READ MATTHEW 1:1-17

* Why does the writer of the book of Matthew begin his book with a genealogy?
  + Because the genealogy acts as a credentialing for Jesus.
  + The Messiah was prophesied to be a Jew (a descendent of Abraham) and a descendent of David (Genesis 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7:16; Jeremiah 23:5-6)
  + The Jews kept very detailed genealogical records and Matthew uses these records to prove that the man around which his book centers met the qualifications for the identity He claimed.
  + If Jesus couldn’t fulfill these prophesies, He would instantly be identified as a fraud.
  + Verse 1 highlights Jesus’ qualifications right-off-the-bat.
* Several important names are brought to our attention in the genealogical records
  + Abraham – Father of the Jewish nation. God promised him that through his descendants all the world would be blessed.
  + Isaac – Abraham’s promised son. Married to Rebecca.
  + Jacob – Father of 12 sons who would become the 12 tribes of Israel
  + Judah – One of the 12 sons of Jacob. Father of the tribe through which Jesus would descend.
  + Rahab – Prostitute that helped hide the Israelite spies in Jericho (Joshua 2)
  + Boaz and Ruth – Main characters in the book of Ruth
  + David – 2nd King of Israel
  + Solomon – 3rd King of Israel
  + Rehoboam – Son of Solomon. During his reign, the kingdom divided into a northern and southern nation (Israel and Judah)
  + Hezekiah – King of Judah (2 Kings 18)
  + Josiah – Became king of Judah when he was 8 years old (2 Kings 22)
* Verse 17 records the number of generations between significant characters and events
  + 14 generations between Abraham and David
  + 14 generations between David and captivity in Babylon (606 BC)
  + 14 generations between captivity in Babylon and Christ (1 AD)

READ MATTHEW 1:18-25

* Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married
  + Betrothal is often compared to modern day engagement but was likely much more binding
  + A betrothal may have involved formal agreements between the involved families and the exchange of a dowry.
  + The union was not consummated until after the betrothal period.
* Mary is discovered to be pregnant
  + Joseph, who was obviously shocked, planned to dissolve the union privately, not wishing to make a public spectacle of Mary.
    - Joseph deserves credit for his approach to the situation
    - Obviously, sexual unfaithfulness in a relationship like this would have been a significant betrayal and probably would have been a bit embarrassing for his family.
    - That being recognized, Joseph didn’t attempt to publicly shame Mary as a means of vengeance
  + An angel appeared to him in a dream and explained the situation.
    - Mary was innocent
    - Mary carried a child conceived by the Holy Spirit
    - The child would be named Jesus and would save His people from their sins.
    - Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14
    - Jesus was given another name, Immanuel, meaning “God with us.”
  + After waking from his dream, Joseph was obedient to the angel and did not “put away” Mary.
  + Joseph deserves a great deal of credit for his decision to remain with Mary.
    - He probably did not imagine his new married life involve a scandal of either premarital sex or betrothal unfaithfulness.
    - There was no easy way out of the situation for Joseph.
      * Either people assumed the child was his and he had had a sexual relationship with Mary before their marriage
      * Or, people assumed Mary had been with another man during her betrothal.
    - Either possibility would have reflected badly on Joseph but rather than run from the situation, he embraced the role God gave him to play.

Sources:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/betrothal.html>

<https://jewsforjesus.org/jewish-resources/community/life-cycle-events/weddings/>