



View of the Valley of Elah from Sokoh, where David killed Goliath.  
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you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup>All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

<sup>48</sup>As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. <sup>49</sup>Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

<sup>50</sup>So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

<sup>51</sup>David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword.

When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. <sup>52</sup>Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath<sup>a</sup> and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. <sup>53</sup>When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp.

<sup>54</sup>David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem; he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent.

<sup>55</sup>As Saul watched David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner, commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is that young man?"

Abner replied, "As surely as you live, Your Majesty, I don't know."

<sup>56</sup>The king said, "Find out whose son this young man is."

<sup>57</sup>As soon as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with David still holding the Philistine's head.

<sup>58</sup>"Whose son are you, young man?" Saul asked him.

David said, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem."

### Saul's Growing Fear of David

**18** After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. <sup>2</sup>From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. <sup>3</sup>And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. <sup>4</sup>Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

<sup>5</sup>Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well.

<sup>a</sup> 52 Some Septuagint manuscripts; Hebrew *of a valley*

**17:55** *whose son is that young man?* How does this question fit with the fact that David had been serving as a musician in Saul's court and as Saul's armor-bearer, and that Saul "liked him very much" (16:18–23)? Possibly in Saul's unstable mental condition he did not recall

David or perhaps he did not know his name, even if he did recognize him. David was not at court full time until after he had killed Goliath. It would not be unusual for the king to know nothing personal about a servant, even a servant he appreciated.

the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

### Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about<sup>a</sup>: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through

the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet<sup>b</sup> did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

<sup>20</sup>But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,

<sup>a</sup> 18 Or *The origin of Jesus the Messiah was like this*

<sup>b</sup> 19 Or *was a righteous man and*

**1:18 pledged to be married.** In Jewish culture, this covenant was made about a year before the marriage. Engagement was understood to be as binding as a mar-

riage covenant; therefore, a legal divorce was required to withdraw from the agreement.

## GENEALOGY OF JESUS

### Matthew 1:1–17

Matthew and Luke both give a genealogy of Jesus (Lk 3:23–38). The coming of Christ to the earth had been anticipated from the beginning. In the early days of human history God had chosen one family, that of Abraham, and later on a family within the larger Abrahamic family, that of David, to be the family through which his Son would make his entrance into the world.

The genealogy in Matthew is abridged. Some names are omitted, as was frequently done in genealogies, without invalidating the line of descent.

The 42 generations, in three groups of 14 each, cover two thousand years (the first group, one thousand years; the second group, four hundred years; the third group, six hundred years). The third group, however, names only 13 generations, the 14th spot evidently being intended for Mary.

The genealogy as given in Luke is somewhat different. Matthew goes back to Abraham, Luke to Adam. Matthew starts at the beginning (Abraham was the father of Isaac, etc.), Luke at the end (Joseph was the son of Heli, etc.; Lk 3:23). From David to Jesus they present separate lines of descent, touching in Shealtiel and Zerubbabel.

The commonly accepted view is that Matthew gives Joseph's line, showing Jesus to be a legal heir to the promises given to Abraham and David, and that Luke gives Mary's line, showing Jesus' blood descent: "who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David" (Ro 1:3).

Mary's genealogy, in accordance with Jewish usage, was in her husband's name. Joseph was the son of Heli (Lk 3:23)—that is, Heli's son-in-law. Jacob was Joseph's father (Mt 1:16).

These genealogies are given more fully in 1 Chronicles 1–9; they form the framework of Old Testament history. Carefully guarded through long centuries of change and upheaval, they contain a family line through which a promise was transmitted for four thousand years, a fact unparalleled in history.

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS

### Matthew 1:18–25

Only Matthew and Luke tell of the birth and childhood of Jesus, and each tells different incidents. (See Lk 1:5–80.)

Mary, for the first three months after the visit of the heavenly messenger, was away at the home of Elizabeth (Lk 1:36). When she returned to Nazareth and Joseph learned of her condition, it must have filled him with perplexity as to what he should do. But he was a good man, and he wanted to protect Mary from what he supposed would be public disgrace or worse.

Then the angel appeared to him and explained what was happening. To avoid scandal, he still had to keep the family secret, for nobody would have believed Mary's story. Only later, when Jesus' divine nature was authenticated by his miracles and his resurrection from the dead, could Mary speak freely of her heavenly secret and the supernatural conception of her child.

that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup>For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup>If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor

for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! <sup>23</sup>I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; <sup>24</sup>but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the

life than ever. He was not relying on himself to magnify Christ but looked to the Holy Spirit (v. 19) to magnify Christ in him (Jn 16:14).

**1:21 Christ ... gain.** Paul would experience gain in his own death because he would be with Christ (v. 23). In fact,

Paul may have been expressing his confidence that his imprisonment had furthered the gospel; God would also use his death to further his kingdom.

**1:22 what shall I choose? I do not know!** Paul was in a dilemma because he clearly saw the advantages of both

### Philippi in the Time of Paul

The Roman colony of Philippi (*Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis*) was an important city in Macedonia, located on the main highway leading from the eastern provinces to Rome. This road, the Egnatian Way, ran along the north side of the city's forum and was the chief cause of its prosperity and political importance. Ten miles east on the coast was Neapolis, the place where Paul landed after sailing from Troas in response to the Macedonian vision.

As a prominent city of the gold-producing region of Macedonia, Philippi had a proud history. Named originally after Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great, the city was later honored with the names of Julius Caesar and Augustus. Many Italian settlers from the legions swelled the ranks of citizens and made Philippi vigorous and polyglot. It grew from a small settlement to a city of dignity and privilege. Among its highest honors was the *ius Italicum*, by

which it enjoyed rights legally equivalent to those of Italian cities.

Ruins of the theater, the acropolis, the forum, the baths and the commemorative arch (about a mile west of the city) have been found. A little farther beyond the arch at the Gangites River is the place where Paul addressed some God-fearing women and where Lydia was converted (Ac 16:13-15).

