

**PREFACE**

How do we know—not by faith, but empirically—that Jesus of Nazareth was and is the promised Messiah? For Jew and Gentile alike, the OT gives us a road map for His genealogy—a specific list of ancestral checkpoints or credentials that He must clear. William Varner summarizes them for us:

In Genesis 3:15, we are told simply that the deliverer will come from mankind (the seed of the woman). In Genesis 9:26, another characteristic is mentioned: He will be a descendant of Shem, one of the three sons of Noah. Years later, God again narrowed His genealogy by saying that among the descendants of Shem, Abraham would be the progenitor of Him in whom all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). That messianic line was further narrowed to one of the two sons of Abraham, namely Isaac (Gen 21:12). The messianic line was again narrowed to one of the two sons of Isaac, namely Jacob (Gen 25:23). Of Jacob's twelve sons, Judah was chosen as the one through whom the Messiah would come (2 Sam. 7:12-16). Then the genealogy was narrowed once more when a specific town within Judah, Bethlehem, was chosen as the site of Messiah's birth (Mic. 5:2)[[which we will look at later in this session](#)].

Jews, of course, reject Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah; they still look for His appearing. Varner goes on to state boldly, however, that that door is now shut: it is now impossible for anyone to prove that He *is* the Messiah, for it would now be impossible to verify his lineage.

In AD 70 Romans destroyed Jerusalem, the temple, and all its archives. The means by which someone in the future could verify his genealogy according to the credentials found in the OT no longer exist. But these records existed when Jesus of Nazareth was on earth—and He met every one of the criteria.

This morning we will quickly wrap up our survey of the Messiah's genealogy with two more individuals in the line from which the Christ sprang before we begin looking at the Christ's actual life—all from the OT.

**DAVID**

In this session we are going to touch lightly on the Davidic connection for Messiah; later we will be more thorough with that when we consider Christ as King, assuming and finalizing the Davidic throne of Judah. Right now we just want to establish that Messiah would be in the line of David. Please turn to the book of Ruth, and one of my favorite passages in Scripture.

We have pointed out before that God's grace was not invented for the NT. Like Christ Himself, God's grace permeates the entirety of His word from beginning to end. In Chapter Four of Ruth, as the story draws to a close, we see God's grace at work again.

Ruth was a Moabitess, originally married to the son of a Jew from Bethlehem. When famine struck, Elimelech and his wife Naomi emigrated to Moab, where they raised two sons, who then married Moabite women—one being Ruth.

After all the men in the family died, the three women started out on a journey back to Bethlehem. Only Ruth remained faithful to her mother-in-law, and once they were back in Judah, a kinsman redeemer, Boaz, falls in love with Ruth and marries her.

**Read Ruth 4:13-15.**

**Read Ruth 4:18-22.**

There is grace. God acknowledges the character and devotion of Ruth for her mother-in-law, and gives her a righteous second husband who just happens to be in the line that would produce the greatest king of Israel. Ruth the Moabitess becomes the great-grandmother of King David, and included in the Messianic line.

And if we want to see an even more profound demonstration of God's grace, we find it in the genealogy that opens the gospel of Matthew. Verses 5 and 6 reiterate the closing of Ruth's story—but for one fascinating addition.

**Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab...**

That is, Rahab the prostitute of Jericho, who sided with Israel against her own people and gave aid and comfort to the Jewish spies. In the line of King David, and hence the line of Christ, we have Moabitess and a Canaanite prostitute from Jericho. But then, isn't that why Jesus came?

**Read Matthew 1:21.**

## **ZERUBBABEL**

Let's look at just one more individual in the line from the first woman to the Messiah.

We learned in our study of the return of the exiles in Ezra-Nehemiah that in the exiles in Babylon there was, as we are told in Ezra 1:8, one remaining "prince of Judah"—Sheshbazzar, grandson of the last Davidic king. He, along with Jeshua the priest, led the group back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

In the next chapter we learn that he was also called Zerubbabel—Sheshbazzar probably being the Persian rendering of his name, or a different name all together.

In the first chapter of Haggai we learn the name of his father.

**Read Haggai 1:1.**

Now let's return to the genealogy in Matthew 1.

**Read Matthew 1:12, 16.**

Both of these names—David and Zerubbabel—confirm the kingly line of Jesus of Nazareth. If He really was the promised Messiah, He *had* to be—not just *a* king, but *a* king in the Davidic line of the tribe of Judah.

## THE MESSIAH'S BIRTH

We now move into the next phase in our study—from tracing the Messiah's lineage to His physical life, beginning, oddly enough, with His birth.

### *The Location*

The prophet Micah details, in Chapter Five of his work, not just *where* the Messiah would be born, but he includes many details about his life and ministry. Because of this we will be returning to Micah 5 at a later date; for now I want to focus on v2, which is chock full of information.

#### **Read Micah 5:2.**

In the Hebrew text, v1 closes the previous chapter, and our v2 is their v1. So our v1 closes the discussion of Chapter Four.

*“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
Too little to be among the clans of Judah,*

Ephrathah [[eph-raw'-thaw](#)] is the ancient name for this Bethlehem—one of several, and the distinction further associates the Messiah with King David.

Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. (1 Samuel 17:12a)

It was Joseph's connection to the Davidic line that made it possible (in a human sense) for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem. We see this in Luke 2.

#### **Read Luke 2:4.**

Note, too, the name Jesse; let's look at one more piece of evidence connecting the Messiah to the kingly line of David.

#### **Read Isaiah 11:1-2.**

[Back to Micah 5.](#)

*From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.*

God is the one speaking in this prophecy; the quotation marks are His. The NASB, NIV and ESV translate this “will go forth **for** Me,” while the KJVs translate it “**to** Me.” Both are valid and true, but each says something different:

**for** Me = The Messiah is God on earth, working, as it were, in the Father's stead. He will be the face of God, the hands of God.

**to** Me = Everything the Messiah says and does will point to God, bringing Him glory. As Albert Barnes puts it, in the voice of God, “to do My Will, to My praise and glory, to reconcile the world unto Me.”

And this “One” will rule; being from the Davidic line, He will be not just rabbi/teacher, not just a prophet, but king. In v4, now in Micah's voice, he says that this rule will extend “to the ends of the earth.” [But back to v2.](#)

## *The Nature of His Birth*

*His goings forth are from long ago,  
From the days of eternity."*

Thomas McComiskey explains that the Hebrew translated "goings forth" or "origins" means "to conduct one's activities." But the whole point of these last two lines (in Micah 5) is to emphasize the *deity* of Messiah. This was not to be someone who grows into the position from obscurity—a normal human individual who *becomes* the Messiah. No, He would be ancient. As Jesus would tell the incredulous Jewish leaders, "Before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8:58)

The Messiah's activities are from eternity, before time itself.

*JFB*: Messiah's generation as man coming forth unto God to do His will on earth is from Bethlehem; but as Son of God, His goings forth are from everlasting.

The words used here indicate that the individual being described ("One") will be a supernatural figure. This is confirmed in the familiar prophecy of Isaiah 9.

### **Read Isaiah 9:6.**

#### *Mighty God*

The Hebrew "el" can be used generically: "god." But in *his* writings, Isaiah only uses "el" to refer to *the* God of Israel, and that is what he uses to describe this child "born to us": Mighty God—*the* God.

**Sidebar**: The combination in v6 of "to us" (as in "a child...born to us, a son... given to us") with "God" is equivalent to "Immanuel".

## *The Virgin Birth*

The Son of God/the Messiah did not have to be born of a virgin to validate His supernatural status. In fact, as anyone who frequents science fiction can attest, there are any number of ways He might have entered the world that would have validated it more demonstrably. But the Lord God had His reasons for Jesus to be born "naturally," from the womb of a woman.

### **Read Matthew 1:22-23.**

We are now confronted with a familiar passage we have all known since childhood days in Sunday School, that is not quite as cut-and-dried as we think. And once more I would love nothing more than to disgorge all the minutia behind the relationship of Matthew 1:23 with Isaiah 7:14. But I would rather you remain awake until the end of this session. Permit me to briefly mention the differences between the two passages—the one quoting, the other being quoted.

There is no consensus, but the preponderance of modern scholarship leads to the conclusion that what we have here is another instance of "now—not yet." Like some other "messianic prophecies" [[Genesis 9:27](#), [Genesis 12:7](#)], Isaiah 7 speaks of a situation contemporary to the prophet, as well as a prophecy well into the future beyond his time.

[Turn to Isaiah 7:14.](#)

Here are the key elements regarding this quoted prophecy by Isaiah—and it will be helpful if you refer to the second handout page:

### Virgin

- The original Hebrew for “virgin” in Isaiah 7 is *almah*, which only marginally might refer to a virgin; it really just means a young woman of marriageable age.
- But in the Septuagint [LXX]—the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew OT—they chose to use the Greek *parthenos* to translate the Hebrew *almah*. *Parthenos* is a more specific term for a maiden, or virgin. *So Isaiah wrote about just a young woman, while Matthew got his quotation from the Septuagint.*

### Immanuel

- The word/name Immanuel can mean “God with us” or “God is with us”—that is, it can mean that God is in our midst, or it can just as well mean that God is on our side, or looking out for us.
- If you compare the complete text of Isaiah Chapter Seven with Chapter Eight you can see similarities that point to the opinion of some that in the immediate context (i.e., the “Now”) Isaiah may be referring in 7:14 to one of his own sons [the one with an unpronounceable name]. Other commentators are of the opinion that Immanuel in Isaiah 7 refers to a royal son of Ahaz.

There are other things going on in these passages, but that is the nub of it for our purposes. With all that being true, the best way to reconcile the differences is that this is, once again, a “Now—not yet” prophecy. Whether in his or the royal family, Isaiah wrote of a contemporary prophecy—something that would occur within the next nine months. But he also wrote of the day when a literal maiden would bear a son who would be God Himself.

### CONCLUSION

When we put all the pieces together, we see how the Lord God, writing through the Holy Spirit into the pen of man, traced the lineage of the Christ from the very first human couple, down through the generations, to be born from the house of David, simply—and in a very human, earthy process—in a stable in Bethlehem.

## Prophecy

## Christ in the OT

## Fulfillment or Reference

### Ruth 4:13-15

13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. And the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel.

15 "May he also be to you a restorer of life and a sustainer of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him."

### Ruth 4:18-22

18 Now these are the generations of Perez: to Perez was born Hezron,

19 and to Hezron was born Ram, and to Ram, Amminadab,

20 and to Amminadab was born Nahshon, and to Nahshon, Salmon,

21 and to Salmon was born Boaz, and to Boaz, Obed, 22 and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse, David.

### Isaiah 11:1-2

1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him,  
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The spirit of counsel and strength,  
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

### Ezra 1:8

...and Cyrus, king of Persia, had them brought out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.

### Haggai 1:1

In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

### *Through David & Zerubbabel*

*Sheshbazzar = Zerubbabel*

### Matthew 1:5-6

5 Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse.

6 Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah.

### Matthew 1:12, 16

12 After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel...

16 Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

**Prophecy**

**Christ in the OT**

**Fulfillment or Reference**

**Micah 5:22**

“But as for you, **Bethlehem Ephrathah**,  
Too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.  
His goings forth are from long ago,  
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And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.  
2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him,  
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The spirit of counsel and strength,  
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

**Isaiah 9:6**

For a child will be born **to us**, a son will be given **to us**;  
And the government will rest on His shoulders;  
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty **God**,  
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

**Isaiah 7:14-16**

14 “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Be-  
hold, a **virgin** will be with child and bear a son, and she  
will call His name **Immanuel**.  
15 He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows  
enough to refuse evil and choose good.  
16 For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and  
choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be  
forsaken.”

*Messiah’s Birth*

**Luke 2:44**

Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Naza-  
reth, to Judea, to **the city of David which is called Beth-  
lehem**, because he was of the house and family of David,

**Matthew 1:22-23**

22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by  
the Lord through the prophet:  
23 “Behold, the **virgin** shall be with child and shall bear  
a son, and they shall call His name **Immanuel**,” which  
translated means, “God with us.”

**Isaiah 8:3-4, 8**

3 So I approached the prophetess, and she conceived and  
gave birth to a son. Then the Lord said to me, “Name  
him **Maher-shalal-hash-baz**;  
4 for before the boy knows how to cry out ‘My father’  
or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of  
Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria.”  
8 “Then it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and  
pass through,  
It will reach even to the neck;  
And the spread of its wings will fill the breadth of your  
land, O **Immanuel**.”

*Greek: parthenos  
= a maiden (i.e.,  
virgin; Matthew’s  
source: not original  
Hebrew, but LXX)*

*Hebrew: almah = a  
young woman of  
marriageable age*

*Immanuel can be translated  
“God with us,” or “God is  
with us”*