

Session 3 Jesus' Pre-existence and Genealogy (Jn. 1; Mt. 1; Lk. 3)

I. JESUS' PRE-INCARNATE EXISTENCE (JN. 1:1-5)

A. John began his gospel with the mystery of the transcendent God fully identifying with broken humanity by declaring Jesus' preexistence as the uncreated God (Jn. 1:1-3) and His incarnation in being fully human (Jn. 1:14). Why? Jesus desires humans to be His eternal companion (Jn. 17:24).

B. Jesus is the Word—He existed before time, together with God, and is the source of creation (1:1-3).

¹"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." (Jn. 1:1-3)

1. Jesus is the Word of God (Rev. 19:13). By seeing what Jesus *said and did* in the Gospels, we can gain understanding into various difficult passages in the Word. The values and truths about God as seen in the Word were experienced and expressed through Jesus' behavior.

2. God created through the Word (1:3). Jesus is identified as the Creator of Genesis 1 who sustains the universe by His word (Jn. 1:3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2-3; Jas 1:18).

C. Jesus is the source of life for the redeemed (Jn. 1:4-5). We receive life from the Word.

⁴In Him was life [zoe], and the life [zoe] was the light of men. ⁵And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it [overpower it]." (Jn. 1:4-5)

1. There are two Greek words for life—*psuche* speaks of natural life that humans and animals have; *zoe* speaks of supernatural life that only comes through relationship with the Spirit.

2. Darkness cannot overpower spiritual light (1:5). The way to decrease darkness in our lives is to focus on increasing the amount of light we enjoy. We will not overcome the darkness of immorality, bitterness, or pride by focusing on it, but by being preoccupied with gaining more of the "light of the superior pleasure of the revelation" of God.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (Jn. 1:5, RSV)

II. INTRODUCTION OF JOHN'S GOSPEL (JN 1:6-18)

A. John the Baptist's life purpose was to be a faithful witness to Jesus (1:6-8)

⁶"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. (Jn. 1:6-7)

- B. The incarnation and the response of people to Jesus (1:9-11). All people have a general revelation of God—the dual witness of creation and conscience (Rom. 1:19-21). If they submit to this general revelation of God, then the Spirit will reveal the specific revelation of God—which is Jesus.

⁹That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. (Jn. 1:9-11)

- C. The privilege of those who accept Jesus, the Word (1:12-13): The power, authority, and privileges that Jesus walked in as a Man are available to His people (Rom. 8:16-17; 1 Jn. 3:1-2).

¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (Jn. 1:12-13)

1. ***Not of blood:*** Salvation does not come by natural birth—boasting in ancestry is futile.
2. ***Nor of the will of flesh:*** Salvation cannot be forced on others. We cannot pressure or convince people to be saved by natural logic. It takes a revelation of God to each individual's heart.
3. ***But of God:*** Salvation is a supernatural miracle that comes by revelation.

- D. The Word was given expression through Jesus' physical body (1:14). God's glory is defined as miracles and character (2:11). God's power and love were expressed in a human form by Jesus.

¹⁴“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (Jn. 1:14)

- E. We receive grace and truth through the Word (1:16-17).

¹⁶And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” (Jn. 1:16-18)

1. We received of His fullness. God does not give to us out of His weakness, but His fullness (Eph. 3:19). Grace speaks of God's power and love—it is lavished upon us (Eph. 1:8).
2. The truth of what we have become in Christ was not made known by Moses' law. Now God's purposes for us and His love and the power available to us have been revealed. They are no longer a hidden mystery as they were while under Moses (Col. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 2:7-9).
3. No man has seen God at any time. Jesus has revealed and explained God to the human race.
4. Jesus lived in the bosom of the Father and continues to live there (Jn. 14:3b).

III. JESUS' HUMAN ANCESTRY THROUGH JOSEPH (MT 1:1-17)

- A. Matthew opened by presenting Jesus as the *son of David* (king of Israel) and the *son of Abraham* (savior of the world). This referred to two Old Testament covenants—the nations would be blessed through Abraham (Gen. 12:7) and the kingdom would come through David (2 Sam. 7:12-16).
- ¹***“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham (Mt. 1:1)***
1. The Messiah had to be traced back to David’s royal family line to be accepted by Israel as heir to the throne of David. Both Mary and Joseph were in David’s family line.
 2. There are over fifty genealogies in the Old Testament. Today, most Jewish people do not have a historical record of their ancestry. Thus, none can prove to be in David’s royal line.
- B. Matthew’s genealogy traces the generations through Joseph’s family line starting with Abraham through David down to Joseph and Jesus. Luke’s genealogy is the reverse—it starts with Jesus and traces the generations through Mary back to Adam. One begins with Jesus; the other ends with Him.
- C. Why a genealogy? To establish Jesus was a son of David and a son of Abraham through Joseph and Mary, so He had the *right* to rule the throne of David. God revealed Himself in Jesus’ genealogy. He is the only person who “hand-picked” His genealogy—it is significant who He picked.
- D. Jesus identified with all mankind through the genealogy that He picked. He wanted all types of people in His family line—the message is that Jesus identified with human failure and weakness. He is approachable by all, unrelated to race, age, sex, social status, education, spirituality, etc.

²***Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob...³Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar...⁵Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah [Bathsheba]...***

¹⁰***Hezekiah begot Manasseh,...¹¹Josiah begot Jeconiah...¹²And after they were brought to Babylon...Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. ¹³ Zerubbabel begot Abiud...¹⁵Matthan begot Jacob.***

¹⁶***And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. (Mt. 1:2-16)***

1. ***Four women:*** It was highly unusual to include women in a genealogy. Three of the women mentioned were involved in immorality— *Tamar* (Gen. 38:11-30), *Rahab* (Josh. 2:6; 6:25), and *Bathsheba* (2 Sam. 11). *Ruth* the Moabitess was a foreigner. Moabites were enemies of Israel and forbidden even to enter God’s house.
2. ***Joseph the husband of Mary:*** Scripture never refers to Joseph as the father of Jesus, but only as the husband of Mary. The royal line legally passed through the father—Jesus was Joseph’s legal son by adoption. Through Joseph and Solomon, Jesus was legally heir to David’s throne.

- E. Three periods of ancestors (v. 17): This is not a complete list. The editing of the genealogy to identify fourteen generations in each of three periods was intentional.

¹⁷So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.” (Mt. 1:17)

1. The first period from Abraham to David—the period of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph) and the judges (Deborah, Barak, Samson, Jephthah). This was the period of the birth and establishing of Israel as a nation.
2. The second period from David to Jeconiah—the period of the kings was through the time of Jeconiah. This period had a few good kings like Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. However, sinful kings dominate this period, like Rehoboam, Ahaz, and Manasseh, leading to apostasy and ultimately to the destruction of Israel and the captivity in Babylon.
3. The third period from the Babylon captivity until Jesus' birth—600 years of names we don't know. It was a hard time in which Israel faced many enemies and much silence.

- F. Jesus' human ancestry through Mary (Lk. 3:23-28): Luke traced the genealogy back to Adam to emphasize Jesus' love for all in the human family. Priests began their ministry at age 30 (Num 4:3).

²³“Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴the son of Matthat...the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel...³¹the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³²the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz...³⁴the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah...³⁶the son of Shem, the son of Noah...³⁷the son of Enoch, the son of Jared...³⁸the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.” (Lk. 3:23-38)

1. Luke presents the genealogy of Jesus in reverse order from Matthew's—giving 77 names. Both genealogies mention Joseph as the father of Jesus, and include Abraham, David, and Zerubbabel (Mt. 1:1, 12; Lk. 3:27).
2. ***Heli***: He was Mary's father (v. 23) and Joseph's father-in-law. Joseph's physical father was Jacob (Mt. 1:16). It is suggested by many that Mary had no brothers and thus Joseph was adopted by Mary's father after their marriage.
3. ***Nathan***: Mary's family line is traced, not through David's son Solomon, but through Nathan, David's third son with Bathsheba. Nathan's family line will be blessed in the end times (Zech. 12:12). Messiah's ancestry is traced through Nathan, bypassing the line of the kings of Judah.

4. **Adam:** He is described as the son of God (3:38) to compare and contrast with Jesus as the son of God (3:22; 4:3). This genealogy comes right *after* Jesus' baptism and anointing by the Spirit as Messiah (Lk 3:21-22) and right *before* Jesus was tempted in the wilderness (Lk. 4:1-13) in a way that parallels Adam's temptation and sin in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-7).
5. By obedience, Jesus stood in the human family as the last Adam restoring sonship to God.