One of the most distinctive aspects of Matthew’s infancy narrative is his insistence that everything that happened was a “fulfillment” of Scripture.

- Why was Jesus’ mother a virgin? To fulfill what the prophet said (he quotes Isaiah 7:14: “A virgin shall conceive and bear a son”)
- Why was he born in Bethlehem? To fulfill what the prophet said (he quotes Micah 5:2: “And you, Bethlehem...from you shall come a ruler”)
- Why did Joseph and the family escape to Egypt? To fulfill what the prophet said (he quotes Hosea 11:1: “Out of Egypt I have called my son”)
- Why did Herod have the boys two years and under killed? To fulfill what the prophet said (he quotes Jeremiah 31.15 “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation”)
- Why did Joseph and family relocate to Nazareth? To fulfill what the prophet said (he quotes ... well what does he quote, exactly? “He will be called a Nazorean.” Huh?)

These so-called “fulfillment citations” are found in Matthew and only in Matthew. It is clear that Matthew wants to see Jesus as the fulfillment of what the prophets of Scripture had said. Jesus’ coming into the world was all part of the divine plan. This is clear from the opening verses of the Gospel as well, where Matthew gives his genealogy of Jesus. I’ll say something more about it in a subsequent post. For now, it is striking that according to Matthew, Jesus’ (well, his “father” Joseph’s) genealogy falls into a divinely inspired pattern. From the father of the Jews Abraham to the greatest king of Israel, David, there were fourteen generations; from David to the greatest disaster in Israel, the Babylonian Captivity, were fourteen generations; and from the Babylonian Captivity to the messiah Jesus was fourteen generations. Something BIG happens every fourteen generations. Jesus’ coming into the world is all according to plan.

FOR THE REST OF THIS POST, log in as a Member. If you don’t belong yet, JOIN!!!