

Solving Puzzles

This genealogy “holds many puzzles... as to how Matthew has arrived at his list of names and its pattern.” – R.T. France

Let’s solve the puzzles. Let’s unpack the mystery.

Puzzle 1 – Why three sets of fourteen generations?

A genealogy is an ancient resume

Answer: Jesus is the _____

Puzzle 2 – Why include these specific (great great...) grandmothers of Jesus?

Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah

Answer: Jesus’ is full of _____ and _____

Puzzle 3 – Why does 3x14=41?

Count the names!

Generation	Abraham to David	David to Deportation	Deportation to Jesus
1	Abraham	Solomon	Shealtiel
2	Isaac	Rehoboam	Zerubbabel
3	Jacob	Abijah	Abiud
4	Judah	Asaph	Eliakim
5	Perez	Jehoshaphat	Azor
6	Hezron	Joram	Zadok
7	Ram	Uzziah	Achim
8	Amminadab	Jotham	Eliud
9	Nahshon	Ahaz	Eleazar
10	Salmon	Hezekiah	Matthan
11	Boaz	Manasseh	Jacob
12	Obed	Amos	Joseph
13	Jesse	Josiah	Jesus
14	David	Jechoniah	?????

Pastor Brian’s answer: Matthew wants us to ask, where’s that 42nd generation? Who did Jesus “begat?”

Isaiah 53:8-10

“By oppression and judgment he was taken away.

And who can speak of his descendants? (emphasis added)

For he was cut off from the land of the living;

for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked,

and with the rich in his death,

though he had done no violence,

nor was any deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer,

and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering,

he will see his offspring (emphasis added!!) and prolong his days,

and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.”

Answer: Jesus children are _____

Puzzle 4 – Why does Matthew start with a genealogy?

The modern objection – this is a grand fairy tale

A world changing conversation

“When reality became fact” – Tim Keller

Answer: Jesus is _____

Questions for Study and Reflection

1. Do you think it is valuable to slow down and marinate in a tough passage? Why?
2. Why does Jesus enter the world through a line of sinners and outsiders?
3. Do you have a different reason why Matthew has only 41 generations in his list of 42? (Tell pastor!)
4. Why do you think great stories keep popping up? Why do stories of good and evil, of life after death, of speaking to nonhuman persons, and of going outside of time have such staying power? How do they point to true, biblical realities that we cannot see?