



THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

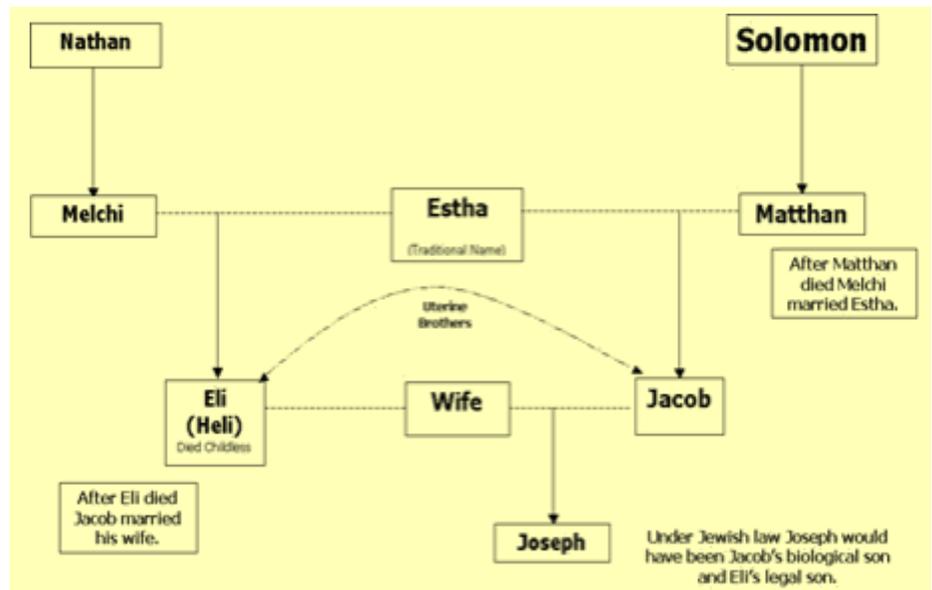
**ET TIBI DABO CLAVES
REGNI CAELORUM**



THE INFANCY NARRATIVE AND EARLY MINISTRY (Matthew 1-4)

The Genealogy of Jesus

- Matthew's genealogy begins with Abraham and works forward while Luke begins with Joseph and works back.
- Matthew begins with Abraham while Luke goes all the way back to Adam and God.
- There is a discrepancy between Matthew and Luke's account of Jesus' genealogy:
 - ◊ Matthew traces through Joseph's line by using Solomon after David.
 - ◊ Luke follows Mary using Nathan.
 - ◊ Each also has a different father for Joseph. Matthew uses the Jewish understanding and makes Joseph the son of Heli while Luke follows a non-Jewish rendering with Jacob.
- Matthew uses the number 14 in his genealogy.
 - ◊ We should look at this as using the number 7-the number of perfection.
 - ◊ He uses what he sees as the major events in Jewish history as the backdrop of his genealogy: the call of Abraham, the establishing of the monarchy, the Babylonian exile and the coming of the Messiah.
 - ◊ It does appear that Matthew deliberately left out some names from the genealogy to make his numbering: Ahaziah, Jehosh and Amaziah between Jehoram and Uzziah.
 - ◊ Technically, Matthew only includes 13 in his third stanza (from Salathiel [Shealtiel] to Jesus). This can be understood by inserting Mary from whom Jesus took all of his humanity.
- Matthew has 4 women included in his genealogy. Three are definitely foreigners (Ruth, Tamar and Rahab). Bathsheba is assumed to be a foreigner as she was married to Uriah, the Hittite.
- Amos probably refers to King Amon and not the prophet. The inclusion of Josiah as his son makes this all but certain.



The Infancy Narrative

- In Matthew it is Joseph and not Mary who is the recipient of a divine message. He is told to take Mary as his wife and later he is told to take the Holy Family to Egypt.
 - ◊ The angel quotes Isaiah 7:14 when delivering his message to Joseph which will signify a tie to Isaiah's suffering servant songs that Matthew will stress.
 - ◊ The name Emmanuel, "God is with us", is a sign that God is ever-present. He is there in the midst of all things. It also alludes to the promise of Jesus to be with his apostles "until the end of the age".
 - ◊ It is fitting that Jesus bears the name Emmanuel both in the beginning of the Gospel and the end. This signifies that there is not time at which Jesus is not with us.
 - ◊ Matthew stresses time and again that Jesus is the fulfillment of what was promised to the Jews.
- It is Joseph in Matthew who finds favor with God and thus bears the title of "righteous".
- Joseph is also the one who is active in Matthew. In Luke, Mary makes haste to Elizabeth but in Matthew it is Joseph who takes Mary and Jesus to Egypt.
- The wise men from the east are usually given the names of Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar.

The word used in the Greek for them is *μάγοι* which is root of the word magic. Hence, they are called Magi or magicians. Originally this term was used for the learned priestly class of Persians but later became used for anyone with a skill with the occult (hence our word magician). Matthew's connection with the star means they were probably skilled in astrology.



He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus. Mt 1:25

- *Heōs* in Greek is usually rendered until in English but is simply used to indicate a select amount of time. It does not imply a change in the future.
 - 2 Sam 6:23 And so Saul's daughter Michal was childless **until** the day of her death.
 - Jn 9:18 Now the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and gained his sight **until** they summoned the parents of the one who had gained his sight..
 - 1Tim 4:13 **Until** I arrive, attend to the reading, exhortation, and teaching.

* "And when he had taken her, he knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born Son.' He hath here used the word till,' not that thou shouldst suspect that afterwards he did know her, but to inform thee that before the birth the Virgin was wholly untouched by man. But why then, it may be said, hath he used the word, till'? Because it is usual in Scripture often to do this, and to use this expression without reference to limited times. For so with respect to the ark likewise, it is said, The raven returned not till the earth was dried up.' And yet it did not return even after that time. And when discoursing also of God, the Scripture saith, From age until age Thou art,' not as fixing limits in this case. And again when it is preaching the Gospel beforehand, and saying, In his days shall righteousness flourish, and abundance of peace, till the moon be taken away,' it doth not set a limit to this fair part of creation. So then here likewise, it uses the word "till," to make certain what was before the birth, but as to what follows, it leaves thee to make the inference." John Chrysostom, Gospel of Matthew, V:5 (A.D. 370).

Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Mt 13:55

- There are two solutions given to the problem of Jesus' brothers and sisters. Both can be correct at the same time.
- St. Jerome discussed this problem in 4th Century and he favored both solutions to the problem.
 - ◊ Jesus and his fellow Jews spoke in Aramaic which has no word for family members that are not one's brother or father. His "brothers and sisters" refer to a family relation but not to a blood brother.
- The Protoevangelium of James was written in the middle of the 2nd century and provides a different point of view.
 - ◊ Joseph was an older man who married Mary as her legal guardian and to give her access to the Temple.
 - ◊ He had children from a previous and deceased wife.

* "But as we do not deny what is written, so we do reject what is not written. We believe that God was born of the Virgin, because we read it. That Mary was married after she brought forth, we do not believe, because we do not read it. Nor do we say this to condemn marriage, for virginity itself is the fruit of marriage; but because when we are dealing with saints we must not judge rashly. If we adopt possibility as the standard of judgment, we might maintain that Joseph had several wives because Abraham had, and so had Jacob, and that the Lord's brethren were the issue of those wives, an invention which some hold with a rashness which springs from audacity not from piety. You say that Mary did not continue a virgin: I claim still more, that Joseph himself on account of Mary was a virgin, so that from a virgin wedlock a virgin son was born. For if as a holy man he does not come under the imputation of fornication, and it is nowhere written that he had another wife, but was the guardian of Mary whom he was supposed to have to wife rather than her husband, the conclusion is that he who was thought worthy to be called father of the Lord, remained a virgin." Jerome, The Perpetual Virginity of Mary Against Helvedius, 21 (A.D. 383).

- The Magi are seeking a king. Jesus is the king.
- Herod, the puppet king installed by the Romans, attempts to use duplicity to fool the Magi into revealing the newborn king.
 - ◊ We cannot trick God
 - ◊ The Magi, like Joseph, are given insight in a dream and return by a different route.
- The Magi enter and do the real king homage.
 - ◊ Significant because these men are gentiles.
 - ◊ This foreshadows the mission to the gentiles.
- The gifts of the Magi
 - ◊ The gifts of the Magi are foreshadowed in Psalm 72:10 as well as in Isaiah 60:6.
 - ◊ Gold-Royalty: that the newborn child is indeed a king.
 - ◊ Frankincense-Sacrifice: many of the Jewish sacrifices (particularly meat offerings) were covered in frankincense.
 - ◊ Myrrh-death: Myrrh is aromatic and was used in Jewish burials. As an extra allusion to his death, Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh while on the cross.



- ◇ If we take these three together, we come to the cross. Jesus, arms extended to all, suffers for his people. He has his title, “King of the Jews”, above his head, he is the sacrificial offering who will be buried only to rise again.
- Joseph is warned to take the child to Egypt because Herod is looking for him to put him to death.
- “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”
 - ◇ Hosea 11:1 speaks to calling Israel, God’s son, out of Egypt.
 - ◇ Here the tie is made that Jesus is God’s own son whom he also calls from Egypt.
- In his desire to destroy the King of the Jews, Herod orders all the male children under two to be killed.
- In doing so, Herod unwittingly ties Jesus to Moses. This will become more evident in Matthew 5.
- After another message from an angel, Joseph brings Mary and Jesus out of Egypt but upon hearing that Archelaus was the ruler in Jerusalem, Joseph took the Holy Family to Galilee.
- He will be called a Nazorean
 - ◇ Nazareth is not mentioned in the Old Testament nor is anyone called a Nazorean.
 - ◇ Matthew is probably referring to the “bud of Jesse” mentioned in Isaiah 11.
 - ◇ “Bud” in Hebrew is “neser”.
 - ◇ It could also be an allusion to “nazir” which means “to consecrate”.



- John preaches near the Jordan River in the wilderness. This is probably not far from Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were uncovered.
 - ◇ By the Jordan River which was a sign of God’s deliverance.
 - ◇ Belonged to a sect called the Essenes.
 - ◇ They viewed Jerusalem as corrupt and went into the wilderness to escape what they saw as contamination to the faith.
- John’s proclamation of the kingdom of God and his encouragement to repent foreshadows Jesus’ own proclamation.
- John’s appearance in the desert and the description of his garments is meant to invoke the image of Elijah.
 - ◇ 2 Kings 1:8 Elijah is described as wearing a hairy garment with a leather belt.
 - ◇ Malachi 3:23 & 24 state that Elijah will return before the coming of the Lord.
- Jesus himself says that John the Baptist was Elijah. We should look at this not as the 2nd bodily coming of Elijah but that John came in the spirit of Elijah-to accomplish the same goal.
- The words John utters do indeed herald the coming of the Lord. They are a quote from Isaiah 40:3.
- John seemingly takes up the mantle of Elijah by stating that one is coming after him that will baptize with fire and the Holy Spirit.
- John’s baptism vs. Jesus baptism
 - ◇ John’s was symbolic-an outward gesture of repentance.
 - ◇ John’s baptism does not include the gift of the Holy Spirit that comes with Jesus’ baptism.
- Why is Jesus baptized if he does not have sin?
 - ◇ To fulfill all righteousness
 - ◇ He is a devout Jew who observes the Law and thus does everything to live a good Jewish life.
- The Trinity is on full display: The Father’s voice, the Son is baptized and the Spirit descends.





- Jesus relives the Old Testament
 - ◊ 40 is the number of testing in the OT
 - ◊ Israel (Ex 4:22) & Jesus are both called God's son
 - ◊ Both temptations are preceded by a baptism (Ex. 14)
 - ◊ Israel fails its temptation while Christ succeeds

The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread."

Own Things

Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

Own God

Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me."

Own Men

He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"

Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'"

At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"



Jesus responds with his own quote from Psalm 91 but with the trust and faith the text encourages.

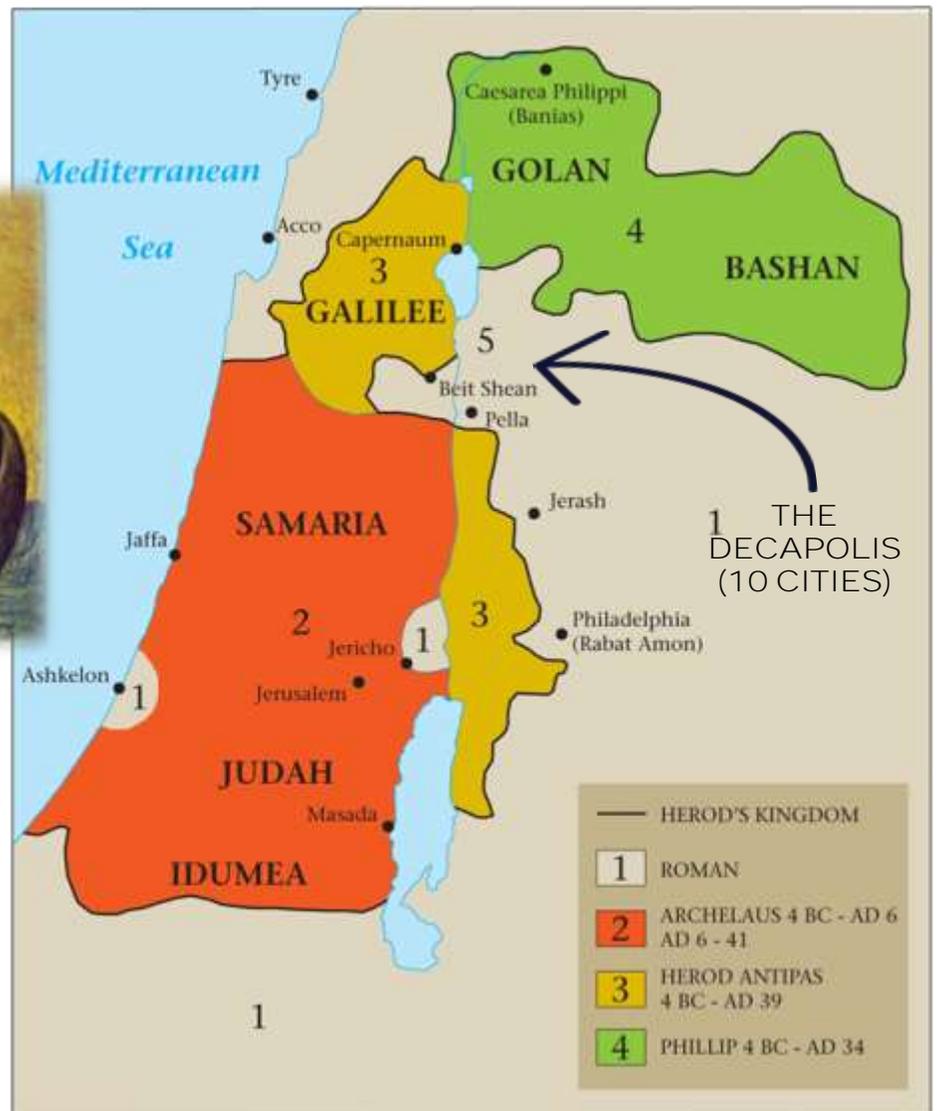
Satan quotes Psalm 91 but he does so violating the meaning of the text. He offers a reading of the text that tests God.

- Zebulun and Naphtali: these were two of the original 12 tribes.
- The areas in which they lived were among the first to be conquered and decimated by the Assyrian invasion. It is fitting then that Jesus begins gathering the tribes in the area in which they were first scattered.

Tasks of the Messiah

1. Gather the tribes
2. Cleanse the Temple
3. Defeat the enemies of Israel
4. Reign as Lord of the nations

- Jesus begins to collect the men that would become the 12 apostles with Peter and Andrew. Later he would also call James and John, the sons of Zebedee.
- The answer to the call of Jesus is “immediate”. They laid down their nets and followed him.
- From now on I will make you fishers of men. The apostles will continue the mission of Jesus to call all men to Christ.
- The preaching of the apostles and their successors will continue throughout the centuries.
- Jesus goes out to preach to all of Galilee.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTERS 1-4

Who in Jesus genealogy jumps out to you? Why?

Matthew stresses that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promises made to the Jews. How were fulfillment of these promises more than the Jews of Jesus' day even dared to hope?

What is important about the visit of the Magi? What do their gifts indicate?

What is important about the preaching of John the Baptist? Who does he come in the spirit of? What is important about the location of his preaching?

What can learn about Satan from the temptation of Jesus?