

Great Expectations

Matthew 1

I. Scripture reading: Matthew 1

II. Great Expectations: Whenever a promise is made, expectations mount. The more people to whom the promise is made, the more people will have expectations about its fulfillment. Whether it's the promise of presents and stockings for excited children on Christmas morning or the promise of marriage to a young woman you loves a young man, promises create a sense of expectation in the one or ones who receive the promise. Notice the promise that the angel made to Joseph as he gave instructions for naming the coming child Jesus: "he will save his people from their sins".

III. The Family Tree: Why did the angel refer to 'his people'? This Jesus was meant to save the Israelites, or Jews, from their sins. In what way were they his people? By his family tree, of course! This is the point Matthew made in providing a family tree here in the first part of his Gospel.

The Son of Abraham: (Gen. 12:3) "All nations on earth will be blessed through you."

The Son of Judah: (Gen. 49:10) "The scepter will not depart from Judah..."

The Son of Jesse: (Isaiah 11:1,10)

The Son of David: (2 Samuel 7:16; Luke 1:32b-33)

The Son of Judah's Kings: [see 1 King and 2 Kings] 7 righteous and 6 wicked listed in Matt. 1.

IV. Conclusion: What do you expect? The promise of Messiah to the Jewish people caused great expectations to build over the centuries of suffering and oppression. Their expectations proved to be accurate in many ways, but very wrong in other ways. In fact, Jesus failed to meet their expectations to such an extent that the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem hauled him off to Pilate that he might be put to death on a cross. "He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him" (John 1:11). Some of the Jews did receive, embrace and trust the Messiah, however, and "to all who received him... he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). What are you expecting from Jesus? Are your expectations realistic and based on the actual promises of God, or are they inventions of people – you or others? Here's the good news: God always keeps his promises and Jesus meets every expectation based on God's promises. As Paul wrote, Jesus is the "Yes" to all of God's promises (2 Corinthians 1:20). Come to the promised Messiah and find your great expectations beautifully and entirely fulfilled!