

# Matthew 1-4

by Chuck Smith

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*This sermon explores the early chapters of Matthew, highlighting the genealogy, birth, and prophetic significance of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 51:13

**Scripture:** Genesis 22:18, Isaiah 9:2, Matthew 4:1-11, Matthew 4:17-22

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ", "Biblical Prophecy"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, highlighting the 400 silent years between Malachi and Matthew, the historical context of the Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires, the significance of Jesus' lineage from Abraham and David, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in Jesus' birth, the temptations faced by Jesus in the wilderness, and the calling of the disciples to follow Him.

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## Transcript

Matthew's Gospel. We'll turn to the beginning of Matthew's Gospel tonight. This is known, the period between Malachi and Matthew's Gospel, there are 400 years and they are really called the silent years as far as the fact that there are no Bible books written during this period of time.

It is though God has just sort of shut off communications for a time and so this is the intertestamental period and between the Testaments and a period of 400 years. At the beginning of this 400 years the Persian Empire was still in power and of course the Jews had just undergone severe, severe persecution under one of the Persian rulers Tiglath-Pileser and it was a terrible time and it was the time when he actually was seeking to just destroy the Jews. He actually emptied the temple, stopped their sacrifices.

He sacrificed a pig on the altar there in Jerusalem and it caused the Maccabee brothers to just conspire together against the Persian rulership and they formed a strong revolt and God blessed them and they did many marvelous exploits and so that was at the beginning of this 400 year time. It was sort of the end of the Persian Empire because arising in power was the Grecian Empire and of course this is ushered in the time of Alexander the Great and his conquest of the world at that time and so the beginning of the Grecian Empire during this period of time. Now it's a little difficult to sort of realize that Socrates actually was living at about the same time as was Ezra and Nehemiah.

So and you think of Ezra and Nehemiah, if you think of the world at that time, it was the time of Socrates arising in prominence there in Greece and of course it was the rising of the Grecian Empire and it lasted a

short period of time but at the end of the Grecian Empire of course it was then conquered by the Roman Empire and now at the time of Matthew's gospel, the Roman Empire is ruling over the world and thus this happened during the period of the Roman rule here in the gospel according to Saint Matthew. So he opens the gospel according to Matthew with the words the book of the generation of Jesus Christ the son of David the son of Abraham. Now it is interesting in the Old Testament God did promise to Abraham that he would bless his seed and he also promised to David that there would never cease one of his descendants upon the throne and David understood that to mean that the Messiah would come from David's family and of course with Abraham he promised again that out of the family of Abraham the Messiah would come.

Genesis 22 18 the Lord said to Abraham and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice. I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven. I'll give unto your seed all of these countries and your seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth and thou shalt spread abroad to the west to the east to the north and to the south and in thee and in thy seed shall all of the families of the earth be blessed and so over and over again God is promising the blessing of course through Abraham's seed and that blessing of course has come to us through Jesus Christ a descendant of Abraham and so in 2nd Samuel the Lord said to David through the prophet.

David had a good friend the prophet Nathan and he told Nathan he said you know I've decided I'm gonna build a house for the Lord. I'm looking at you know this tent over here where the tabernacle where they're worshiping God and I've just built and I'm living in this beautiful palace that doesn't really make sense that I would be living in a beautiful palace and God is dwelling there in that tent so I'm gonna build a beautiful house for God and Nathan said splendid idea David do all that is in your heart and Nathan went on home and the Lord spoke to Nathan that night and said Nathan you encouraged David to do something that I can't allow him to do.

He wants to build a house for me but David is a man of war his hands are bloody it wouldn't be consistent for him to build a house for me and so you're gonna have to go back and tell David that you're sorry and that he just can't build a house for the Lord because of his bloody hands but to sort of ease the pain tell David I will build him a house and by this the Lord was declaring to David that from David's family would arise the Messiah the Savior of Israel so there in 2nd Samuel chapter 7 the Lord said to David through the prophet and when your days are fulfilled you will sleep with your fathers and I will set up your seed after thee which will proceed out of your bowels and I will establish his kingdom and he shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his

kingdom forever and I will be his father he will be my son but my mercy shall not depart away from him as I took it from Saul whom I put away before thee and thy house and thy kingdom will be established forever before thee and thy throne shall be established forever according to all of these words and according to all this vision so did Nathan speak to David then the King David went in he sat before the Lord and he said who am I Oh Lord God and what is my house that you have brought me hitherto and was this yet a small thing in thy sight O Lord God but you have spoken also of thy servants house for a great while to come and is this the manner of man O Lord God and so David is there just in awe of what God has promised to him that God would from his family or from his descendants would

arise the Messiah at one day that God would establish his throne and his kingdom forever so we have the generation of Jesus Christ the son of David the son of Abraham and so now we're going to start with

Abraham and we'll move on up through and to the coming of Jesus Christ and list the families and the descendants of Abraham from which the Messiah will come and of course it does pass through David as you look at this generation and all of these names I'm not going to go through them and try and pronounce them and so forth but there are a few interesting ones in there and you wonder why God would insert them in but yet they are there and one is Tamar and Tamar if you will remember back in the book of Genesis she disguised herself as a prostitute and enticed her father-in-law to a

relationship with her from which she became pregnant and she became her son became a part of the lineage that would lead to Abraham and so Tamar is in this line of generations another interesting one and that is Rahab and you remember that or Rachel actually and that Rachel was actually of the tribe of Moab and the tribe of Moab had been cursed by God that none of the Moabites would be sitting actually upon what would survive but Rachel was of the tribe of Moab and had married Boaz and so she became a part of the lineage that led to Jesus Christ and then of course Bathsheba the wife of Solomon and she had been the wife of Uriah and so she also figures in the lineage of the Messiah and so four women in this lineage and none of them are of the purest or most reputable backgrounds but yet

they're included in the lineage of Jesus Christ the Messiah so we get the lineage and it brings us on down to verse 16 Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus who is called the Christ now this is an interesting thing the lineage here is of Joseph not of Mary and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus Jesus was born of Mary but her husband was Joseph interesting that Joseph was a part of the kingly tribe the lineage of the kings of Israel however it is also interesting that in this lineage in verse 12 you have this fellow Jokanias and Jokanias was cursed by God he was the last king of Israel at the time that they were actually went into full captivity to Babylon and he was carried away to Babylon also known as Jehoiakim in the lineage line in

the Old Testament and Jokanias had a curse on him from God and the Lord said that there would be none of his seed sitting on the throne after him and so it is interesting that he died in Babylon and though he had family after him the it was the end of the monarchy for Israel so none of Jokanias seed did sit upon the throne so it is interesting how that the Lord called that one and how it came to pass so literally so Matthew gives us then the lineage of Joseph begins with Abraham and it it comes on up to Joseph I'm going to get a fly here just wait got him and I'll let him go so Jeremiah tells us therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim or Jokaniah the king of Judah he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the

night to the frost and so Jehoiakim was also known as Jokanias as we told you he was the last of the kings of Judah but none of his descendants followed him on the throne so in contrast to the genealogy of Joseph here in Matthew in Luke we have the genealogy of Mary and so of course we do know that Jesus was born of Mary and this in Luke 3 23 the son of Eli this and it should be the son-in-law of Eli and he goes back to David through a different line in other words it doesn't go through Jokaniah because I had it come from Solomon through Jokaniah with the curse upon Jokaniah Jesus could not actually claim to be the king of Israel because God said there would not be any of his seed there on the throne so the Lord dodged that bullet by allowing another line from and it comes from David

again and from David to Abraham you'll find the lineage is the same as it is in Luke chapter 3 in Luke he takes the lineage clear I'm back to Adam but he does go through Abraham David and through Abraham and thus that lineage is the same so verse 21 the Lord is saying well actually the birth of Jesus Christ happened like this verse 18 when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together

she was found with child of the Holy Spirit now with the Hebrews they had a period known as a spousal it was an engagement period but it was actually more strict than just an engagement you were really considered as married only you had not yet consummated the marriage and for a period of time during this engagement you were committed fully to each other if you wanted to break the

espousal you'd have to get a legal divorce and so it was during this time that they were in this espousal committed fully to each other that suddenly it turns out that Mary is pregnant and Joseph is in a dilemma doesn't know what to do and he loves Mary but yet he feels that she's been unfaithful and he can't understand what's going on he's in real confusion and so she was found with child by the Holy Spirit then Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example was of the mind to put her away privately in other words not to make a big public issue over it but just to send her off privately but while he was thinking on these things behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream and said Joseph son of David don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife

for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit and she shall bring forth a son and thou shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins Jesus is a Greek name it is for the Hebrew name Joshua the name Joshua in Hebrew is a contraction for Jehovah Shua and it means Jehovah is salvation and thus call his name Jehoshua or Jesus why because he shall save his people from their sins his name implies his ministry providing salvation for his people from their sins now all of this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets saying a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son shall call his name Emmanuel which by interpretation is God with us then Joseph being raised from the sleep did as the angel of the Lord had

bidden him and took unto him his wife and he did not have intimate relationships with her until they had brought forth her firstborn son and called his name Jehoshua Jesus so chapter 1 the introduction to the story by Matthew the first of the four Gospels in chapter 2 now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem and they were saying where is he that is born the king of the Jews for we have seen his star in the east and we have come to worship him when Herod the king heard these things he was troubled and all of Jerusalem with him and when he had gathered all of the chief priests and scribes together he demanded that them where the Messiah was to be born and they said in Bethlehem of Judea for thus it is

written by the prophet and now Bethlehem in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel then Herod when he had privately called the wise men inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared he sent them to Bethlehem and he said go and search diligently for the young child and when you have found him bring me word again that I might come and worship him also and when they had heard the king they departed and lo the star in which they saw in the east went before them until it came and stood over where the young child was and when they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy and when they were come into the house they saw the young child with Mary his mother and he they fell down and

worshipped him and when they had opened their treasures they presented unto him gifts gold frankincense and myrrh and being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod they departed to their own country another way.

Herod the Great a very vicious man he had killed he was very jealous he killed one of his wives he killed his son because he thought that the son was conspiring against him to take over the throne and he was

jealously guarding the throne and of course here now are these wise men from the east and they're inquiring where the king is to be born and of course he is the king and he just sees a threat to himself and so he is inquiring you know just when did this star appear and all and you know go search diligently for the young child when you have found him come and let me know that I might also come and worship him that's not really what his desire was it was to come and to kill the child to kill any threat to his sitting there as the king over the people so they came and they found the

child and you know now here's where you have to sort of dismiss the Christmas stories that you see the pageants and all sort of the enactment of the Christmas story and even the Christmas cards that you send out usually the cards have the wise men on camels coming to the manger to worship the child that is born but by the time they got there Jesus had been born and Mary and Joseph were no longer there in the manger but they were in a house and where the young child was he wasn't a baby when the wise men came so your Christmas cards are all off and I'm not suggesting that you throw them away but they just know that they don't properly represent the true story of how it really did happen they gave these gifts expensive gifts gold frankincense and myrrh no doubt God was providing Mary and

Joseph with the money that they would be needing to make their flight to Egypt and to survive while they were in Egypt and and thus it was a it was sort of a way a means by which God was providing the means for them to survive while they were on the run to Egypt to escape from Herod and his desire to kill the baby so when the wise men had departed the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying arise take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt and be thou there until I bring thee word for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him and so when he awoke he took the young child and his mother by night and they departed into Egypt and there were and they were there until the death of Herod that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet saying

out of Egypt have I called my son now I trust that you been noting how that these events that are taking place have all been prophesied in the Old Testament Jesus did fulfill over 400 predictions from the Old Testament of the Messiah and he fulfilled them in his coming in his birth death and burial resurrection all of them fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament it is interesting to take a look at these prophecies and to seek to determine the chance factors of one person fulfilling all of these particular prophecies concerning the Messiah and if you do you'll find out that the chances are just so astronomical that it defies the chance factor it couldn't be just that by chance he fulfilled these prophecies it is proof really that he is indeed the promised Messiah of God and so the

as I said the chance factors are just unreal and just taking 48 of these prophecies the chance factors become so large that it's impossible that they could have been fulfilled by chance but they are just proof that God had spoken in advance and told of things that would be happening in the life of Jesus and Matthew is sort of careful to point out several of these prophecies and how that Jesus was fulfilling them even as an infant even as his birth his birthplace and the circumstances of his birth and all so when Herod saw that he was mocked and that the wise men actually had gone back another way he was exceedingly angry and he sent forth and slew all of the children that were in Bethlehem and all of the regions around Bethlehem from two years old and under according to the time which he

had diligently inquired of the wise men and then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet saying in Rama there is a voice heard of lamentation weeping great mourning Rachel weeping for her children would not be comforted because they are not and so again fulfillment of prophecies all the way along and it is absolutely amazing but when Herod was dead behold an angel of the Lord appeared in

a dream to Joseph in Egypt now this is interesting because this is about the third time that the Lord is speaking to Joseph by dreams and so he had the dream that caused him to flee to Egypt and now in Egypt he has a dream knowing that Herod is dead and to return back to the land and so in the dream the Lord said to him arise take the young child and his mother and go into the land of

Israel for they are dead which sought the young child's life and he arose and took the young child and his mother and he came to the land of Israel but when he heard that Achilles did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod he was afraid to go further and notwithstanding being warned of God in a dream again warned of God in these dreams he turned aside into the parts of Galilee and he came and he dwelt in the city called Nazareth that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet he shall be called Nazareth so again prophecy being fulfilled and just it's absolutely amazing so in those days John the Baptist came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and he was saying repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand now in those days fast-forward probably 30

years and because these are years that we only have the record of one incident in the life of Christ during this period of time and that's when he was about 12 years old when he had gone to Jerusalem with his parents and was there in the temple talking with the religious leaders of the day who marveled at the wisdom of this 12 year old child so John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and he was his message was repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand and so it is interesting you might say the first word of the gospel is repent and so that was the message of John repent the kingdom of heaven is at hand for this he said is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah who said the voice of one crying in the wilderness prepare ye the way of the Lord make his paths straight so

he was fulfilling this prophecy of Isaiah in his message to the people and the same John had his raiment of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins and his meat was locusts and wild honey locusts are sort of a form of grasshopper it doesn't sound like a very good diet to me but I would imagine you stay pretty trim on that kind of a diet then he went out of Jerusalem and all Judea and all of the region about Jordan and the people and they were baptized by John in the Jordan as they confessed their sins but when John saw many of the Pharisees and the Sadducees coming to his baptism he said to them all you generation of vipers who has warned you to flee from the wrath of God bring forth fruit that demonstrate true repentance and don't think and say within yourselves well we have

Abraham as our father for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham and now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees and therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance but he that cometh after me is mightier than I whose shoes I'm not worthy to bear and he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire so the promise of John the Baptist to those who were coming to be baptized there's one is coming after me he's mightier than I am I'm not worthy to untie his shoes he's gonna baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor and he will gather his wheat into the garner and he will burn up

the chaff with unquenchable fire then came Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him but John forbid him saying I have need to be baptized of you and you come to me and Jesus answering said unto him suffer it to be so now for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness and so he suffered him and Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water and lo the heavens were opened unto him he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him and lo a voice from heaven saying this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased here we see the Trinity of the Godhead

Jesus being baptized as he came up out of the water the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him and then this voice from heaven that declares this is my beloved son

in whom I am well pleased there are people say well the word Trinity isn't in the Bible and so you're teaching the Trinity but it's not biblical oh but it is that the word Trinity is not in the Bible that's true but yet here you have the three and they are all recognized as God Jesus when he was baptized coming up out of the water the heavens open the Spirit of God descending like a dove lighting upon him and the voice of the Father from heaven saying this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased so then Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil and when he had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights he afterwards was hungry now I have read I have not experienced this but I have read that if you go on a prolonged fast that after the eighth day you lose your

appetite and it's sort of coasting for a while it isn't difficult to maintain a fast if you can get through that first eight days they said that it isn't until about the 40th day that you start getting hungry again and they say that when that hunger comes after a prolonged fast it is very important that you go ahead and you start eating because the hunger indicates that you are now beginning to starve to death and if you don't eat you'll soon be dead and so here he has been fasting for 40 days and notice afterwards he was hungry and when the tempter came to him he said if thou be the Son of God command these stones to be made bread so here he is in a very vulnerable position he's hungry he's not eaten for 40 days and Satan comes to him and says look if you are the Son of God and that if

is not an indicative it is a subjunctive which is since you are the Son of God command that these stones be made bread and he answered him and said it is written man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God and the devil took him up to the holy city and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple and he said unto him if thou be the Son of God or again the subjunctive since that you are the Son of God cast yourself down for it is written he will give his angels charge concerning thee and in their hands they will bear thee up lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone and Jesus said unto him it is written again thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God so again the devil took him into an exceeding high mountain showed him all of the kingdoms of

the world and the glory of them and he said unto him all these things will I give thee if you will just fall down and worship me then said Jesus unto him get thee hence Satan for it is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve then the devil left him and behold the angels came and ministered unto him so the temptation but notice how that in the temptation Satan is tempting him first of all to use his divine powers since you are the Son of God and since you're hungry just turn those stones into bread use your divine powers for your own personal benefit to fulfill the lust of your flesh you're hungry and so use your powers you know to feed your flesh and Jesus said it is written man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the

mouth of God in other words he answered the temptation with the scriptures and that is why it is so very important that we have a good working knowledge of the scriptures as the Bible said thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee it is your greatest defense and power against temptation is your working knowledge of the Word of God and it is interesting to note that Jesus answered every temptation with the declaration it is written he is answering it with the Word of God so the second temptation as he is suggesting that he use now he does something spectacular to draw attention to himself jump off the pinnacle of the temple and when you land at the bottom uninjured imagine how the crowds are going to come around you and give you a good chance to just really

demonstrate who you are and so Jesus he quotes scripture but he sort of quotes it out of context and be careful about that because Satan so often is quoting scripture out of context he is saying it is written you know he will give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways to bear thee up lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone but Jesus is comparing scriptures with scriptures and that's always a wise thing to do written again thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God in other words don't put yourself deliberately into jeopardy just to try and prove the scriptures to be true again the devil took him to this exceeding high mountain and showed him the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them and he said unto them all of these will I give to thee if you will fall down

and worship me in another gospel which tells us of this temptation Satan is bragging he said for they are mine and I can give them to whomever I will Jesus did not dispute that the world does belong to Satan the glory of the world is his to bestow and how many today have fallen to that temptation and they are sacrificing their souls for the glory that the world is offering to them and so offering it to Jesus and he said it is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve so the devil then left him and behold the angels came and ministered unto him now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison he departed into Galilee and leaving Nazareth he came and he dwelt in Capernaum which is upon the seacoast that is the Sea of Galilee and Capernaum is one of the

cities there on the shores of the Sea of Galilee in the borders of Zebulun and Nephilim and that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying the land of Zebulun and the land of Nephilim by the way of the sea beyond the Jordan the Galilee of the Gentiles the people which sat in darkness saw great light and to them that sat in the region of the shadow of death light is sprung up and from that time Jesus began to preach and to say repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

What was the first word of John's message? Repent. What's the first word of Jesus' ministry? Repent.

Does that say anything to you? And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee saw two brethren Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea for they were fishers and he saith unto them follow me and I will make you fishers of men and they immediately left their nets and followed him and then going from there he saw two other brothers James and John the sons of Zebedee and they were in the ship with Zebedee their father and they were amending their nets and he called them and they immediately left the ship and their father and followed him and Jesus went about Galilee teaching in their synagogues preaching the gospel of the kingdom healing all manner of sickness all manner of disease among the people and his fame went throughout all of Syria and they brought unto him all of the sick people that were taken with diverse diseases and torments and those which were possessed with devils and those which were lunatics and that had palsy and he healed them and there followed him a great multitudes of people from Galilee and from Decapolis that is the ten cities around the northern end of the Sea of Galilee and from Jerusalem and from Judea and from beyond Jordan. So the way Matthew has this if you just take the account from Matthew it sounds like you know Jesus is just walking along the Sea of Galilee and he sees Peter and his brother Andrew and they're out there in their fishing boat and Jesus says come and follow me and I'll make you fishers of men and they left their nets and followed Jesus as though you know that just happened just spontaneously and it wasn't anything that they really stopped to consider but as we read in the other Gospels this was not their first encounter with Jesus they had observed and seen Jesus before this is where Jesus is now calling them to follow him and to become involved in the ministry that they will ultimately have of bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world so it isn't just something that was not with a lot of forethought and all that they had no doubt had in advance and it isn't just an immediate kind of you know just you know dumping things and following Jesus but it is something that is

done with foresight and forethought. Father we thank you for the beginning of the gospel of Matthew here and Lord as we enter into the New Testament and now with the Gospels and we get these recorded stories about you Lord how grateful we are for them and open our hearts our minds and teach us and instruct us Lord and may we become true disciples and followers of Jesus Christ even as were the apostles and those disciples that we read about here in the scriptures and so Lord help us that we might be true disciples in Jesus name we pray.

Amen.

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