

Dominican Institute, Ibadan
Department of Theology
Second Semester Examination
Academic Year 2020-2021

Name: Venancio Sapa Mbala
Mat. no: DI/894
Course: TH/312 Gospel of Matthew
Class: Theology III
Date: 17th June 2021

I. MANDATORY QUESTION

1. About the “Infancy narrative”:

- a) Compare Matthew and Luke.
- b) Within this narrative in the First Gospel, how do you interpret the presence of only five women in the genealogy story of Jesus?

II. OPTIONAL QUESTION

2. Expose and explain the Christology of Matthew.

1st Question (compulsory question)

(b) In addition to Mary, the mother of Jesus, Matthew includes four women in his genealogy: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and (Bathsheba) the wife of Uriah. However, these women need special consideration. Even though their presence in genealogy is unusual according to biblical patterns. Hence, what did the four women have in common that prompted Matthew's choice? There have been three main explanations.

The **first proposal** is that the four OT women were regarded as **sinners**, and their inclusion foreshadowed for Matthew's readers the role of Jesus as the savior of sinful men. **Tamar** was a seductress and presented prostitute; **Rahab** was a prostitute; Uriah's wife was an adulteress...etc They connote the humiliation in Israel's mindset. So all these women entered unusually and surprisingly in salvation history and family of Jesus, for showing that: salvation is for all and that a very good life could come from a zigzag history.

The **second proposal** is that the women were regarded as **foreigners** and were included by Matthew to show that Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, was related by ancestry to the Gentiles. According to the Bible, Rahab and probably Tamar were Canaanites, while Ruth was a Moabite. Bathsheba is not identified in the OT as a foreigner, but it is as the wife of Uriah (the Hittite) that Matthew identified.

The **third proposal**, which has a considerable following today, finds two common elements in the four OT women, elements that they share with Mary: (a) there is something extraordinary or irregular in their union with their partners; a union which, though it may have been scandalous to outsiders, continued the blessed lineage of the Messiah; (b) the women showed initiative or played an important role in God's plan of salvation.

The Infancy Narrative: Compare Matthew and Luke.

(a) Matthew begins his story of Jesus by describing the wondrous and turbulent circumstances of his birth and early childhood. Matthew tracks Jesus' Davidic ancestry (1:2-17), describes the mysterious incidents surrounding his conception and naming (1:18-25), and then in the second half of the infancy narrative he describes the mixture of honor and murderous threats that greet Jesus' arrival (2:1-12), and the tortuous journey of the family as they experience exile, return, and displacement before settling providentially in Nazareth of Galilee (2:13-23). At the same time, through the arrival of the Magi and the murderous threats of Herod.

Some fundamental aspects of the story coincide with Luke's version, such as the location of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, the identification of Mary and Joseph, the affirmation of a virginal conception, and the dating of the event to the reign of Herod. Yet the two versions differ significantly in their overall tone and structure.

Luke builds his account around the parallel **annunciation, birth, and circumcision** stories of John the Baptist and Jesus. Matthew, on the other hand, focuses solely **on the origin of Jesus and the turbulent events that surround his birth**. Joseph's initial misunderstanding about the nature of Mary's pregnancy, the murderous hostility of Herod, and the displacement that it causes the family of Jesus give Matthew's account a more sober tone than that of Luke.

2nd Question (Optional Question)

Introduction

Fundamental and determinative for Matthean theology is the proclamation of Christ (Christology) that finds its pregnant expression in the confession of Peter, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (16:16). It is the confession of the believing community, the confession that Matthew seeks to reinforce and that is found in his presentation. According to Rudolf Schnackenburg in *The Gospel of Matthew*, (p.177) “That presentation is one of faith in Jesus the Messiah (**“the Anointed One”**), the awaited vessel of salvation, and is bound to the Christian conviction that Jesus is the “Son of God.” Matthew’s Christology presents Jesus, first and foremost as the messianic King, the Son of the royal house of David, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

The Christology of Matthew: “The Royal Messiah and Immanuel.”

The truth that Jesus is a divine being indicated even in Mark with the expression “Son of God” (Mark 1:1, 11; 9:7; 15:39), is understood by Matthew through its adoption in the confession of Peter, through the reverence of the disciples after the walking on the water (14:33), and through the mocking of the Crucified One on the part of unbelievers (27:40, 43). Over against contemporary Judaism, which rejected this Messiah, Matthew is especially concerned to establish the unique, especial messianic character of Jesus as attested in the Scriptures, the messianic character that leads logically to the confession of Jesus as the Son of God. The Son born of the Virgin Mary is from the Holy Spirit and is the promised redeemer and “God with us” of Isaiah 7:14 (Matt. 1:20-23). The flight into Egypt, which recalls Moses the liberator of Israel, climaxes in the realization by Christians that “Out of Egypt I have called my son” (2:15) is a reference to Jesus the Messiah. He is also the servant of God promised in the book of Isaiah (Matt. 12:17-21), and in his destiny, he fulfills many other elements of Old Testament prophecy. This explains the abundance of Christological designations in the Gospel of Matthew, and the concentration of particular elements that come to light in the Christian image of the Messiah in contrast to that of Judaism. Jesus, therefore, the shoot of David, is presented as Israel’s promised “king of salvation” in Matthew as nowhere else. On him are focused the genealogy (1:1-17), Joseph’s adoptive paternity (1:20), the outcry of the blind men (9:27; 20:30-31), the questioning on the part of the people (12:23), the supplication of the Gentile woman (15:22), and the acclamation of the entry into Jerusalem (21:9) and in the temple (21:15). Precisely this son of David is also the Son of God, as Matthew suggests to his readers in the conversation he has about the Son of David (22:42). But in his Christology, Matthew also directs our gaze to the Lord who remains with his community and is bound to it (Matt. 7:21-22; 14:28, 30; 17:4, 15; 25:11).

Conclusion

Matthew has many more references to the “Son of Man,” who for him is the same as the “Lord,” and who has a special relationship to the believing community. The Son of Man is the earthly Jesus (13:37; 16:13), the one crucified and raised by God, and most of all, the one to come with power as redeemer and judge (13:41; 16:28; 19:28; 24:39).