

# MATTHEW

## INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

The subject of this book, and indeed of all the writings of the New Testament, is the Gospel. The Greek word *εὐαγγέλιον* signifies a joyful message, good news, glad tidings of good things; such as Christ was anointed to preach, the Angels brought to the shepherds, and the Evangelists, Apostles, and Ministers of Christ published to the world. (<sup><2600></sup>Isaiah 61:1, <sup><2307></sup>Isaiah 52:7 <sup><0210></sup>Luke 2:10). And such is the account given by this inspired writer, of the incarnation, life, actions, ministry, miracles, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ; whereby peace and reconciliation, pardon and righteousness, atonement and redemption, life and salvation, are obtained for lost, perishing sinners. The Jews, to whom the message of grace was first sent, and among whom the Gospel was first preached, having despised and rejected it; they and their posterity, in allusion to the word “Evangelion”, most wickedly and blasphemously call the whole New Testament, *ˆwyl g ˆwa* or *ˆwyl g ˆw[* “Aven Gilion”<sup>f1</sup>, a “revelation”, or “volume of iniquity and vanity”; but “blessed are the people that know the joyful sound”, (see <sup><3995></sup>Psalms 89:15).

The writer of this Gospel, Matthew, who also was called Levi in (<sup><0167></sup>Luke 5:27) was by occupation a publican, or tax-gatherer, and was in his employ when Christ called him by his grace. He was one of the twelve Apostles sent forth by Christ to preach the Gospel of the kingdom, (<sup><4008></sup>Matthew 10:3) and was honoured to be the first of the writers of the New Testament, and to be the first publisher therein of the good news of the incarnate Saviour; and was a wonderful instance of the rich and sovereign grace of God. Though he was employed in collecting the Roman tax, yet he was of Jewish extract; as appears from his being called the son of Alphaeus, (<sup><4014></sup>Mark 2:14) and from his name Matthew Levi; for as the latter, so the former is an Hebrew name. The Jews say<sup>f2</sup> one of the disciples of Jesus was called *yatm*, Matthai or Matthew: his name signifies a “gift” or “given”; he was one of those the Father had given to Christ, and was kept by him, when the son of perdition was lost, (<sup><5176></sup>John 17:6,9,11,12).

It may not be improper to inquire in what language this Gospel was written. The ancient Christian writers were generally of opinion, that Matthew wrote it in Hebrew; Papias and <sup>f3</sup> Pantaenus were of this mind, as also Irenaeus <sup>f4</sup>, Origen <sup>f5</sup> Eusebius <sup>f6</sup>, Athanasius <sup>f7</sup>, Epiphanius <sup>f8</sup>, and Jerom <sup>f9</sup>; and it is asserted in the titles of the Arabic and Persic versions, and at the end of the Syriac version of this Gospel, that it was written in that language; and this opinion is espoused by Grotius and Hammond, though justly exploded by others; for what has been published by Munster, Mercer, Hutter, and Robertson, are translations, made by themselves or others, and of no antiquity: and since Hebrew and Syriac words are interpreted in this Gospel, (see <sup><4023></sup>Matthew 1:23, <sup><4273></sup>Matthew 27:33,46) which would not have been done, had it been written in either language; and since Matthew generally follows the Septuagint version in the passages cited by him out of the Old Testament; and since the Hebrew language was not generally known at that time to the common people, only to the learned; for the law and the prophets, when read in the synagogues in that language, required an interpreter; and since the Greek tongue was the language more commonly spoken, and the rest of the Evangelists wrote in Greek, and the Gospel was designed for the Gentiles as well as the Jews; it is most reasonable to conclude that this Gospel also was wrote in Greek; whereby that ancient prophecy was fulfilled, at least in part, “God shall enlarge” or “persuade Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem”, (<sup><0027></sup>Genesis 9:27) the Gospel being published in the language of Japheth, the Greek language, which the Jews, the posterity of Shem, now understood; agreeably to which the Palmudic writers interpret the prophecy; says <sup>f10</sup> Bar Kaphra, mentioning the above words,

“They shall speak **tpy l ç wnwçl b** in the language of Japheth, in the tents of Shem;”

or,

“the words of the law shall be spoken in the language of Japheth, in the midst of the tents of Shem <sup>f11</sup>.”

R. Jochanan <sup>f12</sup> explains them thus:

“**tpy l ç wyrbr** “the words of Japheth” shall be in the tents of Shem; and says R. Chiya ben Aba, the sense of it is, The beauty of Japheth shall be in the tents of Shem.”

Which the gloss interprets thus:

“The beauty of Japheth is the language of Javan, or the Greek language, which language is more beautiful than that of any other of the sons of Japheth.”

The time when this Gospel was written is said <sup>f13</sup> by some to be in the eighth or ninth, by others, in the fifteenth year after the ascension of Christ, when the Evangelist had received the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, among which was the gift of tongues; and when the promise of Christ had been made good to him, (~~4346~~ John 14:26).

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 1

**Ver. 1.** *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ*, etc.] This is the genuine title of the book, which was put to it by the Evangelist himself; for the former seems to be done by another hand. This book is an account, not of the divine, but human generation of Christ; and not merely of his birth, which lies in a very little compass; nor of his genealogy, which is contained in this chapter; but also of his whole life and actions, of what was said, done, and suffered by him. It is an Hebrew way of speaking, much like that in (~~GEN 5:1~~ Genesis 5:1) and which the Septuagint render by the same phrase as here; and as that was the book of the generation of the first Adam; this is the book of the generation of the second Adam. The Jews call their blasphemous history of the life of Jesus, *וְסֵפֶר הַדּוֹרֹתַיִם* “The book of the generations of Jesus”<sup>f14</sup>. This account of Christ begins with the name of the Messiah, well known to the Jews,

*the son of David*; not only to the Scribes and Pharisees, the more learned part of the nation, but to the common people, even to persons of the meanest rank and figure among them. (see ~~MAT 9:27~~ Matthew 9:27, ~~MAT 12:23~~ Matthew 12:23, ~~MAT 22:42~~ Matthew 22:42). Nothing is more common in the Jewish writings, than for *דָּוִד בֶּן* “the son of David” to stand alone for the Messiah; it would be endless to cite or refer to all the testimonies of this kind; only take the following<sup>f15</sup>,

“R. Jochanan says, in the generation in which *דָּוִד בֶּן* “the son of David” comes, the disciples of the wise men shall be lessened, and the rest, their eyes shall fail with grief and sorrow, and many calamities and severe decrees shall be renewed; when the first visitation is gone, a second will hasten to come. It is a tradition of the Rabbins (about) the week (of years) in which *דָּוִד בֶּן* “the son of David” comes, that in the first year this scripture will be fulfilled, (~~AMOS 4:7~~ Amos 4:7). “I will rain upon one city”, etc. in the second, arrows of famine will be sent forth; in the third there will be a great famine, and men, women and children, holy men and men of

business will die, and the law will be forgotten by those who learn it; in the fourth there will be plenty and not plenty; in the fifth there will be great plenty, and they shall eat and drink and rejoice, and the law shall return to them that learn it; in the sixth there will be voices (or thunders;) in the seventh there will be wars; and in the going out of the seventh **dwd ^b** the “son of David” comes. The tradition of R. Judah says, In the generation in which **dwd ^b** “the son of David” comes, the house of the congregation (the school or synagogue) shall become a brothel house, Galilee shall be destroyed, and Gabalene shall become desolate; and the men of Gabul (or the border) shall go about from city to city, and shall find no mercy; and the wisdom of the scribes shall stink; and they that are afraid to sin shall be despised; and the face of that generation shall be as the face of a dog, and truth shall fail, as it is said, (<sup>23915</sup>Isaiah 59:15) — The tradition of R. Nehorai says, In the generation in which **dwd ^b** “the son of David” comes, young men shall make ashamed the faces of old men, and old men shall stand before young men, the daughter shall rise up against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; nor will a son reverence his father. The tradition of R. Nehemiah says, In the generation in which **dwd ^b** “the son of David” comes, impudence will increase, and the honourable will deal wickedly, and the whole kingdom will return to the opinion of the Sadducees, and there will be no reproof. — It is a tradition of the Rabbins, that **dwd ^b** “the son of David” will not come, until traitorous practices are increased, or the disciples are lessened or until the smallest piece of money fails from the purse, or until redemption is despaired of.”

In which passage, besides the proof for which it is cited, may be observed, how exactly the description of the age of the Messiah, as given by the Jews themselves, agrees with the generation in which Jesus the true Messiah came; who as he was promised to David, and it was expected he should descend from him, so he did according to the flesh; God raised him up of his seed, (<sup>4003</sup>Romans 1:3 <sup>4123</sup>Acts 13:23) it follows,

*The son of Abraham.* Abraham was the first to whom a particular promise was made, that the Messiah should spring from, (<sup>0228</sup>Genesis 22:18). The first promise in (<sup>0015</sup>Genesis 3:15) only signified that he should be the seed of the woman; and it would have been sufficient for the fulfilment of it, if

he had been born of any woman, in whatsoever nation, tribe, or family; but by the promise made to Abraham he was to descend from him, as Jesus did; who took upon him the seed of Abraham, (<sup><38216></sup>Hebrews 2:16) or assumed an human nature which sprung from him, and is therefore truly the son of Abraham. The reason why Christ is first called the son of David, and then the son of Abraham, is partly because the former was a more known name of the Messiah; and partly that the transition to the genealogy of Christ might be more easy and natural, beginning with Abraham, whom the Jews call <sup>f16</sup> *sj yh çar* the “head of the genealogy”, and the root and foundation of it, as Matthew here makes him to be; wherefore a Jew cannot be displeased with the Evangelist for beginning the genealogy of our Lord at, Abraham.

**Ver. 2.** *Abraham begat Isaac*, etc.] The descent of Christ from Abraham is in the line of Isaac; Abraham begat Ishmael before Isaac, and others after him, but they are not mentioned; because the Messiah was not to spring from any of them, but from Isaac, of whom it is said, “in Isaac shall thy seed be called”, (<sup><0212></sup>Genesis 21:12) and who, as he was a progenitor, so an eminent type of Christ; being Abraham’s only beloved son; and particularly in the binding, sacrifice and deliverance of him.

*Isaac begat Jacob.* The genealogy of Christ proceeds from Isaac, in the line of Jacob. Isaac begat Esau, as well as Jacob, and they two were twins, but one was loved, and the other hated; wherefore no mention is made of Esau, he had no concern in the Messiah, nor was he to spring from him, but from Jacob, or Israel, by whose name he is sometimes called, (<sup><2493></sup>Isaiah 49:3)

*Jacob begat Judas and his brethren.* The lineage of Christ is carried on from Jacob in the line of Judah; the reason of which is, because it was particularly prophesied that the Messiah, Shiloh, the prince and chief ruler, should be of him, (<sup><0490></sup>Genesis 49:10) (<sup><1380></sup>1 Chronicles 5:2). And it is evident beyond all contradiction, that our Lord sprung from his tribe, (<sup><3074></sup>Hebrews 7:14). The reason why the brethren of Judah, who were eleven in number, are mentioned, when the brethren of Isaac and Jacob are not, is, because though the Messiah did not spring from them, yet the promise of him was made to the twelve tribes, who all expected him, and to whom he was sent, and came. These made but one body of men, and therefore, though the Messiah came from the tribe of Judah, yet he is said to be of them all, (<sup><8904></sup>Romans 9:4,5).

**Ver. 3.** *And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar*, etc.] The genealogical account of Christ goes on from Judah in the line of Phares, with whom Zara is mentioned; not because they were twins, for so were Jacob and Esau, and yet the latter is taken no notice of; but it may be because of what happened at their birth, (see <sup><OR38></sup>Genesis 38:28,29,30). But the line of the Messiah was in Phares, and very rightly is he put in the genealogy of Christ, the Jews themselves being witnesses; who expressly say, that “the Messiah comes from him.” These two are said to be begotten of Thamar, daughter-in-law to Judah; who, though she was a Canaanitish woman, has the honour to be named in the genealogy of Christ, who came to save Gentiles as well as Jews: nor can the Jews reproach our Evangelist for putting her into the account; since they themselves frequently acknowledge that the Messiah was to spring from her: they say, <sup>f17</sup>

“there are two women from whom come David the king, and Solomon, and the king Messiah; and these two are Thamar and Ruth.”

Jonathan Ben Uzziel on (<sup><OR36></sup>Genesis 38:6) says, that Thamar was the daughter of Shem the great.

*And Phares begat Esrom*; called Hezron, (<sup><OR48></sup>Ruth 4:18) where the same phrase is used as here. He had another son called Hamul, (<sup><OR1></sup>1 Chronicles 2:5) but the account proceeds from Phares, in the line of Esrom.

*And Esrom begat Aram*; called Ram in (<sup><OR48></sup>Ruth 4:18) where the same way of speaking is used as here. Esrom also besides him begat Jerahmeel, Chelubai, or Caleb, and Segub, (<sup><OR1></sup>1 Chronicles 2:9,21) but these are not in the line. Elihu, who conversed with Job, is said to be of the kindred of Ram, (<sup><OR12></sup>Job 32:2) whether the same with Ram or Aram, may be inquired.

**Ver. 4.** *And Aram begat Aminadab*, etc.] Which, with what follows in this verse, exactly agrees with the genealogical account in (<sup><OR49></sup>Ruth 4:19,20).

**Ver. 5.** *And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab*, etc.] That Salmon begat Boaz, is affirmed in (<sup><OR21></sup>Ruth 4:21) but it is not there said, nor any where else in the Old Testament, as here, that he begat him of Rahab, that is, of Rahab the harlot. This the Evangelist had from tradition, or from the Jewish records. That the Messiah was to spring from Boaz is asserted by the Jewish writers <sup>f18</sup>; and they also own that Rahab was married to a prince in Israel, which some say <sup>f19</sup> was Joshua: they pretend that she was ten years of age when the Israelites came out of Egypt; that she played the harlot all

the forty years they were in the wilderness, and was married to Joshua upon the destruction of Jericho. To excuse this marriage with a Canaanitish woman, they tell us, she was not of the seven nations with whom marriage was forbid; and moreover, that she became a proselyte when the spies were received by her: they own that some very great persons of their nation sprung from her, as Jeremiah, Maaseiah, Hanameel, Shallum, Baruch, Ezekiel, Neriah, Seraiah, and Huldah the prophetess. The truth of the matter is, she became the wife of Salmon, or Salma, as he is called, (~~<B3D1>~~ 1 Chronicles 2:11). And in the Targum on (~~<B3D1>~~ Ruth 4:20) is said to be of Bethlehem; he was the son of Nahshon or Naasson, a famous prince in Judah, and the head and captain of the tribe, (~~<B00E>~~ Numbers 1:7, 2:3) (~~<B7D2>~~ Numbers 7:12,17, ~~<B1C4>~~ Numbers 10:14). And from Rahab sprung the Messiah, another instance of a Gentile in the genealogy of Christ; and a third follows.

*And Booz begat Obed of Ruth*; who was a Moabitess. It is a notion that generally obtains among the Jews <sup>f20</sup>, that she was the daughter of Eglon, grandson of Balak, king of Moab; and it is often taken notice of by them <sup>f21</sup>, that the king Messiah should descend from her; and also other persons of note, as David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and Daniel; wherefore the mentioning of her in this genealogy, cannot be said by them to be impertinent.

*And Obed begat Jesse*. Jesse is thought to be, not the immediate son of Obed, but to be of the fourth generation from him; though no others are mentioned between them in Ruth, any more than here. A Jewish writer observes <sup>f22</sup>, that

“the wise men of the Gentiles say, that there were other generations between them; perhaps, says he, they have taken this from the wise men of Israel, and so it is thought.”

Now notwithstanding this, Jesse may be said to be begotten by Obed, as Hezekiah’s posterity, who were carried captive into Babylon, are said to be begotten by him, (~~<B3D1>~~ Isaiah 39:7) though they were a remove of several generations from him. However, Jesse is rightly put among the progenitors of Christ, since the Messiah was to be a rod of his stem, and the branch of his roots, and is called the root of Jesse, (~~<B1C1>~~ Isaiah 11:1,10) which words are interpreted of the Messiah, by many of the Jewish writers <sup>f23</sup>; and to this day the Jews pray for him in their synagogues under the name of יְשׁוּעַ בֶּן יֵשׁוּעַ, “the son of Jesse” <sup>f24</sup>.



**Ver. 6.** *And Jesse begat David the king*, etc.] The descent of the Messiah runs in the line of David, the youngest of Jesse's sons, who was despised by his brethren, and overlooked and neglected by his father; but God chose him, and anointed him to be king, and set him on the throne of Israel; hence he is called "David the king"; as also because he was the first king that was of the tribe of Judah, and in the genealogy of Christ, and was an eminent type of the king Messiah, who is sometimes called by the same name, (<sup><3594></sup>Ezekiel 34:24, <sup><3674></sup>Ezekiel 37:24,25 <sup><2885></sup>Hosea 3:5) and who was to be his son, as Jesus is, and also right heir to his throne and kingdom.

*And David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias*; which was Bathsheba, though not named; either because she was well known, or because of the sin she had been guilty of, which would easily be revived by mentioning her name: our translators have rightly supplied, "that had been", and not as the Vulgate Latin, which supplies it, "that was the wife of Urias", for Solomon was begotten of her, not while she was the wife of Uriah, but when she was the wife of David.

**Ver. 7.** *And Solomon begat Roboam*, etc.] Called Rehoboam, (<sup><1114></sup>1 Kings 11:43) of Naamah an Ammonitess, (<sup><1142></sup>1 Kings 14:21,31).

*And Roboam begat Abia*, sometimes called Abijam, as in (<sup><1143></sup>1 Kings 14:31), sometimes Abijah, (<sup><4216></sup>2 Chronicles 12:16) and sometimes, as here, Abia, (<sup><1380></sup>1 Chronicles 3:10). Him Rehoboam begat of Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom, (<sup><1152></sup>1 Kings 15:2) called Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel, (<sup><4432></sup>2 Chronicles 13:2). Maachah and Michaiah being the same name; or else she went by two names, as her father did.

*And Abia begat Asa*, who was a good king; his mother's name is the same with the name of his father's mother; and perhaps it is not his proper mother, but his grandmother who is meant in (<sup><1150></sup>1 Kings 15:10). He is wrongly called Asaph in the Persic and Ethiopic versions, and in one copy.

**Ver. 8.** *And Asa begat Josaphat*, etc.] Called Jehoshaphat, (<sup><1153></sup>1 Kings 15:24) whom Asa begat of Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi, (<sup><1242></sup>1 Kings 22:42). He also was a very good prince.

*And Josaphat begat Joram*; called Jehoram, (<sup><1251></sup>1 Kings 22:50) to whom his father gave the kingdom, because he was the firstborn, (<sup><4203></sup>2 Chronicles 21:3).

*And Joram begat Ozias*; called Uzziah, (<sup><1401></sup>2 Chronicles 26:1) and Azariah, (<sup><1251></sup>2 Kings 15:1). He was not the immediate son of Joram; there were three kings between them, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, which are here omitted; either because of the curse denounced on Ahab's family, into which Joram married, whose idolatry was punished to the third or fourth generation; or because these were princes of no good character; or because their names were not in the Jewish registers. Nor does this omission at all affect the design of the Evangelist, which is to show that Jesus, the true Messiah, is of the house of David; nor ought the Jews to complain of it, as they do <sup>f25</sup> since such omissions are to be met with in the Old Testament, particularly in (<sup><1501></sup>Ezra 7:2) where six generations are omitted at once; and which is taken notice of by one of their own genealogical writers, whose words are these <sup>f26</sup>;

“we see in the genealogy of Ezra that he hath skipped over seven generations (perhaps it should be W “six” and not Z “seven”, since six are only omitted) from Ahitub to Ahitub.”

Nor is it any objection that Joram is said to beget Ozias, which he may be said to do in the like sense, as has been before observed of Hezekiah, (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 39:7).

**Ver. 9.** *And Ozias begat Joatham*, etc.] Called Jotham, (<sup><1251></sup>2 Kings 15:7) him Ozias begat of Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok, (<sup><1253></sup>2 Kings 15:33).

*And Joatham begat Achaz*, or Ahaz, (<sup><1258></sup>2 Kings 15:38) to him the sign was given, and the famous prophecy of the Messiah, (<sup><1074></sup>Isaiah 7:14).

*And Achaz begat Ezekias*, or Hezekiah, (<sup><1261></sup>2 Kings 16:20) him Ahaz begat of Abi, the daughter of Zachariah, (<sup><1282></sup>2 Kings 18:2). He was a very religious king, and had that singular favour from God to have fifteen years added to his days, (<sup><2385></sup>Isaiah 38:5).

**Ver. 10.** *And Ezekias begat Manasses*, etc.] Or Manasseh, (<sup><1211></sup>2 Kings 20:21). Him Hezekiah begat of Hephzibah, (<sup><1201></sup>2 Kings 21:1). He was very remarkable both for his sins, and for his humiliation on account of them.

*And Manasses begat Amon*, of Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah, (<sup><1219></sup>2 Kings 21:19). He was a very wicked prince.

*And Amon begat Josias*, or Josiah of Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath, (~~1220~~ 2 Kings 22:1). He was a very pious king, and was prophesied of by name some hundreds of years before he was born, (~~1113~~ 1 Kings 13:2).

**Ver. 11.** *And Josias begat Jechonias*, etc.] This Jechonias is the same with Jehoiakim, the son of Josias, called so by Pharaohnecho, when he made him king, whose name before was Eliakim, (~~1234~~ 2 Kings 23:34) begat of Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah, (~~1235~~ 2 Kings 23:36).

*and his brethren.* These were Johanan, Zedekiah, and Shallum. Two of them were kings, one reigned before him, viz. Shallum, who is called Jehoahaz, (~~1230~~ 2 Kings 23:30) compared with (~~1221~~ Jeremiah 22:11,12), the other, viz. Zedekiah, called before Mattaniah, reigned after his son Jehoiakim: these being both kings, is the reason why his brethren are mentioned; as well as to distinguish him from Jechonias in the next verse; who does not appear to have had any brethren: these were

*about the time they were carried away to Babylon*, which is not to be connected with the word “begat”: for Josiah did not beget Jeconiah and his brethren at that time, for he had been dead some years before; nor with Jechonias, for he never was carried away into Babylon, but died in Judea, and slept with his fathers, (~~1246~~ 2 Kings 24:6) but with the phrase “his brethren”: and may be rendered thus, supposing **τους** understood, “which were at”, or “about the carrying away to Babylon”, or the Babylonish captivity.

**Ver. 12.** *And after they were brought to Babylon*, etc.] Not Jechonias, but the father of Jechonias, and the Jews.

*Jechonias begat Salathiel.* Not Jechonias mentioned in the former verse, but his son, called Jehoiachin, (~~1246~~ 2 Kings 24:6,8) and Coniah, (~~1222~~ Jeremiah 22:24,28) both which are rendered Jechonias by the Septuagint in (~~1468~~ 2 Chronicles 36:8 ~~1224~~ Jeremiah 22:24) and he is so called, (~~1316~~ 1 Chronicles 3:16). Abulpharagius <sup>f27</sup> calls him Junachir, and says he is the same who in Matthew is called Juchonia; and he asserts him to be the father of Daniel the Prophet. But here a considerable difficulty arises, how he can be said to beget Salathiel, called Shealtiel, (~~1300~~ Haggai 1:1) when he was pronounced “childless”, (~~1220~~ Jeremiah 22:30). To remove which, it may be observed, that the sentence pronounced may be considered with this tacit condition or proviso, if he repented not. Now the Jews have a tradition <sup>f28</sup> that he did repent in prison, upon which the sentence was

revoked; but there is no need to suppose this, though it is not an unreasonable supposition; for the sentence does not imply that he should have no children, but rather that he should, as will appear upon reading the whole; “thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah”. Besides, the Hebrew word *yryr* [ , rendered “childless”, comes from *hr* [ , which signifies “to make naked” or “bare” and so denotes not only such as have no children, or are bereft of them, but such as are by any providence stripped of the blessings of life, and are left bare, destitute, and unhappy, as Jechonias and his posterity were: however, the Jews have no reason to find fault with our Evangelist, since Salathiel is expressly called Jechonias’s son, (~~1~~1 Chronicles 3:17) either he was his proper natural son, or, to use their way of speaking, *twkl m ^b* “the son of the kingdom”<sup>f29</sup>, that is, his heir and successor in the kingdom, as some have thought; since it looks as if he was the son of Neri, (~~1~~ Luke 3:27) though the chronicle of Jedidaeus of Alexandria<sup>f30</sup>, or Philo the Jew, says, that Jechonias was called Neri, because Ner, or the lamp of David, shined in him, which had been almost extinguished.

*And Salathiel begat Zorobabel.* This account perfectly agrees with many passages in the Old Testament, where Zorobabel is called the son of Shealtiel or Salathiel, (~~1~~Ezra 3:2,5:2 Neh 12:1) (~~1~~Haggai 1:1,12,14 2:2,23) which is sufficient to justify the Evangelist in this assertion. There is indeed a difficulty which as much presses the Jews as the Christians, and that is, that Zorobabel is reckoned as the son of Pedaiah, (~~1~~1 Chronicles 3:19) for the solution of which a noted Jewish commentator<sup>f31</sup> observes, that

“in Haggai, Zachariah and Ezra, Zorobabel is called the son of Shealtiel, because he was his son’s son; for Pedaiah was the son of Shealtiel, and Zorobabel the son of Pedaiah; and do not you observe (adds he) that in many places children’s children are mentioned as children?”

No doubt there are many instances of this; but to me it seems that Pedaiah was not the son of Shealtiel, but his brother, (~~1~~1 Chronicles 3:17,18). And I greatly suspect that Shealtiel had no children of his own, since none are mentioned; and that he adopted his brother Pedaiah’s son Zorobabel, and made him his heir and successor in the government of Judah. However,

it is certain, as a genealogical writer<sup>f32</sup> among the Jews observes, that he was of the son's sons of Jechonias, king of Judah, from whom our Evangelist makes him to descend.

**Ver. 13.** *And Zorobabel begat Abiud*, etc.] The children of Zorobabel are said in (<sup><333></sup>1 Chronicles 3:19,20), to be Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister, but no mention is made of Abiud: he seems to be the same with Meshullam the eldest son, who might have two names; nor is this unlikely, since it was usual, especially about the time of the Babylonish captivity, for men to have more names than one, as may be observed in Daniel and others, (<sup><200></sup>Daniel 1:7) where they went by one, and in Judea by another.

*And Abiud begat Eliakim*, etc. From hence to the 16th verse the genealogy is carried down to Joseph, the husband of Mary; which account must be taken from the genealogical tables of the Jews, to which recourse might be had, and with which it agrees; or otherwise the Jews would have cavilled at it; but I do not find any objections made by them to it. That there were genealogical books or tables kept by the Jews is certain, from the following instances<sup>f33</sup>;

“Simeon ben Azzai says, I found in Jerusalem, *^ysj wy tI gm*, “a volume of genealogies”, and there was written in it, etc.”

Again<sup>f34</sup>, says R. Levi,

“they found a “volume of genealogies” in Jerusalem, and there was written in it that Hillel came from David; Ben Jarzaph from Asaph; Ben Tzitzith Hacceseth from Abner; Ben Cobesin from Ahab; Ben Calba Shebuah from Caleb; R. Jannai from Eli; R. Chayah Rabba from the children of Shephatiah, the son of Abital; R. Jose be Rabbi Chelphetha from the children of Jonadab, the son of Rechab; and R. Nehemiah from Nehemiah the Tirshathite.”

Once more<sup>f35</sup>, says R. Chana bar Chanma, when the holy blessed God causes his

“Shechinah to dwell, he does not cause it to dwell but upon families, *twsj wym*, “which are genealogized” in Israel.”

Now if Matthew's account had not been true, it might easily have been refuted by these records. The author of the old<sup>f36</sup> Nizzachon takes notice

of the close of this genealogy, but finds no fault with it; only that it is carried down to Joseph, and not to Mary; which may be accounted for by a rule of their own <sup>f37</sup>, *tj pçm hywrq hnya ma tj pçm* “the mother’s family is not called a family”, whereas the father’s is. It is very remarkable that the Jewish Targum <sup>f38</sup> traces the descent of the Messiah from the family of David in the line of Zorobabel, as Matthew does; and reckons the same number of generations, wanting one, from Zorobabel to the Messiah, as the Evangelist does, from Zorobabel to Jesus; according to Matthew, the genealogy stands thus, Zorobabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph, Jesus; and according to the Targum the order is this,

“Zorobabel, Hananiah, Jesaiah, Rephaiah, Arnon, Obadiah, Shecaniah, Shemnigh, Neariah, Elioenai, Anani; this is the king Messiah, who is to be revealed.”

The difference of names may be accounted for by their having two names, as before observed. This is a full proof, that, according to the Jews own account, and expectation, the Messiah must be come many years and ages ago.

**Ver. 16.** *And Jacob begat Joseph*, etc.] According to an old tradition mentioned by <sup>f39</sup> Epiphanius, this Jacob, the father of Joseph, was named Panther, and which name perhaps is originally Jewish; and it may be observed, that Joseph is sometimes called by the Jewish writers Pandera <sup>f40</sup>, and Jesus *arydnp `b*, the son of Pandira <sup>f41</sup>. It has created some difficulty with interpreters that Jacob should be here said to beget Joseph, when Joseph in Luke is said to be the son of Eli. Some have thought Joseph’s father had two names, one was Jacob, and the other Eli; others take them to be two different persons, and suppose that Joseph was the natural son of the one, and the legal son of the other, either by marriage, or by adoption, or by the law of the brother’s wife, (<sup>f42</sup>Deuteronomy 25:5,6). But the truth of the matter is, that not Joseph, but Jesus, is by Luke called the son of Eli, as will be made to appear in its proper place. Joseph, who is here called the husband of Mary, because he not only espoused her, but, upon the advice and encouragement of the Angel, took her to be his wife, was, as is evident by this genealogy, of the house and lineage of David; though a mean and obscure person, and by trade a carpenter. Mary, which is the same name with Miriam in Hebrew, was a poor virgin that dwelt at

Nazareth, a city of Galilee; yet also of the family of David, and belonged to the city of Bethlehem;

*of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ*, or Messiah; being that illustrious person, who was spoken of by the Prophets of the Old Testament under that name, and whom the Jews expected. We may learn from hence, what a low condition the family of David was in, when the true Messiah came; according to ancient prophecy, it was like a stump of a tree, or like to a tree cut down to the root, (<sup><2310></sup>Isaiah 11:1) and Christ who sprung from it was like a root out of a dry ground, (<sup><2510></sup>Isaiah 53:2). From the whole of this genealogy it appears, that Jesus was of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David; whereby several ancient prophecies have their accomplishment, and therefore he ought to be acknowledged as the true Messiah: and also that he was of the blood royal, and had his descent from the kings of Judah, and was heir apparent to the throne and kingdom of his father David. The Talmudic Jews own that Jesus, or Jesu, as they call him, was put to death because he <sup>f42</sup>, **hyh twkl ml bwrq** “was nigh to the kingdom”, or nearly related to it. Yea, even in that malicious book <sup>f43</sup> they have written of his life, they represent him as akin to queen Helena, who they say, on that account, would have saved his life. And this was so clear a point, and their forefathers were so thoroughly convinced of this matter, that they would have took him by force and made him a king, (<sup><4065></sup>John 6:15) but his kingdom was to be of another kind, a spiritual, and not a temporal one.

**Ver. 17.** *So all the generations from Abraham*, etc.] The Evangelist having traced the genealogy of Christ from Abraham, which he divides into “three” parts, because of the threefold state of the Jews, “first” under Patriarchs, Prophets, and Judges, “next” under Kings, and “then” under Princes and Priests, gives the sum of each part under its distinct head; “so all the generations”, that is, the degrees of generation, or the persons generated from Abraham to David, both being included, “are fourteen generations”; as there were, and no more, and are as follow, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Phares, Esrom, Aram, Amminadab, Naasson, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David.

*And from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations.* Here David who closed the first division must be excluded this, and it must be observed, that the Evangelist does not say as before, that “all” the generations from David to the captivity were fourteen, for

there were seventeen, three kings being omitted by him at once; but, the generations he thought fit to mention, in order to reduce them to a like number as before, and which were sufficient for his purpose, were fourteen; and may be reckoned in this order, Solomon, Roboam, Abia, Asa, Josaphat, Joram, Ozias, Joatham, Achaz, Ezekias, Manasses, Amon, Josias, Jechonias, or Jehoiachin.

*And from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.* This must be understood as before; for there might be more generations in this interval, but these were enough to answer the design of the Evangelist; and which he thought proper to mention, and may be numbered in this manner; Jechonias, or Jehoiachin, Salathiel, Zorobabel, Abiud, Ehakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph, Christ. This way of reckoning by generations was used by other nations as well as the Jews <sup>f44</sup>, particularly the Grecians; so <sup>f45</sup> Pausanias says,

“From Tharypus to Pyrrhus the son of Achilles, **πεντε ανδρων και δεκα εισι γενεαι**, were fifteen generations of men.”

And Herodotus <sup>f46</sup> speaking of those who had reigned in Babylon, says, among them were two women, one whose name was Semiramis, who reigned before the other **γενεησι πεντε**, five generations; many other instances of the like kind might be given.

**Ver. 18.** *Now the birth of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The Evangelist having finished the genealogy of Christ, proceeds to give an account of his birth, which includes both his conception and bringing forth; and which he says *was on this wise*, **ουτως** so, “after this manner”, and which was very wonderful and astonishing;

*when as, gar, for his mother Mary was found with child*, not of man, no, not of Joseph her husband; Christ had no real father as man, Joseph was only, as was supposed, his father; but

*of the Holy Ghost*, according to (<sup>408</sup>Luke 1:35). “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee”, etc. and this was done that the human nature of Christ might be clear of original pollution; that so being the immediate produce of the Holy Ghost and without sin, it might be fit for union with the Son of God, and for the office of Mediator he had undertaken. When Mary is said to be



*found with child*, the meaning is, it appeared by evident signs, it was observed by Joseph particularly, who might know not only that she was with child, but with child of the Holy Ghost; by conversation with her, who might relate to him what passed between the Angel and her, (<sup>(40128)</sup>Luke 1:28, 36) though it looks as if as yet he did not know this, or at least was not fully satisfied about it; since he had a mind to have put her away, before he was assured of the truth of it, by the appearance of an angel to him. Now Mary's being with child, and its being known, were facts, at the time when she was

*espoused to Joseph*, and thereby the outward credit both of Mary and Jesus were secured; for had this appeared before the espousals, the Jews would have fixed a brand of infamy on them both; and both the espousals and her being found with child, were

*before they came together*; that is, before they cohabited together as man and wife, before he brought her home to his own house and bed. The espousals were before they thus came together. It was usual with the Jews first to espouse or betroth, and then to marry, or rather consummate the marriage, by bringing the woman home to her husband's house, between which there was some space of time. The account and manner of betrothing is given by Maimonides<sup>f47</sup> in the following words.

“Before the giving of the law, if a man met a woman in the street, if he would, he might take her, and bring her into his house and marry her between him and herself, and she became his wife; but when the law was given, the Israelites were commanded, that if a man would take a woman he should obtain her before witnesses, and after that she should be his wife, according to (<sup>(46213)</sup>Deuteronomy 22:13) and these takings are an affirmative command of the law, and are called *ˆyswrya wa ˆyçwdyq* “espousals” or “betrothings” in every place; and a woman who is obtained in such a way is called *tsrwam wa tçdwqm* “espoused” or “betrothed”; and when a woman is obtained, and becomes *tçdwqm* “espoused”, although she is not yet *hl [bn* “married, nor has entered into her husband's house”, yet she is a man's wife.”

And such a distinction between a married woman and a betrothed virgin, which was Mary's case, may be observed in (<sup>(46222)</sup>Deuteronomy 22:22,23) moreover, her being found or appearing to be with child, was “before they

came together”; which it is likely, as Dr. Lightfoot<sup>f48</sup> observes, was about three months from her conception, when she was returned from her cousin Elizabeth. It is probable that as soon as she was espoused to Joseph, or quickly after, she went and paid her visit to Elizabeth, with whom she stayed about three months, and then returned home, (<sup><0156></sup>Luke 1:56). Upon her return home, she appears to be with child, with which she had gone three months, a proper time for the discovery of such a matter, (<sup><0139></sup>Genesis 38:24) and which is assigned by the Jewish doctors for this purpose. In the Misna<sup>f49</sup> such a case as this is put,

“If two men should espouse two women, and at the time of their entrance into the bride chamber, the one should be taken for the other — they separate them for three months, because they may prove with child;”

that is, as Bartenora observes upon it,

“they separate them that they may not return to their husbands; and that if they should be with child, they may distinguish between a legitimate and an illegitimate offspring; and that the children which they may bring forth may not be ascribed to the wrong persons.”

Now Mary being gone three months from the time of her espousals to Joseph, and he and she not being yet come together, it was a clear case, that the child she was gone three months with, was none of his; hence it follows,

**Ver. 19.** *Then Joseph her husband*, etc.] To whom she had been betrothed, and who was her husband, and she his wife according to the Jewish law, (<sup><0122></sup>Deuteronomy 22:23,24) though not yet come together,

*being a just man*, observant of the law of God, particularly that which respected adultery, being wholly good and chaste, like the Patriarch of the same name; a character just the reverse of that which the Jews give him, in their scandalous<sup>f50</sup> book of the life of Jesus; where, in the most malicious manner, they represent him as an unchaste and an unrighteous person:

*and not willing to make her a public example*, or to deliver her, i.e. to the civil magistrate, according to Munster’s Hebrew edition. The Greek word signifies to punish by way of example to others, to deter them from sinning; and with the ancients it<sup>f51</sup> denoted the greatest and severest punishment. Here it means either bringing her before the civil magistrate, in order to her

being punished according to the law in (<sup>f223</sup>Deuteronomy 22:23,24) which requires the person to be brought out to the gate of the city and stoned with stones, which was making a public example indeed; or divorcing her in a very public manner, and thereby expose her to open shame and disgrace. To prevent which, he being tender and compassionate, though strictly just and good,

*was minded to put her away privily*: he deliberately consulted and determined within himself to dismiss her, or put her away by giving her a bill of divorce, in a very private manner; which was sometimes done by putting it into the woman's hand or bosom, (see <sup>f201</sup>Deuteronomy 24:1). In Munster's Hebrew Gospel it is rendered, "it was in his heart to forsake her privately."

**Ver. 20.** *But while he thought on these things*, etc.] While he was revolving them in his mind, considering what was most fit and proper to be done, whether to dismiss her publicly or privately; while he was consulting within himself the glory of God, the peace of his own conscience, and the credit of Mary,

*behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream*; probably the same Angel which appeared to Zacharias, and brought him tidings that his wife should have a son, and who also appeared to Mary, and acquainted her that she should conceive, and bring forth the Messiah, Whose name was Gabriel, (<sup>f011</sup>Luke 1:11,19,36). If we will believe the Jews, this Angel must be Gabriel, since he is the Angel who they say <sup>f52</sup> *aml j l [ anmmd* "is appointed over dreams"; for he appeared to

*Joseph in a dream*, which is one of the ways and methods in which the Lord, or an Angel of his, has appeared to the saints formerly, and has answered them, (see <sup>f011</sup>Genesis 31:11 <sup>f005</sup>1 Kings 3:5 <sup>f006</sup>1 Samuel 28:6,15) and is reckoned by the Jews <sup>f53</sup> one of the degrees or kinds of prophecy: and so the Angel here not only encourages Joseph to take to him his wife,

*saying Joseph, thou son of David*; which is said partly to attest his being of the house and lineage of David, and partly to raise his expectations and confirm his faith, that his wife should bring forth the promised son of David; and chiefly to engage his attention to what he was about to say,

*fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife*; do not be afraid either that thou shalt offend the Lord, or bring any reproach or scandal upon thyself as if thou didst connive at an adulteress; but as she is thine espoused wife, solemnly betrothed to thee, take her home to thyself, live with her as thy wife, and openly avow her as such. To which he is encouraged by the following reason or argument,

*for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost*; she has not been guilty of any criminal conversation with men; this conception of her's is of the Holy Ghost, and entirely owing to his coming upon her, and overshadowing her in a wonderful and miraculous manner. I say, the Angel not only encourages Joseph after this manner, but delivers something to him by way of prophecy, in the following verse.

**Ver. 21.** *And she shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Jesus.*] For though she was with child, it could not be known any otherwise than by prediction or divine revelation, that she should have a son, whose name should be called Jesus; a name of the same signification with Joshua and Hosea, and may be interpreted a “Saviour”, (<sup><41:23></sup>Acts 13:23) for the word [wçy Jesus, comes from [çy which signifies “to save.” And to this agrees the reason of the name given by the Angel,

*for he shall save his people from their sins.* The salvation here ascribed to him, and for which he is every way fit, being God as well as man, and which he is the sole author of, is to be understood, not of a temporal, but of a spiritual and everlasting salvation; such as was prophesied of, (<sup><23:57></sup>Isaiah 45:17) and which old Jacob had in his view, when he said, “I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord”, (<sup><04:18></sup>Genesis 49:18) which by the Jewish<sup>f54</sup> Targumist is paraphrased thus:

“Jacob said when he saw Gideon the son of Joash, and Samson the son of Manoah, that they would rise up to be saviours, not for the salvation of Gideon do I wait, nor for the salvation of Samson do I look, for their salvation is at [çd ^qrwp “a temporary salvation”; but for thy salvation, O Lord, do I wait and look, for thy salvation is ^ymI [ ^qrwp “an everlasting salvation”, or (according to another copy) but for the salvation of Messiah the son of David, who shall save the children of Israel, and bring them out of captivity, for thy salvation my soul waiteth.”

By “his people” whom he is said to save are meant, not all mankind, though they are his by creation and preservation, yet they are not, nor will they be all saved by him spiritually and eternally; nor also the people of the Jews, for though they were his nation, his kinsmen, and so his own people according to the flesh, yet they were not all saved by him; many of them died in their sins, and in the disbelief of him as the Messiah: but by them are meant all the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, who were given to him by his Father, as a peculiar people, and who are made willing in the day of his power upon them, to be saved by him in his own way. And these he saves from “their sins”, from all their sins, original and actual; from secret and open sins; from sins of heart, lip and life; from sins of omission and commission; from all that is in sin, and omission upon it; from the guilt, punishment, and damning power of it, by his sufferings and death; and from the tyrannical government of it by his Spirit and grace; and will at last save them from the being of it, though not in this life, yet hereafter, in the other world, when they shall be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

**Ver. 22.** *Now all this was done*, etc.] These are not the words of the Angel, but of the Evangelist; observing that Mary’s being with child of the Holy Ghost, and her conception in such an extraordinary manner, whilst a pure virgin, before she and Joseph came together, who though espoused to him, was untouched by him, were all brought about in this way, and with such circumstances,

*that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet*; that is, the Prophet Isaiah, and so some copies read. The passage referred to is in (<sup>2374</sup>Isaiah 7:14) what is there spoken was by divine inspiration; it was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet; the Spirit of the Lord spake by him. Prophets and holy men formerly, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; so that what they said is to be looked upon as the word of God. Now between the prophecy of Isaiah referred to, and the fact here recorded by the Evangelist, is an entire agreement: the prophecy shows the will, counsel, and determination of God about this matter; the accomplishment of it, the faithfulness and veracity of God in his word; the prediction declares that the thing would be, and the thing itself was done, that what was spoken might be fulfilled; not merely by way of accommodation, or in a typical and mystical, but in a strict, proper and literal sense.

**Ver. 23.** *Behold, a virgin shall be with child,* etc.] These words are rightly applied to the virgin Mary and her son Jesus, for of no other can they be understood; not of Ahaz's wife and his son Hezekiah, who was already born, and must be eleven or twelve years of age when these words were spoken; nor of any other son of Ahaz by her or any other person since no other was Lord of Judea; nor of the wife of Isaiah, and any son of his, who never had any that was king of Judah. The prophecy is introduced here as in Isaiah with a "behold!" not only to raise and fix the attention, but to denote that it was something wonderful and extraordinary which was about to be related; and is therefore called **twa** a "sign", wonder, or miracle; which lay not, as some Jewish writers<sup>f55</sup> affirm, in this, that the person spoken of was unfit for conception at the time of the prophecy, since no such thing is intimated; or in this, that it should be a son and not a daughter<sup>f56</sup>, which is foretold; for the wonder lies not in the truth of the prediction, but in the extraordinariness of the thing predicted; much less in this<sup>f57</sup>, that the child should eat butter and honey as soon as born; since nothing is more natural and common with new born infants, than to take in any sort of liquids which are sweet and pleasant. But the sign or wonder lay in this, that a "virgin" should "conceive" or "be with child"; for the Evangelist is to be justified in rendering, **hml** [ by **παρψενος** "a virgin"; by the Septuagint having so rendered it some hundreds of years before him, by the sense of the word, which comes from **μl** [ and which signifies to "hide" or "cover"; virgins being such who are unknown to, and not uncovered by men, and in the Eastern countries were kept recluse from the company and conversation of men; and by the use of the word in all other places, (~~Q24B~~ Genesis 24:43 ~~Q11B8~~ Exodus 2:8 ~~Q6R25~~ Psalm 68:25 ~~Q11B8~~ Song of Solomon 1:3 6:8 ~~Q109~~ Proverbs 30:19). The last of these texts the Jews triumph in, as making for them, and against us, but without any reason; since it does not appear that the "maid" and the "adulterous woman" are one and the same person; and if they were, the vitiated woman might be called a maid or virgin, according to her own account of herself, or in the esteem of others who knew her not, or as antecedent to her defilement; (see ~~Q228~~ Deuteronomy 22:28). Besides, could this be understood of any young woman married or unmarried, that had known a man, it would be no wonder, no surprising thing that she should "conceive" or "be with child", and "bring forth a son". It is added,

*and they shall call his name Emmanuel.* The difference between Isaiah and Matthew is very inconsiderable, it being in the one "thou shalt call", that is,

thou virgin shalt call him by this name; and in the other “they shall call”, that is, Joseph, Mary, and others; for, besides that some copies read the text in Matthew *χάλεσεις* “thou shalt call”, the words both in the one and the other may be rendered impersonally, “and shall be called”; and the meaning is, not that he should be commonly known and called by such a name, any more than by any, or all of those mentioned in (<sup>2306</sup>Isaiah 9:6), but only that he should be so, which is a frequent use of the word; or he should be that, and so accounted by others, which answers to the signification of this name, which the Evangelist says,

*being interpreted is God with us*: for it is a compound word of *l a* “God” and *wnm* [ “with us”, and well agrees with Jesus, who is God in our nature, the word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. (<sup>4014</sup>John 1:14), and is the one and only Mediator between God and us, (<sup>5405</sup>1 Timothy 2:5) <sup>f58</sup>. So the Septuagint interpret the word in (<sup>2388</sup>Isaiah 8:8).

**Ver. 24.** *Then Joseph being raised from sleep*, etc.] That is, being awaked out of sleep, *του υπνου* “that sleep”, into which he either naturally fell, whilst he was meditating on the affair of Mary’s being with child; or rather into which he was cast by the Lord, on purpose that he might have a revelation of the will of God to him in a dream; and rising up from his bed or place where he was, immediately and without any delay,

*did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him*; firmly believing that it was a messenger of God that was sent to him, and that this matter was of the Lord. Wherefore he

*took unto him his wife*, that is, he publicly married her, whom he had before espoused, took her to his house, or continued her there, lived with her as his wife, and owned her to be such, and henceforwards had no more thoughts of putting her away.

**Ver. 25.** *“And knew her not”*, etc.] Or “but he knew her not”, *και* answering to the Hebrew *w* that is, had carnal knowledge of her, or copulation with her, though his wife. The words are an euphemism, or a modest way of expressing the conjugal act, and is a very ancient one, (see <sup>4001</sup>Genesis 4:1) and what has been used in nations and languages. And this conduct of his was necessary,

*till she had brought forth her firstborn*; that it might be manifest not only that she conceived, being a virgin, but also that she brought forth, being a

virgin: for both are signified in the prophecy before related, “a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son”; which is all one as if it had been said, a virgin shall conceive, and “a virgin” shall bring forth a son. The “firstborn” is that which first opens the womb of its mother, whether any follows after or not, (<sup><0132></sup>Exodus 13:12,13 <sup><0482></sup>Numbers 3:12). Christ is called Mary’s firstborn, because she had none before him, whether she had any after him or not; for her perpetual virginity seems to be no necessary article of faith: for when it is said,

*Joseph knew her not till she had brought forth*, the meaning is certain that he knew her not before. But whether he afterwards did or not, is not so manifest, nor is it a matter of any great importance; the word “until” may be so understood as referring to the time preceding, that the contrary cannot be affirmed of the time following, (<sup><1063></sup>2 Samuel 6:23 <sup><1073></sup>Matthew 23:39) and which may be the case here, and is indeed generally understood so; and it also may be considered as only expressive of the intermediate time, as in (<sup><1036></sup>Matthew 5:26 <sup><1073></sup>Acts 27:33) as Beza observes. Christ was “her firstborn” as he was man, and the firstborn of God, or his first and only begotten, as the Son of God. It is further observed, that she “called his name Jesus”, as was foretold to her, or ordered her by the Angel, (<sup><1036></sup>Luke 1:31) and to Joseph, (<sup><1012></sup>Matthew 1:21).