

Session 1 hinted at a Savior. Now, we'll explore prophecies about his lineage and birth. We'll start with the Abrahamic covenant, then trace the lineage through Isaac, Judah, and David's house. This leads us to the predicted virgin birth in Bethlehem (Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5:2).

This isn't just academic. It's a journey into divine plans and redemption methods. The genealogical records in Matthew and Luke's Gospels aren't just family trees; they show God's faithfulness, linking prophecies to their fulfillment in Jesus.

This chapter invites readers to explore these hints of the Messiah's birth, revealing the truth about the awaited King.

GENESIS 12:3

1. Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: **2.** And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: **3.** And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 12:3 signifies a pivotal shift in God's dealings, marking a distinct turning point in the divine narrative. Dispensationalists, like myself, view this as a clear transition, second only to Genesis 3's 'fall of man'.

From Genesis 3 to 5, God deals with all of humanity, shifting focus to Noah's family in Genesis 6-11. This narrows even further in Genesis 12, where God works primarily through Abram, later renamed Abraham. This progression, from all of humanity, to one family, to one man, signals significant shifts in God's approach.

From Genesis 12, being right with God meant being right with Abraham, as God promised to bless or curse others based on their dealings with him. The promise was specific to Abraham and his lineage, implying that all nations of the earth would be blessed through him.

Consequently, the Scripture largely omits other families from this point, focusing on Abraham and his descendants unless they intersect with Israel's journey. Almost every chapter from Genesis 12 to the Pauline epistles deals with Abraham's lineage, with the possible exception of the book of Job.

1. **The Book of Ruth** converges into the lineage of King David, making it a significant part of Jewish history and the messianic prophecy.
2. **Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes**, even when dealing with universal themes, are an integral part of Jewish wisdom literature and worship.
3. **The Story of Jonah** emphasizes the Jewish prophet's mission to a foreign city, but the narrative revolves around the monotheistic God of Israel and the concept of repentance that is central to Jewish theology.
4. **The Book of Daniel** highlights the sovereignty of the God of Israel over all nations and showcases the faithfulness of Jewish individuals living in exile.
5. Prophetic books like **Nahum** and **Obediah** are about Nineveh and Edom, respectively. However, the judgment upon those nations has to do with their treatment of the Jewish people, and thus wouldn't even be in the scriptures or in the realm of God's activity were it not for Israel.

THE ABRAHAMIC LINE THROUGH ISAAC

Genesis 17:15-16 narrows the prophetic line to Isaac, Abraham's awaited heir. The story pivots around human effort and divine promise, embodied by Hagar and Sarah. Hagar, Sarah's servant, bore Abraham a son, Ishmael, due to Abraham's striving. Yet, God's plan was for Isaac, Sarah's son, born through divine intervention in her old age, to be the true child of promise. These sons represent two paths: human effort and divine promise. God's promise was explicit that it would be fulfilled through Sarah, thus we focus on her descendants in the search for the Messiah, bypassing Hagar and Keturah's descendants as the Scripture does.

FURTHER NARROWED THROUGH JACOB

Genesis 25:23 narrows the promise to Isaac's sons, Esau and Jacob. Despite Esau's elder status, God told Rebecca, their pregnant mother, that Esau would serve Jacob. Fulfilling this prophecy, Jacob, not Esau, received Isaac's blessing, continuing the Messiah's lineage. The biblical focus shifts to Jacob's descendants, referencing Esau's only when interacting with the Israelites, emphasizing the lineage's narrowing.

NARROWED FURTHER STILL THROUGH JUDAH

Genesis 49:10 prophesies that the Messiah will come from Jacob's son, Judah, narrowing down the lineage. This prophecy is subtle, yet it guides Scripture students to anticipate Judah's importance. As Scripture progresses, Judah becomes the focus, with other tribes fading away. Micah 5:2 reaffirms this, predicting the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem, Judah. Matthew 2:4-6 confirms this interpretation.

2 SAMUEL 7:12-13

12. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. **13.** He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

David, a shepherd turned king from the tribe of Judah, was succeeded by his wise son, Solomon. After Solomon's death, the kingdom split into "Israel" in the north and "Judah" in the south. The term "Jew" stems from "Judean," referring to someone from the tribe or kingdom of Judah.

God's promise to David was explicit; the Messiah would come from his lineage. This prophecy, recorded in 2 Samuel 7:12-13, linked the Messiah's role to reigning, not just delivering, and establishing a kingdom. This introduced the term "kingdom" in Messiah's context, enhancing our understanding of His role.

Contrarily, some might see this as a simple statement, not a prophecy of a future Messianic kingdom through David's line. Yet, the focus of Scripture post this prophecy, until Paul's time, primarily revolves around the Davidic line and the future kingdom, neglecting other Jewish lineages and expectations.

We see this Davidic emphasis in so many passages, including:

- **Isaiah 11:1-10:**
 - A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots, a Branch will bear fruit. This passage speaks to the wisdom, understanding, and fear of the Lord this descendant of Jesse (David's father) will have.

- **Jeremiah 23:5-6:**
 - The promise of a "righteous Branch" for David, who will reign as king and deal wisely, bringing justice and righteousness.
- **Jeremiah 33:14-17:**
 - The Lord's promise that He will fulfill the gracious promise He made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, and in those days and at that time, He will cause a "righteous Branch" of David to spring forth.
- **Ezekiel 34:23-24:**
 - God will set up one shepherd over them, His servant David, who will feed them and be their shepherd.
- **Ezekiel 37:24-25:**
 - David will be king over the reunited Israel, they will follow God's laws, and they will live in the land forever.
- **Hosea 3:5:**
 - The Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king in the last days.
- **Amos 9:11:**
 - The prophecy that in "that day" the booth of David, which has fallen, will be raised up and rebuilt.
- **Zechariah 12:7-10:**
 - The Lord will save the tents of Judah first, and a prophecy about looking upon the one whom they have pierced, mourning for him as one mourns for an only child. God promises to pour grace on the house of David.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke trace Jesus's lineage back to the house of David. Despite this, the Jewish people largely rejected Jesus as the Messiah, not due to doubts about His lineage, but due to His life, teachings, death, and resurrection. After Jesus's rejection, the Jewish people faced difficulty in tracing the Davidic lineage due to lost genealogical records after the Second Temple's destruction in AD 70. This led to a shift in emphasis on the Messiah's Davidic lineage, without negating its importance in Messianic prophecy.

ISAIAH 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

The prophecies of Messiah's unique birth, notably Isaiah 7:14, predict a miraculous virgin birth, introducing a supernatural element into His arrival. However, this prophecy also had an immediate context, serving as a sign for King Ahaz with its fulfillment in Isaiah 8:1-4. This exemplifies the principle of dual fulfillment in biblical interpretation, where prophecies have an immediate fulfillment and a more complete one later. Hosea 11:1 is another instance of this, with its reference to Israel's exodus from Egypt later related to Jesus in Matthew 2:15. Similarly, the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 is seen in Jesus's birth as recounted in Matthew 1:22-23, affirming the belief that Jesus is the Messiah, born of a virgin, as prophesied.

Examining Isaiah 7:14, we find aspects indicating a broader Messianic interpretation.

1. The prophecy's grand language, a virgin conceiving and bearing a son, suggests something beyond immediate context.
2. The child's name, 'Immanuel' ('God with us'), hints at divine intervention.
3. Other explicit Messianic prophecies in Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6-7 and Isaiah 53) support this interpretation.
4. The prophecy's structure, Hebrew parallelism, and the final clause, "God with us," imply a divine figure.

Thus, Isaiah 7:14, even without Matthew's Gospel, offers strong reasons to interpret it as a prophecy extending beyond its historical context to the virgin birth of the Messiah.

ISAIAH 9:6-7

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Jewish scholars interpret Isaiah 9:6-7 as referring to Hezekiah, Ahaz's son. They translate the verse differently: "A child has been born to us, a son given to us, and the authority is upon his shoulder. The wondrous adviser, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, called his name 'the prince of peace.'" Here, divine titles are seen as those bestowing the name, not as the child's names.

This translation separates the divine titles from the act of naming and views the titles as God's descriptors. The phrase "called his name 'the prince of peace'" is seen as a separate action by God, indicating a distinct role between God and the child. It emphasizes God's direct involvement in the child's naming and destiny, suggesting a divine purpose.

Comparing this to a more literal translation, it's clear that the Hebrew structure doesn't indicate the divine being the subject naming. The titles are generally seen as descriptions of the child, unlike the interpretive translation that presents them as bestowed by an external divine figure.

This interpretive translation offers a non-Messianic perspective, but isn't the most literal representation of the Hebrew text. To remove Messiah from the text, it must be interpreted rather than taken literally.

Christians recognize the prophecies in Isaiah 9:6-7 for their detailed anticipation of the Messiah's birth. They state a child will be born, a son will be given, with the government upon his shoulder, and he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. The Jewish interpretation suggests these verses refer to Hezekiah, Ahaz's son.

CONCLUSION

Tracing the Messiah's lineage in the Bible starts broadly with God's promise to Abraham and narrows down through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, to King David. The prophecy of a virgin birth and Isaiah's prophecies further detail the Messiah's unique birth and reign. These, along with Jesus Christ's lineage, support the Christian belief of Him as the Messiah, despite differing interpretations, especially in Jewish tradition.