

Genealogy Overview
Matthew 1:1

Most people believe that Matthew is the beginning of the New Testament. This isn't surprising because the Bible is split into Old and New Testaments with Genesis the beginning of the old and Matthew the beginning of the new.

Both of these designations are actually incorrect because the Old Testament (Covenant) does not really begin until the giving of the Mosaic Law about 2,500 years after Adam in Genesis 1 and 430 years after Abram left Ur. There could be no covenant with Israel until Israel was actually formed. Since the New Covenant was to be made with the house of Israel and Judah (northern and southern kingdoms) the Old Covenant was made with the same people—right after coming out of Egypt. This is the official beginning of Israel the nation.

Jeremiah 31:31—32 ³¹ “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt,

The New Testament (Covenant) was put into effect at the cross. Christ came to fulfill the Law (Matthew 5:17—18). Paul makes it clear that the cross terminated the Old Covenant (Law) for the believer (Romans 6:15; 10:4; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14). It was through the work of Christ on the cross that it was possible for the Law to be nullified for those who believe but the spiritual effects of Christ's death on the cross were not fully revealed until after the Mystery was given to Paul. We in the Body of Christ are not under the New Covenant, as Jeremiah 31:31 makes clear. However, we do reap spiritual benefits according to Romans 15:27.

So the Old Testament actually began in Exodus with the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai and the New Testament began with Christ's shed blood on the cross (Hebrews 9:15—16). This puts most of the book of Matthew in the Old Testament.

Focus of Matthew

The very first sentence of Matthew lays out his point of view. Matthew takes Jesus Christ's lineage back to King David and then to Abraham. It was God who made a non-conditional covenant with David promising that his throne would be established forever (2 Samuel 7:16). It was through Jesus Christ through whom this promise would be fulfilled.

The Magi understood this connection of Jesus to the throne as they sought to find the new born baby by inquiring “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matthew 2:2) As Jesus begins His public ministry we see Him preaching the Gospel (Good News) of the Kingdom. The word kingdom is used 55 times in Matthew because the focus of the book is on Jesus Christ as King. If the King is in their midst then the Kingdom could not be far off.

The Bible contains many prophecies connecting the Davidic line with Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 11:1—3 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. ³ And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;

Jeremiah 23:1—4 ¹ “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: “You have scattered My flock and driven them away, and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds,” declares the LORD. ³ “Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be

afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD. ⁵ “Behold, *the* days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.

This last prophecy not only shows that Jesus Christ will come from the line of David and reign forever on his throne but it also shows that these scattered sheep will be brought back to their land. These scattered sheep are the other sheep of John 10:16. The little flock of Luke 12:32 are the unscattered, believing Israelites who stayed in Jerusalem. Sheep in Scripture always relates to Israel. Some people think that we as believers are sheep with Jesus as Shepherd. This breaks down when you realize that Jesus came to the LOST sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24). The Old Testament is consistent with using sheep for Israel. Ezekiel 34:20—31 shows a judgment between the believing and unbelieving sheep within Israel.

On the other hand, we can get great comfort in seeing how God cares for His sheep. We see His great love for believing Israel in Psalm 23 and in many other passages. That same love is poured out generously on the Body of Christ.

From David, Matthew looks further back to Abraham, the Father of the nation of Israel. From this we see that Jesus was nationally an Israelite. Jesus has claims to the national promises of Israel as well as the legal rights to the throne.

Note that Scripture portrays Christ on a physical throne on a physical earth in the physical city of Jerusalem. There is absolutely no room for spiritualizing these things to mean Jesus is reigning on the throne of my heart and all believers together constitute the spiritual Kingdom of Heaven. Yes, believers are in God’s Kingdom (Colossians 1:13) but this is not to be confused with the Kingdom promised to Israel.

There is also a connection between Abraham and David. Both were promised that their offspring would be a part of this future great nation of Israel. Abraham had Isaac when God miraculously regenerated both Abraham’s and Sarah’s bodies so that they could conceive. Isaac is a picture or type of Christ, born through the intervention of God, carried the wood he was to be sacrificed on, went willingly as a lamb to the slaughter, considered by Abraham to be dead on their three day journey and brought back of life when God supplied the sacrificial ram (Genesis 22; Hebrews 11:17—19). David’s promised offspring was Jesus Christ.

The Two Divisions of Matthew

The book of Matthew naturally divides into two sections. From Chapters 1—25 we see a focus on Jesus Son of David, the King and His Kingdom. In Chapters 26—28 the emphasis is on Jesus Son of Abraham with His death, burial and resurrection as pictured by Abraham’s son Isaac.

Parallel to this there are many rabbis in the past and today who see the book of Isaiah presenting two Messiahs. One is the Son of David who will come and save Israel from their enemies and set up a glorious Kingdom (Isaiah 11). The other is the Son of Joseph (or Ephraim) a son of Jacob and is seen as the suffering servant (Isaiah 53).

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