

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MATTHEW 1:1-25

- 1 Consider how Jesus is the prophesied Son of David and also the Son of Abraham: Throughout his Gospel, Matthew presents Jesus as the kingly Messiah promised from David's royal line.

NOTE: Jesus fulfilled the prophecies made about a coming Son of both Abraham and David. But, even more than that, 2 Cor. 1:20 says that all the promises of God find their yes in Him." That means is that, if you have Christ, eventually you will have both Christ and everything else that God has promised in sending a Messiah. This section can be used explore the unique dimensions of God's promises to His people through Jesus being both the promised Son of Abraham and the promised Son of David.

 Look up 2 Samuel 7:12-16 to see how the Messiah would be from David. From the very first sentence in Matthew, discuss how Jesus fulfilled this prophecy.

ADDITIONAL: What specific promises did Jesus fulfill in being the prophesied Son of David? In what ways was the world blessed or does the world need the prophesied Son of David? In what ways does this prophecy affect your life/give you hope/encourage you?

NOTE: God says to David, "one of your offspring will be established as a king forever—over a kingdom that would be an everlasting kingdom." In fact, God makes His oath by describing it as sure forever. Secured forever by God.

 Matthew not only connected Jesus to David, but back yet further to Abraham. Jesus is the Seed of Abraham in whom all nations would be blessed. Discuss how Jesus is the Son of Abraham from Genesis 12:3. **TRANSITION:** Let's also discuss how Jesus is the promised offspring of Abraham.

ADDITIONAL / APPLICATION: What specific promises did Jesus fulfill in being the prophesied offspring of Abraham? In what ways was the world blessed or does the world need this promised One? In what ways does this prophecy affect your life/give you hope/encourage you? How does your relation to Jesus as the Son of Abraham affect your life and mission and choices?


NOTE: God calls a man named Abram out from His heathen country called Ur. God tells Abram to leave his home country and travel far away where God promises to make his family to be as large in number as amount of stars in the sky. God promises to bless Abram that He would be the father of many nations and that in him (or out of Him), all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gen 12:1-3)

- 2 This genealogy is noted for the unusual presence of four women. Women were rarely mentioned in ancient genealogies, and the four mentioned here are worthy of special note as examples of God's grace. They show how God can take unlikely people and use them in great ways.

NOTE: A significant criticism of the Bible is that it demoralizes women. But, contrary to the cultural norms of ignoring women and treating them as if they didn't count, scripture goes to great lengths to include them in its narratives. Especially clear in the gospels, women are brought into stories as significant characters even including their dialogue. This would have run countercultural to other historical literature written at the time and the general treatment of women. In fact, when many Jewish men prayed in the morning they thanked God that they were not Gentiles, slaves, or...women. YIKES. In including the four women in his opening genealogical record, Matthew is thundering the truth that Jesus overcomes the cultural stigma attached to women and displays His powerful grace by highlighting the lowest of society as lynch pins in His coming to earth.

 Tamar: Write a short bio of Tamar from Genesis 38

Tamar was a Canaanite who was Judah's daughter-in-law....and in Genesis 38, we find Tamar seducing her father-in-law into incest.

 Rahab: Write a short bio of Rahab from Joshua 2; 6:22-23

Rahab was a Canaanite and a prostitute

 Ruth: Write a short bio of Ruth from Ruth 1

Ruth is a Moabitess, a people known for their sexual immorality who at one point were practically left out of any interaction with the people of God.

 Her who had been the wife of Uriah: Write a short bio of Bathsheba (who is mentioned by implication in Matthew 1:6) from 2 Samuel 11

Matthew doesn't even say her name. It's like he is reminding—Bathsheba is here on this list because she committed adultery with David.


 Discuss the unusual presence of these four women in the genealogy.

ADDITIONAL: What surprises you about the inclusion of these women? What women would you expect to be included? (Sarah, Leah,


NOTE: 1. There are women in the list. Genealogies didn't normally include women.


2. They are marginalized and outsiders. Tamar and Rahab are both Canaanites, Ruth is a Moabitess, and the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba) is married to a Hittite.


3. They have moral stigmas attached to their stories. Tamar—incest. Rahab—prostitute. Ruth—the Moabite (see above), Bathsheba—adultery

 These four women have an important place in the genealogy of Jesus to demonstrate that He identifies with sinners in His genealogy, even as He will in His birth, baptism, life, and His death on the cross. "Jesus is heir of a line in which flows the blood of the harlot Rahab, and of the rustic Ruth; he is akin to the fallen and to the lowly, and he will show his love even to the poorest and most obscure." (Spurgeon)


- 3 Virgin Conception: How does the denial of Jesus' virgin birth affect the gospel message? So, what if Jesus had 2 biological human parents? What if Jesus had no human parents? Discuss the ramifications of these questions.


 Mary: "She was found with child of the Holy Spirit." Matthew plainly (without the greater detail found in the Gospel of Luke) presents the virginal conception and subsequent birth of Jesus. However, the virgin birth was difficult for people to believe back then, even as it is also doubted now by some.

 What verses would you use to support the prophecy and the fulfillment of the virgin birth of Jesus? Discuss your answers.

 We should consider what a great trial this was for a godly young woman like Mary, and for Joseph her betrothed. “Her situation was the most distressing and humiliating that can be conceived. Nothing but the fullest consciousness of her own integrity, and the strongest confidence in God, could have supported her in such trying circumstances, where her reputation, her honor, and her life were at stake.” (Clarke) What additional thoughts do you have about this situation?


4 JESUS as Savior: “You shall call his name JESUS” The name JESUS means “The Salvation of Yahweh.” As was later said by the Apostle Peter, there is no other name under heaven by which men must be saved (Acts 4:12). “For He will save His people from their sins” The angelic messenger briefly and eloquently stated the work of the coming Messiah, Jesus. He will come as a savior, and come to save His people from their sins. This description of the work of Jesus reminds us that Jesus meets us in our sin, but His purpose is to save us from our sins.


 Discuss how Jesus saves us first from the penalty of sin, then from the power of sin, and finally from the presence of sin.


 Discuss the link in many false religions with the denial of the depravity of man and the denial of the deity of Christ.

 JESUS as Immanuel: This title of Jesus refers both to His deity (God with us) and His identification and nearness to man (God with us).

5 Discuss the following implications of the name Immanuel:

 It shows how low God bent down to save man; He added the nature of one of His own creatures to His own divine nature, accepting the weaknesses, frailties, and dependency that the creature experiences.

 It shows what a great miracle it was that God could add a human nature to His own and still remain God.

 It shows that we can come to Him; because He has come to us. Whoever you may be, you need no priest or intercessor to introduce you to God, for God has introduced himself to you.

6 What were the circumstances that led up to you giving your life to Christ? Would you be willing to share with group your salvation story?

7 On a personal level, what are some of the circumstances in your life that cause you to question the faithfulness of God? Is there a circumstance that you feel comfortable to sharing with the group? What is a weakness in your life (personality, mental, relational or spiritual) that can cause you to be discouraged or depressed? If you desire, share a weakness and ask the group to speak truth into this situation.

PRAYER REQUESTS
