parents, and friends can’t vouch for you.**

**We will all stand before God with one merit – Is Jesus Lord?**

**Parents: (1) Be diligent to raise our children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (2) Do not lose heart when your children stray (Manasseh eventually repented)**

**Those often-skipped verses in Matthew – tell us that Jesus can use anyone - and that he came to save sinners like you and me.**

**Do you know and have you bowed the knee to…?**

**Matt 1:1 - “Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”**