

## 2,000 Years of Amazing Grace

Matthew 1:1-17 - NCBC, February 17, 2019

Main Point: **Matthew proves Jesus is the Christ through 2000 years of God's grace.**

- The signature of God's grace (1)
  - Jesus
  - Christ
  - Son of David
  - Son of Abraham
  
- The subjects of God's grace (2-16)
  - God's people in development from Abraham to David (2-6a)
    - God's grace reaches pagan idolaters
    - God's grace reaches overlooked siblings
    - God's grace reaches scandalous sinners
    - God's grace reaches gentile women
    - God's grace reaches unknown nobodies
  - God's people in decline from David to Jechoniah (6b-11)
    - God's grace reaches lustful murderers
    - God's grace reaches worldly backsliders
    - God's grace reaches repentant reformers
    - God's grace reaches demonic occultists
    - God's grace reaches cursed fools
  - God's people in darkness from Jechoniah to Jesus (12-16)
    - God's grace reaches enslaved prisoners
    - God's grace reaches hopeful leaders
    - God's grace reaches obscure peasants
    - God's grace reaches devout parents
    - God's grace reaches poor laborers
  
- The summary of God's grace (17)
  - Jesus must be the promised Christ!

Application: **Marvel at the sovereign grace of God towards sinners like us.**

### Opening Announcements:

- **Man Camp** – March 29-31 – All Men Invited! – Contact Robert Myers for more info.
- **Truth for Every Man Conference** - March 15-16 – Springfield, IL – Contact Pastor Scott Gnuse for more info.

<<Man of Sorrows (Hallelujah What a Savior)>>



What a Savior, Redeemer, and King! His love has powerfully rescued us from the penalty and the power of sin!

We gather this morning to worship this glorious Christ together, and so I invite you to take your personal copy of God's Word and continue your worship by opening to the **Gospel of Matthew, chapter 1** this morning.



If you don't have a Bible, simply raise your hand as men are coming now with Bibles to give away. Please take a copy for yourself, and read it. God's Word brings life to humble hearts.

While you're preparing to read a long list of names from **Matthew 1**, let me just thank those of you who intentionally wear a name tag every week. Here at New Castle Bible Church, we desire to grow deeper and reach farther through relational wholeness for the glory of God. Every relationship begins with a name. So wearing a name tag is an invitation to a relationship.

That's why we encourage everyone to wear name tags every Sunday morning, every Weds night – in fact to every church function of any kind. So that by sharing our names, we can better know each other, and fulfill the “one another” commands of Scripture in biblical community together.

If you have lost your name tag, or have never received one, all you need to do is just stop by the welcome center in the Commons, or let the church office know anytime,

and we'll make you a name tag!! We appreciate everyone's help as we keep seeking practical ways to love one another better in our growing church family.



Now this morning we turn our attention to the Genealogy of Jesus Christ in **Matthew chapter 1**. As tempting as it is for all of us to want to skip over long lists of names in our Bible readings, **2 Timothy 3:16** teaches us that *All Scripture is breathed out by God, and is profitable*. In fact, this genealogy presents a thrilling vista of 2,000 years of amazing grace offering indisputable proof that Jesus is the Christ!

So please stand in honor of the public reading of God's Word as I read **Matthew 1:1-17** from the **ESV** translation:

*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

*<sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup> and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, <sup>4</sup> and Ram the father of Amminadab, and*

*Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup>and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of David the king.*

*And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, <sup>7</sup>and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, <sup>8</sup>and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup>and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup>and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup>and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.*

*<sup>12</sup>And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup>and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup>and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup>and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.*

*<sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.*

Thus reads God's Word. You may be seated.

**Let's Pray.**

When early church councils determined the order of the New Testament books in the biblical canon, it was an obvious choice to place **The Gospel of Matthew** first, since from the very first verse,



Matthew proves Jesus is the Christ through 2000 years of God's grace.

This genealogy is a golden bridge that spans across the Jewish Dark Ages and grounds the Jesus born to Mary the wife of Joseph in the historical pedigree of Israel's royal family.

No faithful Jew could ever accept Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah unless his ancestry is truly part of King David's line.<sup>1</sup> So Matthew begins his eye-witness record of Jesus' life and ministry with a family tree. A historical pedigree of grace proving Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of all of God's Messianic promises!!

<sup>1</sup> Christ's enemies were constantly attacking Jesus' origin: Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:3; Luke 4:22; John 7:27, 40-41; 8:41, 48.

Now you must understand the family tree of Jesus represents more than 2,000 years of God's amazing grace. In 17 verses, Matthew lists 51 names representing 42 different generations. People from all walks of life. Good and bad. Rich and poor. Jews and Gentile. Men and women. This family tree stands as a historical witness to the sovereign and surprising power of God's active grace!

Now **verse 17** tells us that Matthew purposefully organizes the genealogy into three sets of 14 generations. Perhaps he did this as a memory aid for his Jewish audience, or perhaps he did this to emphasize Christ as the Davidic king since the Hebrew constants in the word David add up to 14?<sup>2</sup> Others suggest that since 7 is the number of completion, perhaps Matthew views the entire history of God's chosen people as 6 sets of 7 generations, leaving Jesus Himself as the perfect start to the final 7<sup>th</sup> generation of God's chosen people?

Frankly we don't know *why* Matthew compressed the family tree down to 3 sets of 14 generations. But since we know some names are omitted,<sup>3</sup> we shouldn't use this

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew consonants of the name David have a numerical value of fourteen (4+6+4), since Hebrew uses the alphabet to communicate numerical value. Whether this fact is in Matthew's mind we cannot know with certainty.

<sup>3</sup> I.e. We know that between Joram/Jehoram and Uzziah Matthew omits mention of Ahaziah (2 Kings 8:25; 2 Chronicles 22:1), Joash (2 Kings 11:21; 2 Chronicles 24:1), and Amaziah (2 Kings 14:1; 2 Chronicles 25:1). Jehoiakim is also omitted between Josiah and Jechoniah/Jehoiachin/Choniah (1 Chronicles 3:15-16). This was a common Jewish practice to use the word "father" to indicate one farther removed in the ancestry. For example, in 2 Kings 18:3, David is called the father of Hezekiah. C.f. Matthew 3:9; Luke 1:73; 16:24; John 8:39, 53, 56, etc.

list to establish chronological connections. This is not an exhaustive ancestry, but an emphatic one. Matthew is not concerning himself with chronology, but Christology!! Matthew is establishing a genealogical proof that Jesus is indeed Israel's King!

That's why there are some differences between Matthew's genealogy here and the genealogy of Christ found in **Luke chapter 3**. Since Matthew is writing to Jews, he starts with Abraham – the father of Israel, and moves forward to Christ. But Luke – who is writing to Gentiles – starts with Jesus and moves backward all the way to Adam.

Matthew traces the legal line of the throne from David's son Solomon, to *Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born.*<sup>4</sup> However Luke traces Jesus' blood line back through Mary<sup>5</sup> – all the way back to David's son Nathan<sup>6</sup> – proving that Jesus had David's flesh and blood through his mother, and David's right to the throne through his legal father.

There's no doubt from Matthew's opening genealogy – Jesus is the promised King! And only God's grace can account for this miraculous fulfillment of all of God's promises in Jesus' birth.

In **verse 1** we begin with the signature of God's grace, then **verses 2-16** present all the various subjects of God's grace. Finally **verse 17** concludes with the summary of God's grace.

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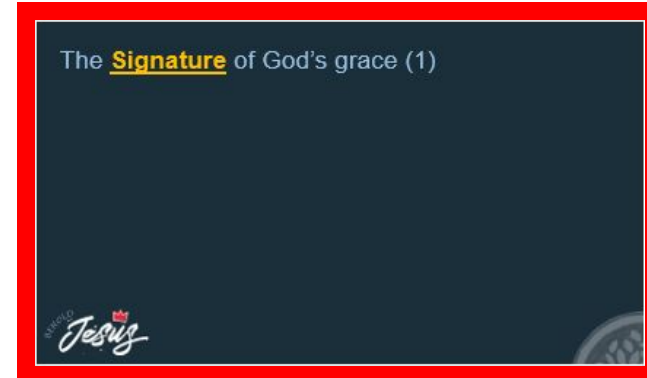
<sup>4</sup> Matthew 1:16

<sup>5</sup> Luke 3:23 – Heli was Joseph's father-in-law, or father of Mary.

<sup>6</sup> Luke 3:31

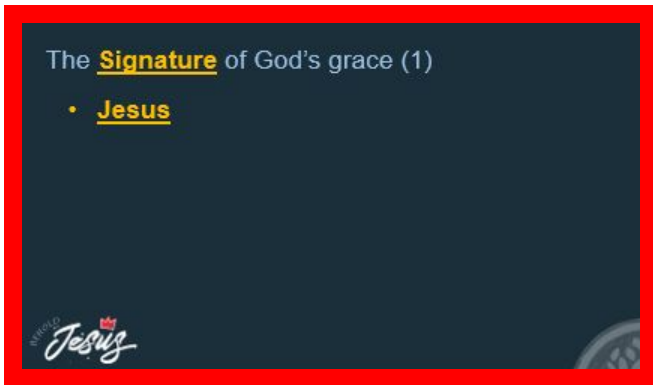
And as we walk through the subjects of God's grace in **verses 2-16**, we will consider each of the 14 generations in order. First considering God's people in development from Abraham to David in **verses 2-6**, then seeing God's people in decline from David to Jechoniah in **verses 6-11**, and then God's people in darkness from Jechoniah to Jesus in **verses 12-16**.

So let's begin by considering the,



The signature of God's grace in **verse 1**.

Matthew's genealogical records starts with four different names for the long-awaited Deliverer sent from God. And the first signature of God's grace is the Name that is above every other name,



### Jesus

Jesus literally means *Yahweh Saves*, or God will certainly save. This is the name given by the angel in **verse 21** of this same chapter, saying,

*She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*

Friend – there is no greater revelation of God's grace than Jesus Himself.<sup>7</sup> He is the King of Grace, for His second name is



### The Christ

Now you must understand when Matthew refers to Jesus as Christ – Christ is a title. It's not a last name. It literally means, "the anointed One." It's the same word that gets translated "Messiah" in Hebrew.

For the entirety of Jewish history, their prophets were anointed. Their priests were anointed. And their kings were anointed...and now Matthew wants to make clear that Jesus is anointed as THE Messiah – God's eternal prophet, priest, and king for His people! God's grace signs its name as Jesus, the Christ, and third,

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<sup>7</sup> John 1:14, 16  
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### Son of David

Matthew's reference to Jesus as the Son of David points to the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant – the promise that God made to King David back in **2 Samuel chapter 7**<sup>8</sup> that God would cause one of His offspring to reign from David's throne forever.

God keeps His promises church – even after a 1,000 years of waiting... there now comes a son of David who will be David's Lord!<sup>9</sup> The Son of David signature emphasizes His sovereign kingly authority.<sup>10</sup> All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. He is the Son of David.

But fourth, this Jesus who is the long-promised Anointed One, the Son of David, is also,

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<sup>8</sup> 2 Samuel 7:16

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 22:41-46; Psalm 110:1

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 28:18



### The Son of Abraham.

He is the fulfillment of God's saving promise to Abraham when God set His love upon Him, and made a people for Himself. For Matthew to refer to Jesus as the Son of Abraham is to emphasize that He is the Savior of *all nations*. For God promises in **Genesis 12** that through Abraham's descendent, all of the nations will be blessed.<sup>11</sup>

Now get this. The New Testament begins by immediately introducing you to good news. Did you know that God's grace has a name? He is Jesus, the Messiah, the one who possesses all authority to make disciples of all the nations! He is the Sovereign Savior!! Do you know Jesus as your Savior and King? God gives grace to the humble.<sup>12</sup> So repent of your pride. Believe on the Lord Jesus and be rescued from your sins!

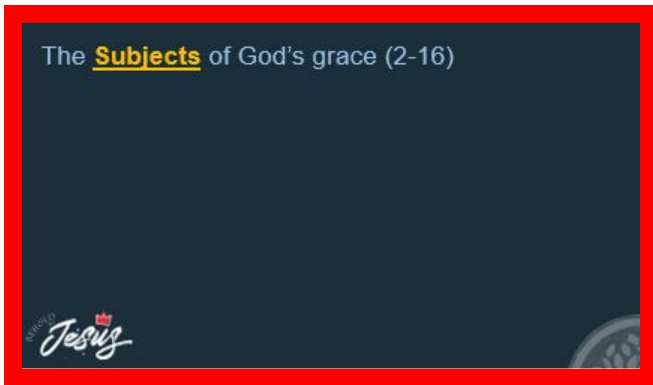
Now let's consider,

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<sup>11</sup> Genesis 12:3

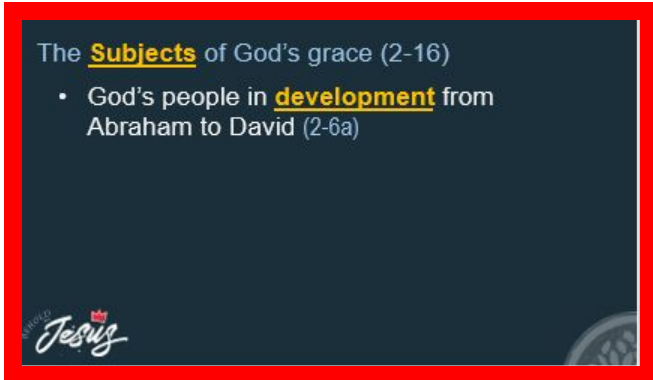
<sup>12</sup> 1 Peter 5:5-6





The subjects of God's grace in **verses 2-16**.

Matthew starts with the origin of the house of David – with the period of the patriarchs, walking through 14 generations of,



God's people in development from Abraham to David (2-6a)

*Abraham* ... just the name caused the Jews to hold their head high. This was the father of their faith.<sup>13</sup> But stop for a moment and consider Abraham's beginnings.

<sup>13</sup> Hebrews 11:8-12  
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Before God called him Abraham, he was Abram. He lived in the land of Ur of the Chaldees. And **Joshua 24 verse 2** says that Abram and his father worshipped other gods. Most likely Abram and his family were moon-worshippers – just like the rest of the Chaldees.<sup>14</sup>

Be amazed church that,



God's grace reaches **pagan idolaters** like Abram, and sovereignly promises to bring forth a son or descendent of Abraham through which all the nations of the earth shall be blessed!

*Abraham was the father of Isaac* ...<sup>15</sup>

Again God's grace is on display through the miraculous birth of Isaac to a barren old woman. Jesus' own family tree begins with a supernatural birth – showing how,

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Abraham-religion.html>

<sup>15</sup> 1 Chronicles 1:28, 34; Genesis 21:1-5





God's grace reaches overlooked siblings.

Abraham and his servant Hagar had a firstborn named Ismael. But God's grace sovereignly elected Isaac to be the forerunner of the Messiah, and then *Isaac was the father of Jacob*<sup>16</sup> ... but remember Isaac's firstborn was named Esau. We would have expected God to bring blessings through Isaac's firstborn son – not the overlooked and whiney runt named Jacob.<sup>17</sup>

In fact the family tree of our Lord Jesus testifies how,

<sup>16</sup>1 Chronicles 1:34, 2:1; Genesis 25:26

<sup>17</sup>Genesis 25:23



God's grace reaches scandalous sinners!

Jacob himself was a deceiver and a liar. God changed his name to Israel, and we know his 12 boys as the 12 tribes of Israel. But notice how the genealogy reads in **Matthew 1:2**,

*And Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.*<sup>18</sup>

Jesus didn't come from Reuben who was the firstborn. No, instead the Messiah came from Judah's line in fulfillment of the promise in **Genesis 49** that *the scepter shall not depart from Judah...until Shiloh come.*<sup>19</sup> This is nothing short of God's amazing grace! Because as **verse 3** reminds us,

*Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar...*<sup>20</sup>

Now put on your seat belts as I remind you of the dark underbelly of Jesus' ancestors. You aren't the only one

<sup>18</sup> 1 Chronicles 2:1-2; Genesis 29:31-35; 30:1-24; 35:16-18; 49; Exodus 1:1-6

<sup>19</sup> Genesis 49:8-10

<sup>20</sup> 1 Chronicles 2:4; Genesis 38:24-30; Ruth 4:18

who comes from a dysfunctional family! There's no reason why God would choose these people as the human ancestors of His Christ except for grace – His amazing grace!!

Judah was a selfish womanizer and absentee father to 3 boys who were each more evil than their father. His firstborn married a Canaanite named Tamar. But God put Er and his brother Onan to death because of their wickedness.<sup>21</sup> When Judah broke his promise to give his third-born son to Tamar, she dressed up as a prostitute and tricked Judah – her father-in-law – into having relations with her. The result was the birth of twins, Perez and Zerah, mentioned in **verse 3**.

Prostitution and incest. This was the raw material from which God would bring forth the Savior of scandalous sinners like you and me! What amazing sovereign grace!

By the way, Tamar is not the only Gentile woman listed in the genealogy of Jesus the Christ. In **verse 5**, we meet the professional prostitute Rahab – the Canaanite from Jericho.<sup>22</sup> God's grace not only spared her life, but brought her into the Messianic line! Then we meet the Moabite Ruth,<sup>23</sup> and in **verse 6** Matthew is clear to point out *the wife of Uriah* – referring to a Gentile woman named Bathsheba who was abused by King David and saw her husband murdered in a cover-up plot.

From a Jewish standpoint, women would never be mentioned in a royal genealogy – yet Matthew seems to

<sup>21</sup> Genesis 38:7, 10

<sup>22</sup> Joshua 2, 6; 1 Chronicles 2:11; Ruth 4:13, 21

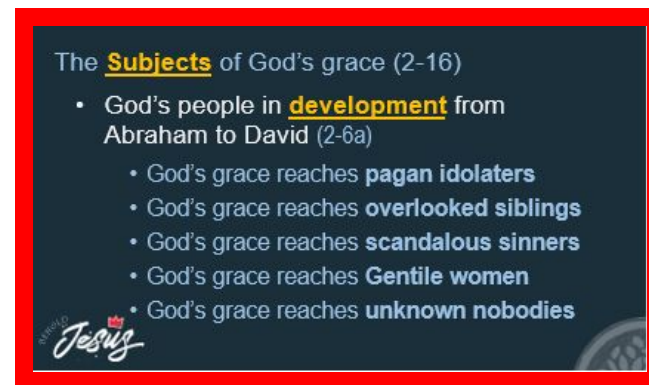
<sup>23</sup> 1 Chronicles 2:12; Ruth 4:21

go out of his way to make sure the Jewish readers understand that,



**God's grace reaches gentile women.** Non Jewish women. The pedigree of King Jesus is wide enough to encompass both men and women from all the nations!

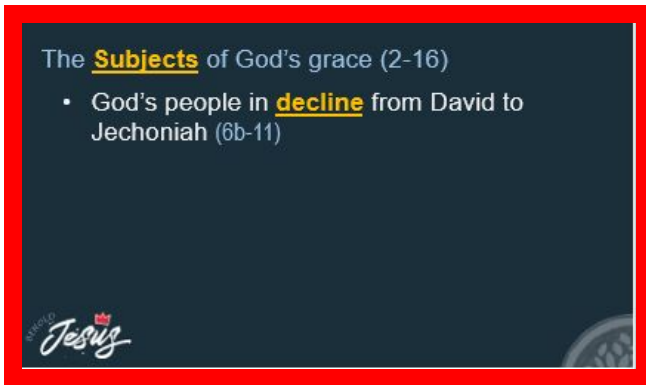
Finally, in these first 14 generations, we find names like Hezron and Ram in **verse 3**. We know nothing about these two individuals at all. Their lives were unremarkable to history. And yet here their names stand as a reminder that,



God's grace reaches unknown nobodies.

The King of Grace takes on himself the humanity of a long line of people just like us...all so that He can save us from our sins!

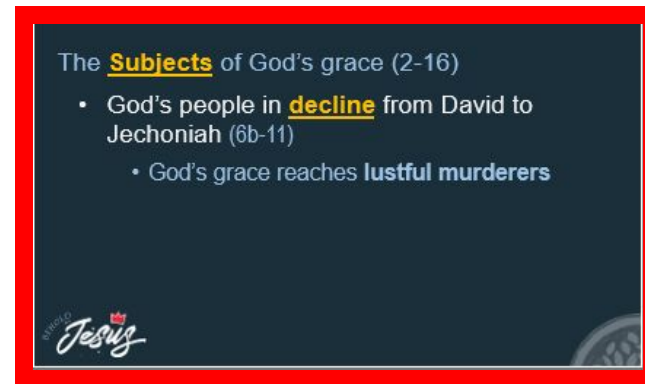
Now the second section of 14 generations represents,



God's people in **decline** from David to Jechoniah (6b-11)

This section of Jewish history starts with David on the throne and ends with the divided kingdom being carried off into exile in Babylon.

The mention of David with Uriah's wife in **verse 6** is a shocking reminder how,



God's grace reaches **lustful murderers**

Only the grace of God could explain how Bathsheba's second son Solomon could continue the Messianic line, after how far David had fallen.

And of course the mention of Solomon speaks to how,



God's grace reaches **worldly backsliders**, for Solomon allowed his love of foreign women to lead him from the pure worship of the Lord.

Then as the genealogy progresses through **verses 7-11**, Matthew structures the timeline of Judah's kings to include,



**repentant reformers** like Asaph (otherwise known as King Asa),<sup>24</sup> Jehoshaphat,<sup>25</sup> and Hezekiah.<sup>26</sup> These faithful rulers feared God, removed idol worship from Judah, and were the kind of men you'd expect to find in the family tree of the Anointed Messiah. Yet they are listed right along other wicked kings – perhaps the most vile being King Manasseh who is listed in **verse 10**.

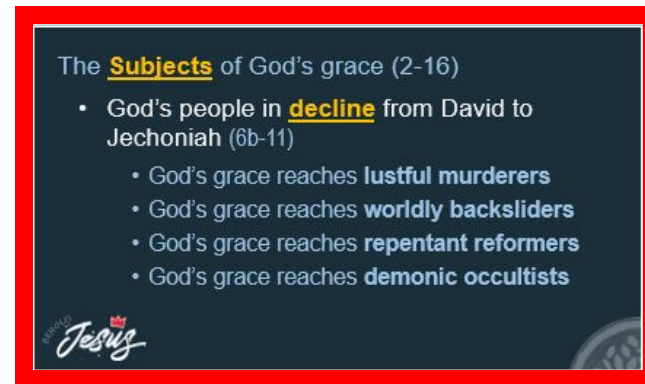
**2 Kings 21** describes how Manasseh did evil in the sight of the Lord, leading the Jews into witchcraft, demon worship, and even sacrificing innocent children to Molech!

Church, have you ever thought you met someone who could never be saved?

<sup>24</sup> 1 Kings 15:9-24; 1 Chronicles 3:10

<sup>25</sup> 1 Kings 22:45-46

<sup>26</sup> 2 Kings 18:3-8



God's grace reaches demonic occultists!

**2 Chronicles 33** tells the amazing account of how God's grace even brought Manasseh to repentance before he died. To have people like Manasseh among the ancestors of our Lord hints that One is coming who has the power to change chief sinners into miracles of mercy!!<sup>27</sup>

Now look how these 14 generations end in **verse 11**,

*Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.*

After reigning for just 3 months and 10 days as king,<sup>28</sup> Jeconiah and all of Judah were captured and carried away to Babylon in judgment for their wicked idolatry.

Now Jechoniah was the King with 3 names. Sometimes he was called Coniah for short,<sup>29</sup> sometimes he was

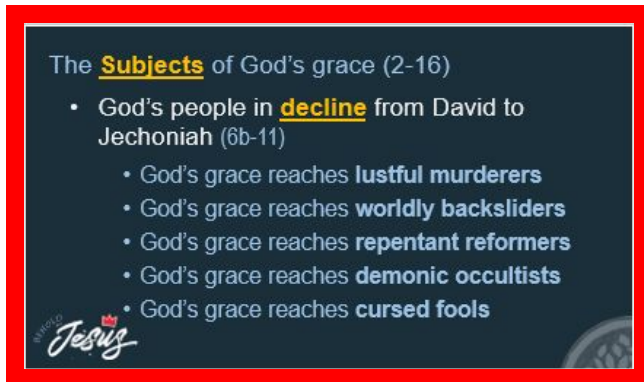
<sup>27</sup> Attributed to Spurgeon, Matthew's Commentary.

<sup>28</sup> 2 Chronicles 36:9

<sup>29</sup> Jeremiah 22:24-30; 37:1

called King Jehoiachin,<sup>30</sup> and other times, as here in **Matthew**, Jechoniah.<sup>31</sup>

And the inclusion of this wicked king in the genealogy of our Lord and Savior means that,



God's grace even reaches cursed fools.

For in **Jeremiah 22:30**, the Lord curses Jechoniah saying, *Write this man down as [as if he was] childless, ... for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.*

Jechoniah was young fool who received a devastating curse – none of his offspring would be the Anointed King who would forever sit on David's throne!

And yet his name is listed here among the ancestors of Christ? How could this be?

Perhaps the genius of God's grace is revealed in **Matthew 1:16** as the lineage coming down through Jechoniah leads us to *Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ*. Notice **verse 16** doesn't follow the pattern. It doesn't say and Joseph the father of Jesus. Rather, *Joseph the husband of Mary*, of whom Jesus was born. The virgin birth of Jesus Christ miraculously established Jesus' legal right to the throne of David through Jechoniah, without transferring any of Jechoniah's physical genetics to Jesus.

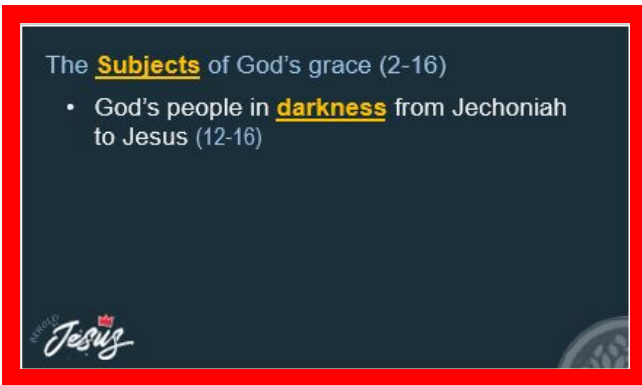
Jesus received his physical flesh and blood from Mary, who was a descendent through David's son Nathan, rather than from Joseph who as a descendent of Jechoniah. So the virgin birth of Jesus effectively established Jesus as the rightful heir to David's throne while simultaneously preserving God's curse upon King Jechoniah! What kind of sovereign grace is on display to bring us King Jesus through such a dark and twisted people in decline from David to Jechoniah?

Finally then, the last set of 14 generations in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus reflect,

<sup>30</sup> 2 Kings 24:25; 2 Chronicles 36:8-9; Jeremiah 52:31-33; Ezekiel 1:2

<sup>31</sup> 1 Chronicles 3:16-17; Esther 2:6; Jeremiah 24:1; 27:20; 28:4; 29:2

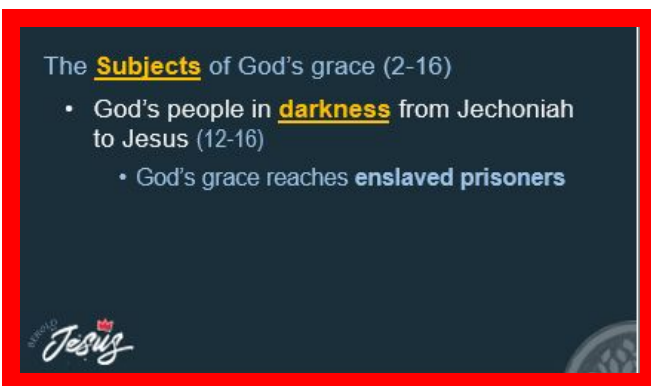




God's people in darkness from Jechoniah to Jesus in **verses 12-16**. This is when the house of David goes dark, and is eclipsed while God's people wait, wait, and wait for God to bring the Messiah to them.

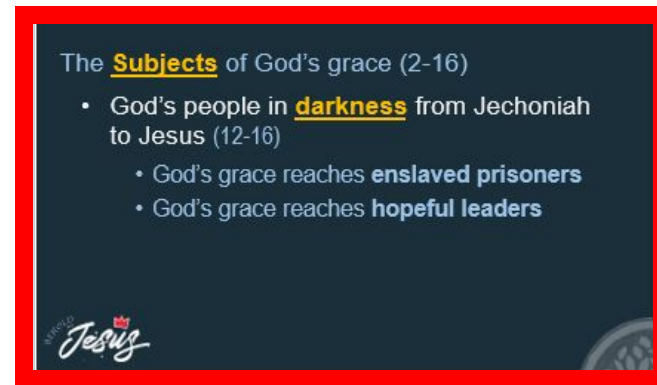
Even though we know very little about most of the names from this era of Israel's history, these 14 generations still provide a grand tour of God's grace.

For Jechoniah's 37 years in captivity<sup>32</sup> tells us that,



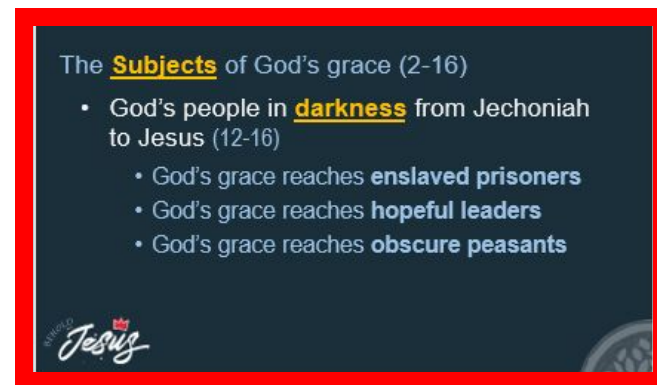
God's grace reaches enslaved prisoners.

Shealtiel's son Zerubbabel actively helped Nehemiah and Ezra to govern the Jews when they returned back to Palestine after being released from Babylonian captivity. So in the humble return to the land, God's grace was at work preserving and preparing the Messianic lineage, for,



God's grace reaches hopeful leaders.

As the Jews faded into historical darkness under the oppressive regimes of the Greeks, Egyptians, Syrians, and finally Romans.... Matthew lists several names of,

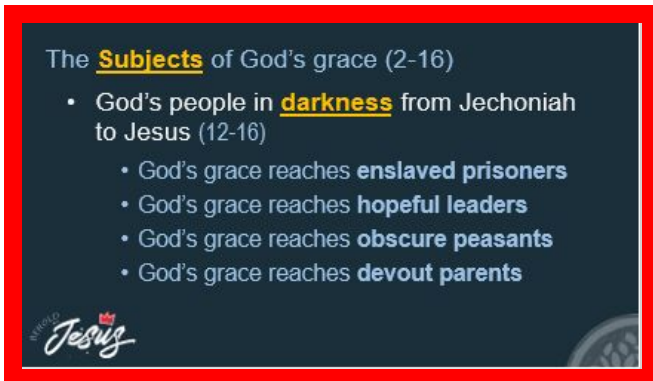


<sup>32</sup> 2 Kings 24:8-12; 25:27

obscure peasants.

We know little about *Eliakim, Azor, Zadok, or Achim*. But by now it should be obvious to us that God's sovereign grace is not a respecter of persons! God's purposes are not accomplished through man's wisdom, or man's might, or man's riches.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps we get a hint of God's grace preserving the faith of His people who were still waiting in the darkness for God's light to shine again on them? For **in verse 14**, *Achim is the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar*. And since Eliud means, "God is my praise" and Eleazar means, "God is my helper" perhaps these names embodied the fervent prayers of,

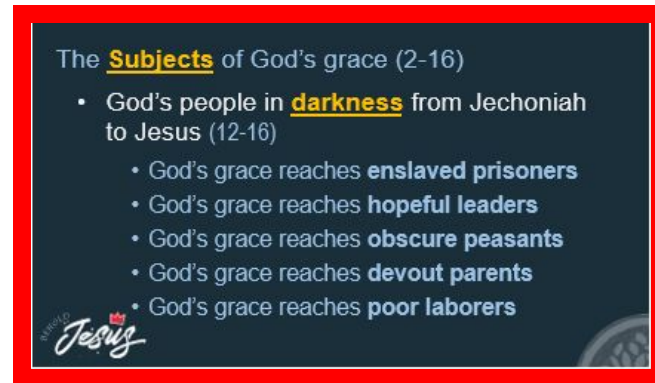


**devout parents** as they experienced the active grace of God in and through their obscure lives.

And so, *Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ*.

<sup>33</sup> Zechariah 3:6  
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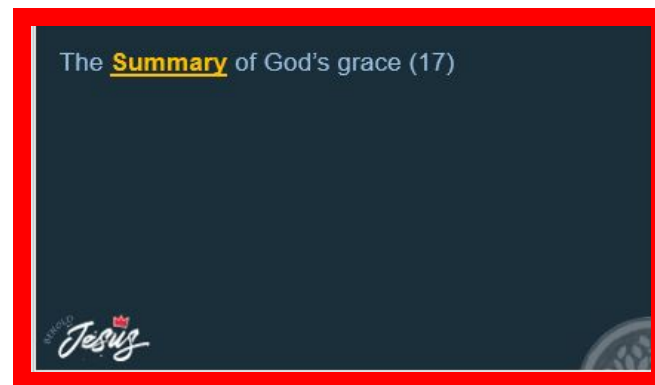
The genealogy swells to a climax teaching us that,



**God's grace reaches poor laborers.**

Common carpenters. Only grace can explain this privilege of becoming the legal father of our Lord!! The virgin birth is clearly hinted at in **verse 16**, and Matthew goes to great length to show that Joseph was *not* Jesus' physical father. Instead, Joseph was his legal father through marriage to *Mary, of whom Jesus was born*.

So what is,

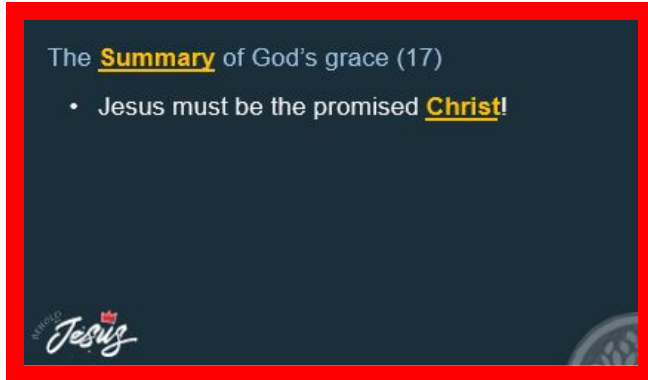




The summary of God's grace for Matthew in **verse 17**?

*So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon were fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.*

For his Jewish audience, Matthew has organized 2,100 years of genealogies neatly into 3 sets of 14 generations, to prove conclusively that,



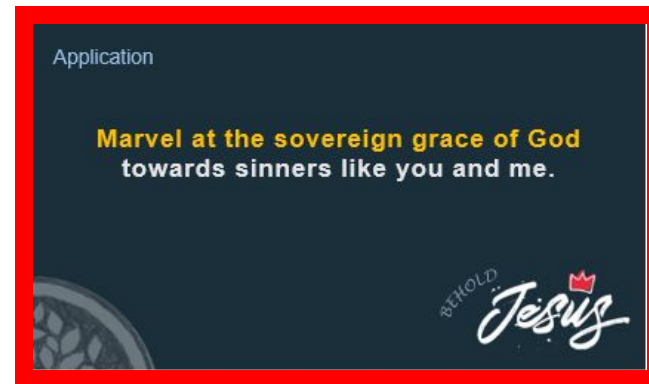
Jesus must be the promised Christ!

Only God's sovereign grace working through the entire history of the Jewish people could account for the realization of all of God's promises in the birth of Jesus.



Matthew proves Jesus is the Christ through 2000 years of God's grace.

So when you step back and ponder the family tree of Jesus, what thoughts come to your mind? Are you glad Matthew didn't just start his gospel in **verse 18**?



Church – if the human ancestors of Jesus Christ teach us anything, may they teach us to **Marvel at the sovereign grace of God towards sinners like us.**

God never gives grace to anyone because they deserve it. God never owes kindness to any of us. All we like sheep have gone astray.<sup>34</sup> Every one of us needs God's grace. And God's grace is not weak. No – God's grace is sovereign and all-powerful. A grace that is faithful to accomplish all of God's will throughout history – even in spite of our dysfunction, weakness, and sin.

So friend – learn from 2,000 years of amazing grace in the opening of Matthew's Gospel. This is the bridge which connects the Old Testament to the New. Though your sins may abound, grace abounds all the more!<sup>35</sup> God's ways are higher than our ways.<sup>36</sup> Though we are faithless... our God is faithful still!<sup>37</sup> Marvel in awe at the sovereign grace of our God today!



Let's pray.

<<Great is Thy Faithfulness>>

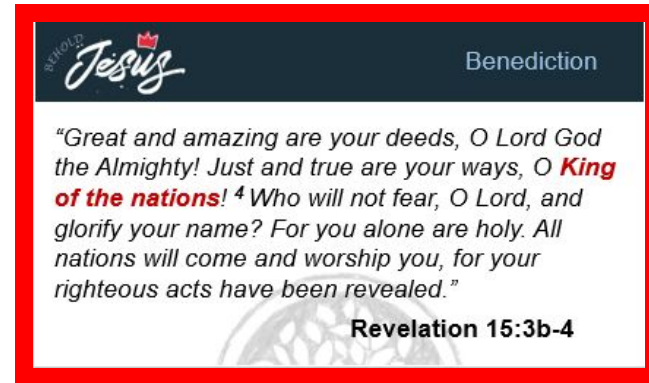
<sup>34</sup> Isaiah 53:6

<sup>35</sup> Romans 5:20

<sup>36</sup> Isaiah 55:8-9

<sup>37</sup> 2 Timothy 2:13

Let's pray our benediction together as we dismiss.



*Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! 4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.*

**Revelation 15:3b-4**



## **Recommended Resources for 2000 Years of Amazing Grace:**

- Isaiah 55:8-9
- Matthew 9:13
- Mark 2:18
- John 18:37
- Romans 5:20
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Titus 2:11-14
  
- <https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues/issues-v05-n06/the-genealogy-of-the-messiah/>
- <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/royal-genealogy-jesus/>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvZW58LQg\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvZW58LQg_k)

## **Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions**

1. Read Matthew 1:1. What is the first name mentioned in Matthew's gospel? After 400 years of prophetic silence, what reasons can you suggest for why the early church ordered the Gospel of Matthew first in the New Testament canon?
2. Read Isaiah 55:8-9. Who do you find the most unexpected or surprising occupant of the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1:1-17? What does this teach you about God's sovereign grace throughout history?
3. Compare the genealogies of Christ in Matthew 1:1-17 (through Solomon's line to Joseph) and Luke 3:23-38 (through Nathan's line to Mary). Note similarities and differences. Explain how the genius of God bypassed the curse of Jeconiah/Jehoiachin/Coniah (c.f. Jeremiah 22:30).
4. Read Romans 5:20. Are you ever tempted to think that your sin is too bad for God to forgive and wash away? How does the opening to Matthew's gospel give you hope that God's extraordinary grace is able to welcome you into His kingdom? What must you do to receive God's grace? (c.f. Ephesians 2:8-9)
5. Consider Matthew/Levi's own background in Matthew 9:9-13. Why does Matthew seem to emphasize the sinfulness of Christ's ancestors? How might this truth delighted Matthew's own heart?
6. Read Titus 2:11-14. Have you personally experienced God's sovereign grace? Share your testimonies of God's grace together, and pray for one another.