# Lesson 1 Matthew 1Birth of Jesus

Life in Christ: When did you feel closest to Our Lord this week?

1. What does Matthew 9:9 reveal that lends great credibility to his Gospel and that is only true for himself and St. John among the Gospel writers?

Matthew 9:9

9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.

Eusebius of Caesarea (A.D. 325), Church History, 3.24.5-6

Nevertheless, of all the disciples of the lord, only Matthew and John have left us written memorials and they, tradition says, were led to write only under the pressure of necessity. For Matthew, who had at first preached to the Hebrews, when he was about to go to other peoples, committed his Gospel to writing in his native tongue

1. Matthew’s Gospel begins with the words, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ.” Literally, the words are: The book of the origin (Greek biblos geneseos) of Jesus Christ. Genesis (chapter 2) begins with these same words: This is the book of the origin (biblos geneseos) of heaven and earth. What message is the Gospel conveying with these words?
2. Why would the three titles given to Jesus in verse 1 be important to Matthew’s Jewish audience?

Matthew 1:1

1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

1. Women were not usually included in genealogies. Read the background of the four women mentioned in the genealogy:

A. Tamar

Genesis 38:6-26

 6 Judah got a wife named Tamar for his firstborn, Er.

 7 But Er, Judah’s firstborn, greatly offended the LORD; so the LORD took his life.

 8 Then Judah said to Onan, “Have intercourse with your brother’s wife, in fulfillment of your duty as brother-in-law, and thus preserve your brother’s line.”\*

 9 Onan, however, knew that the offspring would not be his; so whenever he had intercourse with his brother’s wife, he wasted his seed on the ground, to avoid giving offspring to his brother.

10 What he did greatly offended the LORD, and the LORD took his life too.

11 Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, “Remain a widow in your father’s house until my son Shelah grows up”—for he feared that Shelah also might die like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her father’s house.

12 Time passed, and the daughter of Shua, Judah’s wife, died. After Judah completed the period of mourning, he went up to Timnah, to those who were shearing his sheep, in company with his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 Then Tamar was told, “Your father-in-law is on his way up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”

14 So she took off her widow’s garments, covered herself with a shawl, and having wrapped herself sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the way to Timnah; for she was aware that, although Shelah was now grown up, she had not been given to him in marriage.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, since she had covered her face.

16 So he went over to her at the roadside and said, “Come, let me have intercourse with you,” for he did not realize that she was his daughter-in-law. She replied, “What will you pay me for letting you have intercourse with me?”

17 He answered, “I will send you a young goat from the flock.” “Very well,” she said, “provided you leave me a pledge until you send it.”

18 Judah asked, “What pledge should I leave you?” She answered, “Your seal and cord,\* and the staff in your hand.” So he gave them to her and had intercourse with her, and she conceived by him.

19 After she got up and went away, she took off her shawl and put on her widow’s garments again.

20 Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to recover the pledge from the woman; but he did not find her.

21 So he asked the men of that place, “Where is the prostitute,\* the one by the roadside in Enaim?” But they answered, “No prostitute has been here.”

22 He went back to Judah and told him, “I did not find her; and besides, the men of the place said, ‘No prostitute has been here.’”

23 “Let her keep the things,” Judah replied; “otherwise we will become a laughingstock. After all, I did send her this young goat, but you did not find her.”

24 About three months later, Judah was told, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has acted like a harlot and now she is pregnant from her harlotry.” Judah said, “Bring her out; let her be burned.”

25 But as she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, “It is by the man to whom these things belong that I am pregnant.” Then she said, “See whose seal and cord and staff these are.”

26 Judah recognized them and said, “She is in the right rather than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.” He had no further sexual relations with her.

B Rahab

Joshua 2:1-16

 1 Then Joshua, son of Nun, secretly sent out two spies from Shittim, saying, “Go, reconnoiter the land and Jericho.” When the two reached Jericho, they went into the house of a prostitute named Rahab, where they lodged.

 2 But a report was brought to the king of Jericho: “Some men came here last night, Israelites, to spy out the land.”

 3 So the king of Jericho sent Rahab the order, “Bring out the men who have come to you and entered your house, for they have come to spy out the entire land.”

 4 The woman had taken the two men and hidden them, so she said, “True, the men you speak of came to me, but I did not know where they came from.

 5 At dark, when it was time to close the gate, they left, and I do not know where they went. You will have to pursue them quickly to overtake them.”

 6 Now, she had led them to the roof, and hidden them among her stalks of flax spread out\* there.

 7 But the pursuers set out along the way to the fords of the Jordan. As soon as they had left to pursue them, the gate was shut.

 8 Before the spies lay down, Rahab went up to them on the roof

 9 and said:\* “I know that the LORD has given you the land, that a dread of you has come upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land tremble with fear because of you.

10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites beyond the Jordan, whom you destroyed under the ban.

11 We heard, and our hearts melted within us; everyone is utterly dispirited because of you, since the LORD, your God, is God in heaven above and on earth below.

12 f Now then, swear to me by the LORD that, since I am showing kindness to you, you in turn will show kindness to my family. Give me a reliable sign

13 that you will allow my father and mother, brothers and sisters, and my whole family to live, and that you will deliver us from death.”

14 “We pledge our lives for yours,” they answered her. “If you do not betray our mission, we will be faithful in showing kindness to you when the LORD gives us the land.”

15 Then she let them down through the window with a rope; for she lived in a house built into the city wall.\*

16 “Go up into the hill country,” she said, “that your pursuers may not come upon you. Hide there for three days, until they return; then you may go on your way.”

Joshua 6:16-17

16 The seventh time around, the priests blew the horns and Joshua said to the people, "Now shout, for the LORD has given you the city

17 and everything in it. It is under the LORD'S ban. Only the harlot Rahab and all who are in the house with her are to be spared, because she hid the messengers we sent.

C. Ruth

Ruth 1:14-18

14 Again they sobbed aloud and wept; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth stayed with her.

15 "See now!" she said, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her god. Go back after your sister-in-law!"

16 [4](#4) But Ruth said, "Do not ask me to abandon or forsake you! for wherever you go I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge, your people shall be my people, and your God my God.

17 Wherever you die I will die, and there be buried. May the LORD do so and so to me, and more besides, if aught but death separates me from you!"

18 Naomi then ceased to urge her, for she saw she was determined to go with her.

Ruth 4:13-17

13 Boaz took Ruth. When they came together as man and wife, the LORD enabled her to conceive and she bore a son.

14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the LORD who has not failed to provide you today with an heir! May he become famous in Israel!

15 He will be your comfort and the support of your old age, for his mother is the daughter-in-law who loves you. She is worth more to you than seven sons!"

16 [7](#7) Naomi took the child, placed him on her lap, and became his nurse.

17 [8](#8) And the neighbor women gave him his name, at the news that a grandson had been born to Naomi. They called him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

D. Wife of Uriah: 2 Samuel 11:1-3 and 23-27

2 Samuel 11:1-3

1 [1](#1) At the turn of the year, when kings go out on campaign, David sent out Joab along with his officers and the army of Israel, and they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. David, however, remained in Jerusalem.

2 One evening David rose from his siesta and strolled about on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing, who was very beautiful.

3 David had inquiries made about the woman and was told, "She is Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam, and wife of (Joab's armor-bearer) Uriah the Hittite."

4 Then David sent messengers and took her. When she came to him, he took her to bed, at a time when she was just purified after her period; and she returned to her house.

2 Samuel 11:23-27

23 He told David: "The men had us at a disadvantage and came out into the open against us, but we pushed them back to the entrance of the city gate.

24 Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall above, and some of the king's servants died, among them your servant Uriah."

25 David said to the messenger: "This is what you shall convey to Joab: 'Do not be chagrined at this, for the sword devours now here and now there. Strengthen your attack on the city and destroy it.' Encourage him."

26 When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband had died, she mourned her lord.

27 But once the mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her into his house. She became his wife and bore him a son. But the LORD was displeased with what David had done.

1. Why do you think each of these women have been included here?
* Tamar:
* Rahab:
* Ruth:
* Wife of Uriah:
1. Who are the people who led you to Christ and the Church?
2. The “wife of Uriah” was Bathsheba by whom was born Solomon, King David’s successor. In Solomon’s court she held considerable power and presented petitions to her son, the king. Her title was Queen Mother and she was singularly honored. Matthew’s Gospel presents Jesus as the New Moses, New David, and the New Solomon. What does this passage in 1 Kings tell you about the honor and veneration due to the Queen Mother? Who is the Queen Mother to the King of Kings?

1 Kings 2:19

Then Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah, and the king stood up to meet her and paid her homage. Then he sat down upon his throne, and a throne was provided for the king’s mother, who sat at his right.