



Who is Jesus?

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

2 Samuel 7:12-16 Ephesians 2:11-20 Matthew 1:1

December 2, 2018

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Advent begins today!

The word “**Advent**” is a Latin word (*adventus*) that means “coming, approach, or arrival of a King;” in Church usage it means “**the coming of the King, our Savior.**” **Advent** is one of the most special times of the Church Year as we prepare for the fast approaching Christmas season.

The way we are going to prepare for Christmas this year is to look at the **Gospel of Matthew** and how he teaches us about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem¹. You may have noticed that our Gospel lesson for today was **ONLY ONE VERSE** --- that’s because the very first verse of the Gospel of Matthew is loaded with **THREE TITLES** of the Savior that sets the stage for understanding *Who He is*; three titles to help us understand Who was born in Bethlehem for us. Here is that verse:

This is the genealogy of Jesus: the **Christ**, the **Son of David**, the **Son of Abraham.**
Matthew 1:1

THE CHRIST

The word “Christ” means *anointed*, the *chosen* one. it is the same meaning as the Old Testament word “Messiah”. **To say that Jesus is the Christ is the same thing as saying that Jesus is the Messiah.**

In the Old Testament, God's people were eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come. The Messiah was promised to bring **judgment** on God's enemies and **salvation** to God's people. The Messiah would signal a New Era of

¹ Please spend some time this Advent Season reading through Matthew 1; its only 25 verses. As you read and re-read it, pick out the key themes that Matthew is teaching us about the birth of Christ!

Salvation for God's people. And Jesus brings that New Era through His “arrival” – *His advent* – into the world. Today we call this “New Era” the “New Testament” times.

Matthew begins by identifying Jesus as God's *anointed one*, the “chosen one”, to be our Savior. God sent Him into the world to rescue us from sin and reconcile us to the Father. He would do that by living a **perfect and holy life**, and by **dying on a cross** in our place. **His life, and death, was for us and our salvation.** God did not send the Messiah into the world to simply assist us in saving ourselves; nor did God send the Christ to advise us how to live a “successful” life. **God sent the Messiah, the Christ, into the world to be our Savior from sin, guilt and death.** He does what we could not do; only the Messiah could save us from our sins.

So Matthew begins His Gospel, and we begin this Advent season, with the proper focus: Jesus is identified as the Christ: the *anointed one*, the chosen one, the promised *Messiah* who ushers in The New Era of Salvation!

The New Testament times have begun!

THE SON OF DAVID

Matthew also teaches us that Jesus is the “*Son of David*”. King David was the greatest King of Israel in the Old Testament times. **God promised David that He would have a Son who would be a great King, and have an eternal Kingdom.** God would treat this promised King as His own Son, and He would be His Father.

This is the **genealogy** of Jesus:
the **Christ**,
the **Son of David**,
the **Son of Abraham**.
Matthew 1:1

Solomon was certainly a great King of Israel, and a “son of David”. God blessed him in many ways, even allowing him to build the magnificent Temple in Jerusalem. **But Solomon was not the “Son” of David that God had promised.**

JESUS IS!

Matthew identifies Jesus as the promised Son of David!

Jesus is the One who fulfills the Old Testament promises! He is the One whom all the Messianic prophecies pointed to! He is the One who is the King of all kings and rules over the eternal Kingdom of God. Jesus is the Son of God, Who obeys His Father in Heaven! Jesus is the promised *Son of David* who fulfills God's promises!

The royal Son of David who has an eternal Kingdom has made sure that you are a part of that Kingdom. He has worked in your life to bring the Gospel to you. The Holy Spirit has opened your heart through the Gospel so that you know and believe that Jesus is the **Christ**, the **Son of David**. Jesus the Royal King uses His mighty power to set you free from sin and bring you into His Kingdom; He uses his mighty, divine omnipotent power to make everything work for good in your life, and Jesus the royal King promises that you will live forever in His Kingdom of Heaven --- *a Kingdom that will never end*.

Even now, as you live your life on earth, you live in the Kingdom of God. You learn **God's ways** and **His values**, and you shape your life around them. Our daily Christian life is lived in the Kingdom of God!

Matthew begins His Gospel by connecting Jesus to all the promises given to King David; that Jesus is the Son of David who will be a King like David, but greater, and He will have an eternal Kingdom!

THE SON OF ABRAHAM

Finally, Matthew does yet another fascinating thing in the first verse of His Gospel. Matthew identifies Jesus as the *Son of Abraham*! Abraham is considered the *Father of the Jews*; but the promises God gave to Him were for **all the people of the earth**!

I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” Genesis 12:3

The One who will bless all the peoples of the earth is Abraham's descendent: Jesus, born in Bethlehem. **Jesus blesses all the people of the earth through His work of salvation for us**. When Jesus died, He did not just die for the Jewish people --- but every nation, tribe, people, and language! Jesus is the Savior of us all!

That means that you are not excluded. Christ died for you! Your sins are forgiven! Whatever guilt you may be struggling with ends at the cross. God sent the Messiah into the world for you. If you are feeling crushed in guilt, if you are troubled by past sins; if remorse fills your mind, then listen and believe this Good News:

**Your sins are forgiven
because of the death and resurrection
of the Christ, the Son of David,
the Son of Abraham:
JESUS HIMSELF!**

Jesus, who summarizes *Israel's history* and who fulfills *Israel's Scriptures* and who embodies *Israel's hope* for an end-time deliverance through One who is "Christ" and royal "Son of David" has also come *for the salvation of the Gentiles!*

Matthew, Dr. J. A. Gibbs, Concordia Commentary, commenting on the significance of "Son of Abraham" in Matthew 1:1

Since God sent the Messiah for all people, it also means that your neighbor is included as well. The people in our lives need Jesus as much as we do. According to the statistics, there are plenty of people in your life who need to hear that God send the **Christ**, the **Son of David**, the **Son of Abraham** for them. There are people in your life who need to hear about forgiveness of sins and peace with God, because they too are crushed in guilt, troubled by past sins, and are full of remorse. During this Advent season, reach out to them, invite them to come and hear about the Savior; tell them what Jesus has done for them through His life, death and resurrection!

Matthew begins His Gospel by identifying Jesus as the Christ, the *Son of David*, the *Son of Abraham*; the New Era of Salvation is here; and it is **FOR ALL PEOPLE --- Jews and Gentiles alike!**

Today as we begin this Advent season, may you take time to properly prepare for the fast approaching Christmas season. Perhaps you can memorize the first verse of Matthew and review what it means:

**This is the genealogy of Jesus:
the Christ, the *Son of David*, the *Son of Abraham*.**

Amen!