



Session

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THE PROMISED ONE

Matthew 1:1-17

Matthew, also known as Levi, was a tax collector. As a tax collector, and a Jew, Matthew would have been particularly hated by fellow Jews. In the social structure of the day, Matthew would have ranked below “Gentile” on the hierarchy of those with whom Jews would associate. Tax collectors were agents of Rome and known for taking more than the government’s share of the taxes to profit themselves. It would appear that Matthew was deeply entrenched in that practice. After Jesus chose Matthew to be His disciple, Matthew, as did other disciples, left his home and business and followed Jesus.

Matthew wrote his Gospel to the Jews who lived in the lands around the Mediterranean Sea. Matthew’s Jewish audience would have been well versed in the Old Testament. Jews were perplexed how Jesus, if He was indeed the Messiah of the Old Testament, ended up on a cross. Matthew determined to prove Jesus to be both Messiah and “Son of David,” a favorite term of Matthew’s. Matthew made known this connection in the very first verse of his Gospel when he began to trace the family tree of “Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

By identifying both David and Abraham in the context of this lineage, Matthew solidified for his Jewish audience that Jesus indeed did fulfill the covenants God made to both David and Abraham. Through those promises, Matthew took great care to outline the lineage in three sets of fourteen generations each. These sets included time before the rule of kings, during the rule of kings, and from the exile to Jesus’ birth. Matthew did not include every single ancestor of Jesus in his list, but he highlighted important names that would have been significant to his readers.

Matthew, unlike other Jewish historians, took the bold step of including four women in his genealogy. The inclusion of these women could have signified Matthew’s teaching in his book that the kingdom of heaven was intended for more than just Jewish males.

SESSION FOCUS

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus was the One God promised to send.

BIBLE STORY

Matthew 1:1-17

BIBLE VERSE

Matthew 1:16

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

The Book of Matthew confirms that everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

BIBLE SKILLS: Preschoolers will . . .

- Know that Matthew is the first book of the New Testament.
- Remember the names of familiar Bible people.



CONNECT WITH FAMILIES

Provide these weekly resources to help families explore the Bible together.

- Explore the Bible at Home (Printable: Music & Print Extras)
- Preschool Activity Page
- Preschool Family Card

MISSIONS ACTIVITY: FIND PLACES ON A GLOBE



Tools: Bible, large globe or world map, Missionary Photos & Places (Printable: Music & Print Extras)

- Print the Missionary Photos & Places and put the photos on a table near the globe. Put the place cards in the Bible.
- Invite children to look at the photos as you read the names of the people and where they serve.
- Next, remove the place cards from the Bible and read the names of the places. Direct children to match people and places by moving photos next to the corresponding place cards.
- Help children find the places of service on a globe. Remark that some of the missionaries serve in our country—the United States, and other missionaries serve in different countries.
- Pray for each of the families in the photos.

LEADER TIP!

Include this special missions-focused activity in addition to preschoolers' Bible Explorations.

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus was the One God promised to send.

BIBLE STORY

People in Jesus' Family
Matthew 1:1-17

BIBLE VERSE

Mary gave birth to Jesus.
Matthew 1:16

LEADER TIP!

At the beginning of December, display the Matthew Door Poster (Pack Item 15) outside your classroom to tell families that their child will be exploring the Book of Matthew, the first book in the New Testament.

LEADER TIP!

You choose! Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the session Bible verse you want to use with your group.

PEOPLE IN JESUS' FAMILY**Matthew 1:1-17**

Matthew was a tax collector in Capernaum. He collected money from the people for the Roman government.

One day, though, Matthew changed jobs. He became one of Jesus' disciples. For three years Matthew walked with Jesus and listened to Jesus teach people. Matthew learned a lot about Jesus and wanted to tell people about Jesus. Matthew knew Jesus was God's Son, and Jesus was the King who had been promised long ago.

Matthew knew that prophets told that Jesus would come. The prophets said God's Son would be from the family of Abraham. For years and years the people waited for the King to be born. When would a child from Abraham's family be the promised King?

Finally, the King came. And Matthew wanted everyone to know God kept His promise to Abraham. So Matthew wrote the story about Jesus' life. He began by writing the names of the people in Jesus' family from the time of Abraham. These are some of their names: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Obed, Jesse, David, Solomon, Josiah, and Joseph.

Joseph married Mary. And Mary gave birth to Jesus.

BIBLE VERSE

From the Bible text:

Mary gave birth to Jesus. Matthew 1:16

Paraphrase:

Mary gave birth to Jesus. Matthew 1:16



CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

GATHER

- Play music and invite preschoolers to move to Circle Time.
- Invite a child to tell about her grandparents. Write the family members' names on the dry erase board.
- Say: "Long ago, your grandparents were children just like you, and they had grandparents! Your grandparents' grandparents are your family members, too!"

HEAR THE BIBLE STORY

- Comment: "Jesus had parents and He had grandparents. We can read about some of the people in Jesus' family when we read the Bible."
- Continue: "When you hear the names of some of the people in Jesus' family, think about whether you've heard a Bible story about that person."
- Place the Bible in your lap and open it to Matthew 1. Tell the story.
- Show children the Story Picture and point to Matthew. Remark: "Matthew learned about the people in Jesus' family. Matthew wrote a list of names of people in Jesus' family."
- Help preschoolers recall names of some of the people in Jesus' family.

PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- Say: "The Book of Matthew is the first book in the New Testament. The words Matthew wrote about Jesus' family are in the first chapter of the Book of Matthew."
- Help a child open the Bible to Matthew 1. Say the Bible verse as a group.
- Remark: "After Matthew wrote down the names of Jesus' grandparents and great-grandparents, Matthew wrote that Jesus was born. God had promised to send a special child, and that child was Jesus."
- Read today's Text Truth from the Clothesline Add-on and place it on the Text Truth Poster.

PRAY

- Ask God to help boys and girls understand that Jesus is special and the One God promised to send.

TOOLS

- Bible
- Music & Print Extras
- dry erase board, dry erase marker

PACK ITEMS

- 1 Story Picture: People in Jesus' Family
- 16 Bible Verse Markers
- 17 Text Truth Clothesline
- 18 Clothesline Add-ons

Note: Leave the Text Truth Clothesline displayed on the wall if possible. Each week use the appropriate Clothesline Add-on for the session.

LEADER TIP!

Show toddlers where the Book of Matthew is located on the Bible Timeline for Kids.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus was the One God promised to send.

BIBLE STORY

People in Jesus' Family
Matthew 1:1-17

BIBLE VERSE

Mary gave birth to Jesus.
Matthew 1:16

PACK ITEMS

1 Story Picture: People in Jesus' Family
16 Bible Verse Markers
19 People at Work Puzzles

PRINTABLES

Jesus' Family Pictures
Bible Names: Jesus

LEADER TIP!

Use the Bible Names page anytime this month to help children begin to recognize Jesus' name. Children can decorate the page, then use safety scissors to cut out the matching letters.

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers. Use the Bible in every exploration.

CREATE A PHOTO ALBUM

Tools: Bible, Jesus' Family Pictures, paper lunch sacks, stapler, tape, glue sticks, scissors, washable markers or crayons

- Put two or three sacks on top of each other and fold them in half. Staple the folded side to bind the pages to make a book. Tape over the staples.
- Print several copies of Jesus' Family Pictures and cut out the pictures.
- On the cover of a child's book, print the title *Jesus' Family*. Give the child a set of picture cutouts to glue on the book pages.
- Point to a picture and identify the person.
- Say: "Matthew wanted people to know about Jesus' family."
- Turn to Matthew 1:16 and read the Bible verse.

WRITE LIKE MATTHEW

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: People in Jesus' Family, paper, colored pencils, washable markers, crayons

- Show the Story Picture. Say: "Matthew wrote about Jesus. He told about Jesus' family. Can you write your name? Can you write your mother's name or your daddy's name?"
- Assist the child in spelling his name and family members' names. Or write the child's name on the paper with dashed letters for him to trace.
- If you teach younger preschoolers, suggest that they draw pictures of their family members. Write names beside the pictures.

READ ABOUT FAMILIES

Tools: Bible, several preschool books featuring families, People at Work Puzzles, Bible Verse Markers

- Use today's Verse Marker to mark Matthew 1:16 in the Bible.
- Spread the puzzle pieces on a table. Tell children that the pictures show people working and tools they use.
- Encourage children to look for pieces that have the same color border. When a puzzle is complete, talk about the person and work he or she does.
- Relate this to Matthew's job as a tax collector.
- Show children the family books. As you picture-read the books, ask children about their families.
- Say: "God planned for Jesus to have a family. Matthew wrote the names of the people in Jesus' family."
- Read Matthew 1:16.

PLAY STEP BELLS

Tools: Bible, children's step bells, Music & Print Extras

- Play music and encourage preschoolers to sing along and play the step bells.
- As the children make joyful sounds, tell them they are celebrating God's Son, Jesus.
- Say: "God chose His Son, Jesus, to help people and teach them about God. We love Jesus. He is pleased when we sing songs to Him."
- After a few songs have played, open the Bible to Matthew 1. Read the first verse.
- Say: "Matthew wrote the story of Jesus' family. Matthew said, 'This is the record of Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.' The Bible tells the story of Jesus' family."
- Help the preschooler find Matthew 1:16. Say the Bible verse together.

CARE FOR BABY DOLLS

Tools: Bible, two baby dolls, baby blankets, baby-care items, Activity Page, child's rocker

- Gather a few baby-care items and put them near the dolls and rocker.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 1:16 and read the verse. Say: "Matthew wrote the names of people in Jesus' family. In this verse, Matthew wrote, 'Mary gave birth to Jesus.' Mary was Jesus' mother and she was married to Joseph."
- Invite the child to take care of a baby. While the child plays, relate her actions to those of the people in her family. Thank God for the preschooler's family.
- Show the child the picture on the Activity Page.
- Say: "Matthew's record of Jesus' family is in the Bible."

LEADER TIP!

Tell preschoolers that Matthew is the first book in the New Testament. The New Testament tells about things that happened after Jesus was born.