

We ought to be very careful not to read our own preconceived ideas into the Bible. In interpreting any part of God's Word we need to determine how each word is used in the Scripture.

Thus any one of us might think that he knew exactly what is meant by the word "son." Surely we would not call two men father and son if they lived many centuries apart. Yet we find that Matthew 1:1 calls Jesus Christ "the son of David, the son of ~~Abram~~ Abraham." How could a man be the son of someone who lived a thousand years before, and how could that second man be the son of ~~another~~ another who lived many centuries before he did? These and many other evidences make perfectly clear that in the Bible the word "son" means simply a male descendant who may be in the next generation, or several generations later.

Further on in this first chapter of Matthew we find, in verses 7 to 11, the names of the kings of Judah from Solomon to Jehoiachin (Jechonias). The history of these <sup>of Judah</sup> kings is given at length <sup>both in Kings and in Chronicles</sup> in the Old Testament. When we compare, we find that Matthew omits the names of three of them. This omission is not accidental, since we are told in verse 17 that there are 14 in the list, not 17. <sup>WFF</sup> Moreover, every Jewish child knew the names of the kings of Judah. It could not be an accident that <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ Scripture there speaks of a king as begetting his great-great grandchild. <sup>clearly</sup> ~~So we see that~~ in the Bible the word "beget" means "to become an ancestor," just as the word "son" denotes one who is a descendant.

Thus, in studying the Bible we must carefully investigate the use of each word to determine exactly what it means. I believe in standing positively and strongly against those who do not accept what the Bible says, but I am sorry indeed when <sup>③</sup> disagreement about <sup>misinterpretation or</sup> ~~the meaning of a word or phrase~~ produces <sup>②</sup> ~~by~~

① divisions are ④ which good Christians may differ.