



**Part 2: God's Covenant Faithfulness – Blessing the World**  
Matthew 1:1

*Jesus is the great blessing to the world.*

Matthew 1:1, “This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:”

**Intertestamental Period** - the time period between the last prophet of the Old Testament, Malachi (~420 BC) to the ministry of John the Baptist.

- Geopolitical perspective:
  - 424 – 331 B.C., Persian Rule
  - 331 – 167 B.C., Alexander the Great (Hellenistic Period)
  - 332 – 198 B.C, Egyptian Rule under Ptolemies
  - 198 – 167 B.C., Syrian Rule under the Seleucids
  - 167 – 63 B.C., The Maccabean Revolt and the Hasmonean Dynasty
  - 63 – New Testament Era, Roman Rule
- Spiritual context: the Hebrew Bible ended with the book of Chronicles. What Jesus and the Jewish people were familiar with did not end with the book of Malachi but Chronicles. It is not later until the early church in 200 – 300 A.D. reordered the Old Testament putting Malachi at the end, which thematically fits as well.
  - While the end of Chronicles is an incomplete decree from King Cyrus, “let him go up...”

“The decree from Cyrus is incomplete because the authors of the TaNaK (Old Testament) were still waiting for a real return from exile and the coming of the Messianic kingdom of God. God’s people need a deliverer from a deeper kind of exile than simply being ruled by Babylon. In Chronicles, the literal exile has become an image of Israel’s ongoing ‘spiritual’ exile, their slavery to evil and sin and their inability to obey the Torah. This is all representative of the human condition: home and yet not home until the kingdom of God comes. The Chronicler, and the people, are anxiously awaiting this day.” – Amber Dillon, BibleProject Blog

- The Jews wait for the Messiah under the two great covenants, that of Abraham and of David, which come to full expression in Jesus.

### **Abrahamic Covenant, Genesis 12:1-3**

The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

“I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.  
I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.”

- Five Promises in the Abrahamic blessing: “I will”. God is the source of these blessings.
- Definition of Blessing: it includes but is not limited to prosperity, well-being, long life, wealth, peace, good harvests, and children. God’s blessing is not just to receive but to share. Simply put, blessing is to be a part of God’s favor and goodness to others.
- Jesus is the fulfillment and greatest expression of these blessings.

“...and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.” Genesis 22:18

“Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you...He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.” Galatians 3:8, 14

### **A Blessing to the World:**

- “Do not be afraid. I bring you great news that will cause great joy for all the people.” Luke 2:10
- The blessing of Jesus changes lives, families, cities, and whole cultures.
- Don Richardson ‘Peace Child’ – ‘Never the Same’ - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mm6R9EPtMHo>
- The blessing of Jesus continues to echo throughout history.

“I am a historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history.” – H.G. Wells

- “The Woman behind the West’s Economic Success” by Vishal Mangalwadi. The story of the enterprising Katherine Luther, wife of Martin Luther. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcN\\_D4AEMhw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcN_D4AEMhw)
- John Ortberg – April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 Westmont Chapel, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_hezusRHOE&t=94s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_hezusRHOE&t=94s)
- John Ortberg insightfully points out that without Jesus, you would not have the same medical care, education, and science of today.
  - Medical Care:
    - Porter Hospital: 1930, Seventh Day Adventist background
    - St. Joseph: 1873 Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth
    - St. Anthony: 1882 Catholic sisters
    - Littleton Adventist Hospital: 1989, Seventh Day Adventist
    - Skyridge Medical Center: Health One Network which is connected to Presbyterian/St. Luke’s Medical Center
  - Education: How fundamental Jesus was to the rise of education in the U.S.
    - Harvard, Yale, William and Mary, Princeton, Brown: all started for the glory of God and to serve Jesus.

“Let every student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3), and therefore to lay Christ as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning.” – Harvard’s “Rules and Precepts”, 1646.

- Science:
  - Isaac Newton, Robert Boyle, Michael Faraday, Blaise Pascal

“What made it possible for science to emerge? It was the medieval insistence on the rationality of God.” Alfred North Whitehead

- Unfortunately, we have been desensitized to the blessing of Jesus and easily miss it. Our culture was significantly inspired by a Judeo-Christian ethic and yet we are destroying the very foundation we stand on. As Mark Sayers says, “We want the kingdom without the king.” We have been put to the sleep with the lullaby of comfort and don’t see, receive, and share the blessing of Jesus.