

Jesus Then and Now

Jesus Son of Abraham Isaac and Jacob

By Rev. P. Michael Williamson November 29th 2009

Introduction: Jesus Then and Now is a sermon series through Advent, Epiphany and then again in Lent. We will be exploring the prophetic words that are declared in OT about the coming Messiah and how they are fulfilled in the Life of Jesus Christ.

Today we will look at Jesus Son of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Matthews often stated "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophets..." It occurs 10 times in the gospel with 5 in the 1st 4 chapters. Matthew has 61 quotes from 25 OT books twice as many as any of the other gospels.

Are you interested in genealogy? The older we get the more interested we become. *(Show family tree in frame or on the screen).*

Matthew 1 shows 42 generations of OT History from Abraham to Jesus

ABRAHAM TO DAVID	14 GENERATIONS
DAVID TO EXILE	14 GENERATIONS
EXILE TO JESUS	14 GENERATIONS

Matthew traces Jesus line through Joseph
Luke traces Jesus line through Mary

The patriarchs of Israel are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

1. Abraham Father of the Faithful

Abraham is the 1st Patriarch of the Israelite people. He is the first that we can clearly place in history, about 4000 yrs ago. Abraham means "My (Divine) father is exalted."

Have you ever moved? *(show post office moving card)*

Abraham had no forwarding address

Did he know where he was going...? Sort of...

Abraham left Haran a permanent residence to become an alien in a foreign land dwelling in tents.

He had a sizeable family group perhaps 500. In ch 14 he musters 318 fighting men to rescue his nephew Lot who had been captured. Abraham leaves his father's home behind; they knew they would never return. The only constant Abraham and his family would know would be the God who had called him. But would that be enough? When they arrived in Canaan every time they stopped Abraham built an altar to worship God.

Abraham's call and promises from God are clearly linked. The key is that Abraham heard God's call and responded.

God had a clear purpose for Abraham, and God made two promises to further his agenda.

I. National Promise

This is how the scriptures put it: The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. ***"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;*** I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; That is a pretty amazing promise, but that is not all.

II. International Promise

Through Abraham all the people of the earth will be blessed.

But what was standing in the way of God's promises to Abraham? Eliezer of Damascus! Who! God promised Abraham an heir of his own.

Genesis 15:6 "Abram believed the Lord and he credited it to him as righteousness."

What do God's promises demand of Abraham?

FAITH, TRUST & OBEDIENCE

Through all this Abraham became God's friend. It took God 25 yrs to fulfill his promises to Abraham with a few diversions along the way but in the end God fulfilled his promise to Abraham in his life time through the birth of Isaac. The wider promise of nationhood would take a long time. The international promise of a blessing to the world would have to wait for at least 42 generations.

2. Jesus Fulfills Prophecy

I. Jesus son of Abraham

Matthew traces Jesus back through the OT figures of David and Abraham. This point is equally important to us and to Jewish readers which was Matthews primary audience. If Jesus was to be established as a significant contributor to the faith His heritage was essential. He could not just be anyone's son. He had to have a heritage that included David, (more about him next week) and the Messiah had to ultimately be traced back to the Father of the faith, Abraham.

"It seems that Matthew was especially concerned to show his readers how Jesus Christ was exactly the person towards whom the Old Testament was pointing." NIV Bible Commentary Alister McGrath p.233

In Both Mary's song and Zachariah's song (John the Baptists dad) they both make reference to Abraham as being the forefather of the faith and that the Messiah would be his descendant.

II. Jesus the Christ

Christ is not some kind of surname for Jesus, like John Smith, it is a divine title meaning "anointed one" it is the Greek translation of the word Messiah.

Jesus comes to earth as the promised Messiah the one who will be called Immanuel "God with us". Jesus is identified as the Son of David in Matthew 1:1 which has a strong Messianic connection and the title of Christ in 1:17. This is part of his earthly and divine heritage, both are essential in establishing Jesus true identity. We will be talking more about Jesus' divine heritage in a few weeks when we look at the virgin birth.

3. Jesus rooted in History powerful to save

The Readers Digest version of the Bible skips all the genealogies as being irrelevant to the overall story of the scriptures. But that is far from true. The genealogy of Jesus for Matthew has great importance as he wants to establish the background and credibility of the central character of His Gospel – Jesus Christ. That is why Matthew has firmly rooted Jesus in the History of the people of Israel. He is preparing his readers for the unusual circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus.

Matthew takes great pains to clearly show that Jesus is the fulfillment of all of God's promises outlined in the OT. Jesus is the essential bridge between the OT & the NT.

The promise made to Abraham that he would be a blessing to all nations was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ through his birth, life and finally through his death on the cross and his glorious resurrection. However, that promise continues to be worked into the world by the HS through the church.

Conclusion

What can we conclude from these scriptures?

Does God keep His promises?

Does God's delay, in keeping his promises, make you doubt?

Doubt that he will keep his promise? or doubt that he is able to keep his promises?

How does God keep His promises?

God spoke his promises to Abraham: nationhood and being a blessing to the entire world was fulfilled.

God is always faithful, in fact he cannot but be faithful

God who is from everlasting to everlasting never starts something that he is unable to complete. He never leaves projects half done and walks off and forgets them.

God knows what he is doing; nothing is by accident, then or now. God is always working his purpose out in each of our lives. He is able to

simultaneously speak into each of our lives. God coordinates his purposes to fulfill his plan which is still in effect. God is not done with us yet. God is still speaking into our lives today, God is still making promises, to us if we would just have the ears to hear His voice.

Ps 139:17-18