

[Luke 2:1-21; Mat 1.18-25] The gospels are interesting in the different ways they reflect on the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. We've looked at this before, but sometimes it's an important key in studying a particular passage.

Matthew presents Jesus as Messiah and King of Israel, and in verses 1-17, we find the genealogy of Joseph given, because this genealogy reflects the regal genealogy of Jesus; it reflects the fact that Jesus Christ is in line to be the King of Israel.

In Luke's Gospel, Luke presents Jesus Christ as the son of man. Here in Luke, we have the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ all the way back to Adam. This is the natural lineage of the Lord, as far as Jesus Christ being the son of man. In other words, Luke, being a physician, the Lord allowed him to reflect upon the humanity of the son of man; the natural, legal line.

But, there's something very interesting here: Hold your finger in Matthew and look with me in [Luke 3:31], and you will find some interesting genealogy. Mary's lineage departs with Joseph's at David. David had two sons (well, he had more than that), and one of his sons is Solomon through whom Joseph's regal line came. But, Mary's line came through Nathan. Nathan was the second oldest son of Bathsheba and Solomon was the oldest. Nathan is where the lineage splits.

Now, if you look back in Matthew 1:6, it says [Matthew 1:6]. There are no mentions of women in Mary's lineage, but there are a few in Matthew, in the regal lineage: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. (Well, Bathsheba isn't mentioned by name, it says, "the wife of Uriah".)

Why did the Lord split the lineage of Mary and Joseph at David? He did that for a reason. If you look down in verse 11, it says [Matthew 1:11] Josiah was a good king, but the ones after him left a lot to be desired. In fact, there are two names missing in this genealogy here in Matthew. The two names missing are Jehoakim and Jeconiah.

[2 Chronicles 36:8; on him, not in] I don't know why the names changer here, but Jehoachin is Jeconiah. You can find that to be true in 1 Chronicles 3:16. But, many believe that Jehoachin was cut off because of what was found on him; what many believe was found on him was tattoos.

This isn't talking about some anchor that a sailor got while overseas or something like that. This is talking specifically about tattoos given to false gods. In fact, it was against the law to have a tattoo to any gods or anything that had to do with witchcraft. However, that's what a lot of people think was found on him.

[Jeremiah 22:24] This has to do with Jeconiah and what happened to his son. You see the "Coniah" here? Which is the son of Jehoakim? The one that was cut off for that tattoo? Coniah is a shortened form. You know what's been cut out of his name? "Je." A reference to Jehovah. He was cut off from Jehovah. [Jeremiah 22:28] This is just before the Babylonian captivity, [Jeremiah 22:29-30].

Why did this transpire? If Jesus the Christ were the son of Joseph, he would not be able to rule and reign over Israel on the throne of his father David, because from this point on, no king would be able to prosper upon the throne of David. That's why the virgin birth is so important. When you look at the lineage of Mary, where it departed, right there in David's court (one through Nathan and one through Solomon), you can see that Jesus had to be virgin born in order to be able to successfully take the throne of his father David. God is never ambiguous, and if He said that no one would be successful, he meant it. If Jesus had been born of Joseph, he would have been disqualified.

This king, Coniah or Jeconiah, was to be written childless. No children as far as God was concerned. The Lord is interested in detail, even though many men will say it's not important to study detail, or to study what the Scriptures actually say. They call it "dry theology". But, the Lord is interested in details, not only in affairs of state, but also in the affairs of you and me.

[Galatians 4:4] The reference of being made unto a woman is a reference to the virgin birth. The first reference to a virgin birth is found in Genesis 3:15, which says, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed ***and her seed***; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

So, we find Jesus born of a virgin and just as in the days of Ezra 1:1, "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom..." When God has plans and purposes that are higher than man, he can still use man, even men that are not close to Him, to accomplish His task.

[Luke 2:1] This is actually talking about a census, and not taxes, but taxes always followed a census in short order. I wonder what moved Caesar to do this when he did? He had set out to do this 27 years earlier, but had been delayed by some troubles somewhere, so why now? Why did God do this? Because Mary and Joseph were in the wrong place, so God had the government intervene, and they obeyed the lawful orders of the government.

Look at this expression: "It came to pass". It not only came to pass in the life of Joseph and Mary, but it came to pass in the lives of the shepherds as well. [Luke 2:15]

I want you to appreciate the fact that we're not just children of God that He winds up and puts us to simply running around like a toy until our spring is run out or something breaks; God is interested in every little detail of our lives, and things are coming to pass!

Remember when Paul was on the road to Damascus? The NAS tells us that it came about that Jesus met Paul on the road to Damascus. It wasn't just an accident. The Lord knew where Paul was going to be because the Lord stirred Paul and the powers that be in the synagogue to go to Damascus to incarcerate people for following Jesus the Christ.

[Acts 9] This is in the life of Peter. Isn't it interesting that this is the same chapter that Paul was incarcerated by the Lord in verse 3 [Acts 9:3; same as "it came to pass"]. But, look with me down in [Acts 9:32-34]. "It came to pass as Peter moved through all quarters..." It came to pass as Peter was moving. Notice the word "it" is singular. It came to pass that Peter was to go to the house of this sick person who was sick with the palsy.

It was the Lord's plan to minister to this one who had been sick for eight years. [Acts 9:36-37; Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick....] Isn't it interesting? What came to pass? Her sickness. What else came to pass? She died. That also came to pass. Just like in the life of Lazarus, about whom it came to pass that he was sick and then he died. [Acts 9:37b-41; begin with "whom when they..."] I just think that we need to appreciate that certain things come to pass, just on time, just like they're supposed to, just like the birth of Jesus the Christ.

I don't think any of you are here, except by God's appointment. I'm here because of God's appointment and you're here because of God's appointment. We need to believe and appreciate that, because often, we can become discouraged about things that come to pass in our lives. Particularly when you don't like what's happening in your life. We need to appreciate that God makes no mistakes.

Look down in [Acts 10; but, 9:43 first]. Why did Peter tarry at Joppa? God wanted Peter to tarry in Joppa long enough so that someone could come to get Peter to come down and explain some things. Cornelius. If Peter had been going to and fro, it would have been more difficult for the Lord to send someone to get him, but here, he tarried for many days in Joppa. Also, he was with one Simon the tanner, and under Jewish law, it was against the law for people to touch dead animals. It made them unclean.

But, Peter was down there, and he apparently didn't feel too dirty. [Acts 10:9-10] I like the fact that it says, "on the morrow"; the next day, the 6th hour; it gives specific details. We don't have a book written about us that we can read what hour and what day the Lord performed something in our lives, but we do in Peter's and Paul's and Mary's and Joseph's.

Notice that the Lord even made him very hungry, to help him not to resist killing and eating things that he was not used to eating. [Acts 10:25; "and as Peter was coming in..." NAS has "and when it came about..."; this is "it came to pass".]

God had an appointment for Peter to meet with Cornelius. There are times when you can look back on your life and see how the Lord worked. [My leg is a perfect example of this, as it put me in a particular place at a particular time with particular people.] I've had many of these experiences. Have you? Maybe you don't see it at the time, but can you look back and see it? You've sat next to just the right person or something. That would be an "it came to pass" event. Think about it.

We can see this, of course, in the life of Paul. Things came to pass in the life of Paul that can't be explained, except through the workings of the Lord. Think about when Paul tried to go into Asia and God forbade Paul from going into Asia. It *didn't* come to pass that Paul went into Asia. What did come to pass is that Paul had a vision, so he went to Macedonia, in which is Bithinia, Cappadocia, and other places toward the Black Sea, and Paul went to Greece and into Europe. We can see how God moves in Mysterious Ways.

[Ephesians 2:10] We are His creation, and we have been created for good works. We can look for those opportunities to come to pass because God is working in us for what? Both to do His will and to do His good works. We *can* resist that working, but you can be assured that God is working in us all.

It came to pass. A lot of things come to pass, and it's no accident. Think about this next time something just seems to come to pass.

[John 15:16] God has chosen us to be fruitful. Fruit bearing is being the blessing that God wants us to be, whether it's the one in Joppa, or the one in Homer, Alaska, or the one in Arkansas, or New Zealand, or some other place. You never know where those opportunities to be a blessing, where those opportunities may come to pass.

But, you do need to be sensitive to them and pay attention. I know that God has chosen me and ordained me that my fruit should remain. I also know that all things are working together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose, as we're told in Romans 8:28.

There are no accidents; it comes to pass.

[1 Peter 1:1-2] You see the word "elect" in verse 2? That word "elect", or "called out" is actually in verse 1 in the Greek text. "Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ unto the elect..." or to the chosen Gentiles. "Strangers" is "Gentiles". Not just saved Gentiles, but the elect Gentiles. See the word "scattered"? That's the Greek word "diaspora". That's spores, like in mushrooms. "Dia spora" is "through sowing".

What this passage is telling us is this: Peter is writing to those elect strangers that have been sown. They have been sown in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithinia. How? According to the foreknowledge of God. God knew what He was doing when He sowed individuals in these cities. I mean, who in the world would want to go live in Pontus? Why would you go there? Because God was working in these individuals and sowed them in a place where they could do what? Produce fruit.

God has worked in our lives in the same way. I have been sown in Alaska to produce fruit. You have been sown in Alaska to produce fruit. You have been sown in offices and homes and businesses so that you can produce and bear fruit. And it *will* come to pass in your life, just as it came to pass in Mary and Joseph's and even in Jesus' lives; things came to pass in his life even.

Just like in the life of Zecharias. [Luke 1] The birth of John the Baptizer was not an accident. [Luke 1:8; 23-24; 41] God kept Elizabeth barren for the purpose of having John the Baptizer being conceived about six months before Jesus, so Elizabeth and Mary could come together and have fellowship and Elizabeth could be filled with the Holy Spirit and John... Look in verse 15; when does verse 15 tell us that John was filled with the Holy Spirit? From the womb! This was not all one big coincidence or accident. It all came to pass!

Those things were not accidents. Those things happened because who is in control? God is in control, and you don't have to be afraid; you don't have to fear.

I hope that you appreciate the impact of the fact that God is allowing things to come to pass in your life for a purpose, so don't be afraid; you don't even have to be astonished.

It comes to pass for a purpose, so there's no reason to be afraid.