

Like my previous post, this one takes material over from my textbook, [The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings](#).

I pointed out in the previous post that Matthew presents a numerically significant genealogy of Jesus in order to show that something of major significance happen every fourteen generations: from Abraham, the father of the Jews, to David, the greatest king of the Jews: fourteen generations; from King David to the Babylonian Captivity, the greatest disaster for the Jews: fourteen generations; and from the Babylonian Captivity to the Messiah Jesus, the ultimate savior of the Jews: fourteen generations.

It's a terrific genealogy. But to get to this 14-14-14 schema, Matthew had to manipulate the names in a couple of places, for example, by leaving out some of the generations and by counting the final set of names as fourteen, even though there are only thirteen. And so, we might wonder whether the number fourteen, in particular, was for some reasons significant for Matthew. Why not 15, or 12?

Over the years interpreters of Matthew have puzzled over the question and have suggested two, in particular, that strike me as interesting.

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