

## THE BIG READ (1)

### Jesus in Matthew

#### A. Introduction

1. Every book of the Bible has one dominating theme – Jesus is the Christ.

Jesus is the Christ who will suffer and die.

Jesus is the Christ who will rise from the dead on the third day.

Jesus is the Christ who will forgive the sins of all who repent.

Jesus is the Christ who will be preached to the nations.

“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:45-47)

2. The New Testament begins with the four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

These four books tell the story of Jesus’ earthly life.

Whilst they all focus on different aspects of Jesus’ life and ministry, each account has the same basic themes about the identity, mission, and message of Jesus.

Together they paint a beautiful portrait of who Jesus is.

3. Matthew’s Gospel comes first in the New Testament.

The early church believed that Matthew was the first Gospel to be written – more likely it was Mark.

This is the Gospel used most often by the early church – the early church fathers mention it more than twice as often as the other gospels.

It is appropriate that Matthew comes first because it bridges the Old and the New Testament – Matthew connects the story of Jesus explicitly to the Old Testament. [Look out for the word ‘fulfilled’]

#### B. Matthew the Man

1. A Jew

Matthew is a Hebrew name. He also went by the name Levi, another Hebrew name.

“As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth.” (Matthew 9:9)

“Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector’s booth.” (Mark 2:13-14 see also Luke 5:27-28)

He has a special interest in the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. A Tax Collector

“These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.” (Matthew 10:2-4)



Chapters 10-12 – Opposition to Jesus’ ministry (Jesus prepares his disciples for this opposition).

Chapters 13-16 – Two responses to Jesus (those who see Jesus is the Christ and those who don’t – this polarisation is described in the parables).

Chapters 16-18 – Leading out of Peter’s confession, Jesus teaches those who have decided to follow Him about what it means to be a disciple, and how they are to live together in local churches.

Chapters 19-25 – Judgment on those who reject Jesus.

Chapters 26-28 – The Suffering, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

2. The central section (chapters 5-25) contains five blocks of teaching interspersed with narrative.

[Look out for the phrase ‘When Jesus had finished...’]

“When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.” (Matthew 7:28-29)

## **E. Jesus in Matthew**

1. The central theme in Matthew is that Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament; He is the long anticipated Messiah; the King who will bring salvation to both Jew and Gentile alike.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.” (Matthew 5:17)

2. Jesus is the Son of David.

God had made a promise to the people of Israel about a King who would reign forever.

“When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall endure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.” (2 Samuel 7:12-16)

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and for ever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.” (Isaiah 9:6-7)

Who will be the King? Will there be a King?

The opening line of Matthew’s gospel explodes with excitement – the King is here!

“A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David.” (Matthew 1:1)

Herod recognises that Jesus is the King, which is why he tries to kill him (Matthew 2:1-16).

People call Jesus the Son of David (Matthew 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30-31, 21:9, 21:15, 22:41-45).

Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ.

“Simon Peter answered, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16)

Jesus is the King who will reign forever because He is Immanuel.

"All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel— which means, God with us."  
(Matthew 1:22-23)

### 3. Jesus is the True Israel

A retelling of a classic story.

Miracles surrounding His birth (Matthew 1:18-25).

Conflict with the ruler of the land (Matthew 2:1-12).

A massacre of male babies (Matthew 2:16-18).

A journey to and from Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23).

Passing through the waters of baptism like Israel went through the sea (Matthew 3:13-17).

40 days in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11).

Teaching ministry on a mountain (Matthew 5-7).

Matthew tells us that the story of the Exodus teaches us about Jesus.

But unlike Israel of old who were law-breakers; Jesus the Christ was the true law-keeper and this not for His own sake but for ours, so that we can be righteous before God.

### 4. Jesus is the Son of Abraham

God promised Abraham that all nations will be blessed through Him – particularly through his offspring.

"through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed" (Genesis 22:18)

Jesus is the promised offspring of Abraham, who brings God's blessing to the nations by saving His people from their sins.

"A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham." (Matthew 1:1)

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21 see Matthew 20:28)

The nations are included in Jesus' genealogy – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba.

Matthew shows people from the nations putting their faith in Jesus (Magi in Matthew 2:1-12, Roman Centurion in Matthew 7:5-13, Canaanite Woman in Matthew 15:21-28).

The Great Commission brings these two themes of Jesus being the King and Jesus being the one who brings blessing to the world by saving His people from their sins together.

"Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:16-20)

## F. Conclusion

1. Matthew wants his readers (who would have primarily been Jewish) to see that Jesus is the promised King who has come to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:1, 1:21, 20:28).

2. Our response to King Jesus is to repent and follow Him (Matthew 4:17-22), listen to Him (Matthew 7:24-27), live like Him (Matthew 5-7) and proclaim Him to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20).

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<sup>i</sup> Adapted from 'The Message of Matthew: Jesus the Son of David' by Mark Dever