



Matthew (Levi) · c. AD 80–90 · New Testament · Gospel

Matthew

The Gospel of the King — Jesus as the fulfillment of Israel's story

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

— Matthew 28:19

CONTENTS OF THIS STUDY PACK

01 Visual Overview Infographic

A panoramic lens on twenty-eight chapters of Matthew.

03 Key Themes & Theological Insights

New Moses, Kingdom of Heaven, Discipleship, Fulfillment.

05 Small Group Discussion Guide

Eight questions with guided prompts and note space.

07 Practical Application

Living the Sermon on the Mount and the Great Commission.

02 Chapter-by-Chapter Narrative Arc

Birth, Ministry, Passion, Resurrection — six movements.

04 Symbolism & Imagery

Star of Bethlehem, Mountain, Bread, Dove at Baptism.


06 Key Characters

Jesus, Joseph, John the Baptist, Peter — portraits.

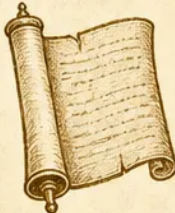
THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

The Gospel of the King


DISCOURSE 1:
SERMON ON THE MOUNT
(CH. 5-7)




DISCOURSE 2:
MISSION
(CH. 10)




DISCOURSE 3:
PARABLES
(CH. 13)



DISCOURSE 4:
COMMUNITY
(CH. 18)



DISCOURSE 5:
END TIMES
(CH. 24-25)



Therefore go and make disciples of all nations — Matthew 28:19



STAR OF BETHLEHEM
Reveals the King and guides the nations to Him.



THE MOUNTAIN
Where the King teaches His kingdom way.



THE DOVE
The Spirit of the King brings peace and empowers.

Visual overview of Matthew — the King, the Kingdom, and the Commission.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Matthew is the most Jewish of the four Gospels — and the most quoted book in the early church. Written by Matthew (Levi), a former tax collector turned apostle (c. AD 80–90), it is addressed to Jewish Christians wrestling with the relationship between the Law and the gospel of Jesus. Matthew's answer is clear: Jesus is not the abolition of the Old Testament but its fulfillment. He is the new Moses who gives a new law from a new mountain, the new David who establishes an eternal kingdom, and the new Israel who succeeds where the nation failed. The Gospel is structured around five great discourses — mirroring the five books of Moses — and culminates in the Great Commission: “Go and make disciples of all nations.”

SECTION 1

Matthew 1–4 THE KING ARRIVES — BIRTH, BAPTISM, AND TEMPTATION



- 1:1–2:23** The genealogy traces Jesus from Abraham through David to Joseph, establishing his royal credentials. The birth narratives: the angel's announcement to Joseph, the Magi's visit, the flight to Egypt, and the return — each fulfilling Old Testament prophecy.
- 3:1–17** John the Baptist prepares the way in the wilderness, calling Israel to repentance. Jesus is baptized in the Jordan; the Spirit descends as a dove and the Father speaks: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” The first Trinitarian scene in Matthew.
- 4:1–25** Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days of testing — echoing Israel's forty years. He resists three temptations with Scripture. He begins his ministry in Galilee, calls his first disciples, and heals throughout the region.

SECTION 2

Matthew 5–7 THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT — THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM



- 5:1–48** The Beatitudes: eight declarations of blessing that describe the character of kingdom citizens. Jesus then raises the ethical bar of the law — not abolishing it but fulfilling it. “You have heard it said... but I say to you”: anger, lust, divorce, oaths, retaliation, love for enemies.
- 6:1–34** The practice of kingdom life: giving, prayer (the Lord's Prayer), fasting — all done in secret before the Father, not for public recognition. The command not to worry, grounded in the Father's care. “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”
- 7:1–29** The conclusion of the Sermon: judging others, asking and receiving, the narrow gate, false prophets, and the two builders. The crowds are astonished at Jesus' authority — he teaches as one who has authority, not as the scribes.

SECTION 3

Matthew 8–12 THE KING'S AUTHORITY — MIRACLES AND MISSION 

- 8:1–9:38** A series of ten miracles demonstrating Jesus' authority over disease, nature, demons, and death. The healing of a leper, a centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law, the calming of the storm, the healing of two demoniacs, and the raising of Jairus' daughter.
- 10:1–42** The commissioning of the Twelve: Jesus sends them out with his authority to heal and proclaim the kingdom. He warns them of coming opposition and persecution, and promises that the one who endures to the end will be saved.
- 11:1–12:50** Growing opposition: John the Baptist's question from prison, Jesus' rebuke of unrepentant cities, the controversy over the Sabbath, and the Pharisees' accusation that Jesus casts out demons by Beelzebul. Jesus declares himself "Lord of the Sabbath."

SECTION 4

Matthew 13–18 THE KINGDOM PARABLES AND THE COMMUNITY OF DISCIPLES 

- 13:1–58** Seven parables of the kingdom: the Sower, the Weeds, the Mustard Seed, the Yeast, the Hidden Treasure, the Pearl, and the Net. Jesus explains why he speaks in parables — to reveal to those with ears to hear and conceal from those who have hardened their hearts.
- 14:1–16:20** The feeding of 5,000, Jesus walking on water, the feeding of 4,000, and Peter's confession: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus declares he will build his church on this rock. The first prediction of his death and resurrection.
- 17:1–18:35** The Transfiguration: Jesus' glory is revealed on a mountain before Peter, James, and John. Moses and Elijah appear. The Father speaks again. Jesus teaches on humility, forgiveness, and community life — including the parable of the Unmerciful Servant.

SECTION 5

Matthew 19–25 THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM AND THE OLIVET DISCOURSE 

- 19:1–21:46** Teaching on divorce, children, the rich young ruler, and the workers in the vineyard. The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem: Jesus rides a donkey, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9. He cleanses the temple and curses the fig tree. The chief priests and elders challenge his authority.
- 22:1–23:39** Controversies in the temple: the parable of the Wedding Banquet, questions about taxes, resurrection, and the greatest commandment. Jesus' declaration: "Love the Lord your God... and love your neighbor." The seven woes against the Pharisees.
- 24:1–25:46** The Olivet Discourse: Jesus predicts the destruction of the temple and the end of the age. Three parables of accountability: the Ten Virgins (readiness), the Talents (faithfulness), and the Sheep and Goats (compassion toward the least of these).



- 26:1–75** The Last Supper — a Passover meal — where Jesus institutes the Eucharist. Gethsemane: “Not as I will, but as you will.” The arrest, Peter’s denial, and Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas.
- 27:1–66** Jesus before Pilate, the crucifixion at Golgotha, the darkness at noon, the tearing of the temple curtain, and the resurrection of many holy people. Joseph of Arimathea buries Jesus; the tomb is sealed and guarded.
-
- 28:1–20** The resurrection: the women find the empty tomb; Jesus appears to them. The Great Commission on a mountain in Galilee: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations... And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
-

KEY THEMES

Matthew's Gospel is organized around four great theological convictions that together present Jesus as the climax of Israel's story and the inaugurator of a new covenant community.

⁰¹ JESUS AS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT



01

Matthew contains more Old Testament quotations and allusions than any other Gospel — over 60 direct citations. His signature phrase “This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet” appears 14 times. Matthew presents Jesus not as a replacement for the Old Testament but as its completion: the new Moses who gives a new law from a new mountain, the new David who establishes an eternal kingdom, the new Israel who succeeds where the nation failed.

MODERN APPLICATION

Reading the Old Testament through Matthew's lens transforms it from a history book into a promise book. What Old Testament promises or patterns do you see coming to completion in Jesus's life and ministry?

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

⁰² THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN



02

The phrase “kingdom of heaven” appears 32 times in Matthew — and nowhere else in the Gospels. It is the organizing theme of the entire book. Jesus announces it in the **Beatitudes**, illustrates it in seven **parables** (Matthew 13), and embodies it in his person. The kingdom is both present (“the kingdom of heaven is at hand”) and future (“your kingdom come”). It is not a geographic territory but a reign — the rule of God breaking into human history through Jesus.

MODERN APPLICATION

The Sermon on the Mount is the constitution of the kingdom. Which of its demands — loving enemies, forgiving seventy times, giving without recognition — most challenges the way you currently live?

“Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” — Matthew 6:33

⁰³ DISCIPLESHIP AND THE GREAT COMMISSION



03

Matthew is the only Gospel to use the word “church” (ekklesia, 16:18; 18:17). From the calling of the first disciples (4:18–22) to the Great Commission (28:18–20), the entire Gospel is structured around the formation of a community of disciples. Jesus does not just teach crowds — he invests deeply in twelve. The Great Commission is the climax: “Go and make disciples of all nations” — the mission is global, the method is discipleship, and the promise is his perpetual presence.

MODERN APPLICATION

Discipleship in Matthew is not a program but a relationship — following Jesus, learning from him, and becoming like him. Who are you discipling, and who is discipling you?

“Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people.” — Matthew 4:19



Matthew contains more teaching on judgment than any other Gospel. The Olivet Discourse (chapters 24–25) ends with three parables of **accountability**: the Ten Virgins (readiness), the Talents (faithfulness), and the Sheep and Goats (compassion). The final parable is stunning in its criteria: judgment is based not on theological correctness but on how we treated “the least of these” — the hungry, the stranger, the sick, the imprisoned. Orthodoxy without **orthopraxy** is insufficient.

MODERN APPLICATION

The Sheep and Goats parable is uncomfortable precisely because it is so concrete. What specific acts of mercy toward vulnerable people does Jesus’s teaching call you to?

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” — Matthew 25:40

SYMBOLISM & IMAGERY

Matthew’s symbols are drawn from Israel’s history, creation, and the life of Jesus — each one a pointer to the identity of the King and the nature of the kingdom he brings.



THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

SYMBOL 01

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The **Magi** were likely Zoroastrian astrologers from Persia or Babylon who studied celestial phenomena for prophetic significance. The star they followed has been variously identified as a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, a comet, or a supernova. Whatever its astronomical nature, it served as a divine navigational sign pointing to the birthplace of the Messiah.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

The star is the first sign in Matthew that the gospel is for all nations, not just Israel. Gentile astronomers from the East are the first to worship the newborn king — while the religious establishment in Jerusalem is indifferent or hostile. The star anticipates the Great Commission: the **light of Christ** is meant to guide all peoples to worship.



THE MOUNTAIN

SYMBOL 02

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In the ancient Near East, mountains were considered the dwelling places of the gods — the meeting point between heaven and earth. Moses received the Law on Mount **Sinai**. Elijah heard God's voice on Mount Horeb. The Jerusalem Temple was built on **Mount Zion**. Mountains in the Bible are consistently places of divine encounter and revelation.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

Matthew structures his Gospel around five major discourses, each delivered on or associated with a mountain. Jesus is the new Moses giving a **new law** from a new mountain. The final scene of Matthew — the Great Commission — takes place on a mountain in Galilee. Mountains in Matthew signal that something definitive is being revealed.



BREAD AND THE FEEDING MIRACLES

SYMBOL 03

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Bread was the staple food of the ancient Mediterranean world — the difference between survival and starvation. The two feeding miracles in Matthew took place in the wilderness, evoking the **manna** God provided to Israel in the desert. The numbers are significant: **12 baskets** and 7 baskets.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

The feeding miracles are **Eucharistic foreshadowings**: Jesus takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it — the same four actions at the Last Supper. They also demonstrate that Jesus is the true **bread from heaven**. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches his disciples to pray for "**daily bread**" — a prayer that is simultaneously physical and spiritual, trusting God for both sustenance and salvation.



THE DOVE AT BAPTISM

SYMBOL 04

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Doves were the most common sacrificial bird in ancient Israel — affordable even for the poor. They were also symbols of peace and new beginnings: after the Flood, a dove returned to Noah with an olive branch, signaling the end of judgment and the start of a new creation. In the **Song of Solomon**, the dove is a term of endearment.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

The dove descending on Jesus at his baptism is the Holy Spirit visibly manifesting. This is the first explicit **Trinitarian scene** in Matthew: the Son is baptized, the Spirit descends, and the Father speaks. The dove connects Jesus to Noah, to the sacrificial system, and to the Song of Solomon. The Spirit's descent also marks Jesus as the anointed one — the Messiah — empowered for his mission.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

These 8 questions are designed for a 60–90 minute small group session. Begin with the icebreaker, then work through observation, interpretation, and application questions. Close with the prayer prompt.

ICEBREAKER

If you could have been present at one scene in Matthew’s Gospel — the Sermon on the Mount, the Transfiguration, the feeding of the 5,000, or the empty tomb — which would you choose and why?

.....
.....

01

OBSERVATION

Read the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–12) aloud slowly. Which beatitude is most surprising or counterintuitive to you? Which one most describes where you are right now in life?

Leader’s Note:

The Beatitudes do not describe eight types of Christians — they describe one person: the disciple of Jesus. Together they paint a portrait of the character formed by life in the kingdom.

.....
.....

02

OBSERVATION

Matthew records seven woes against the Pharisees in chapter 23. Compare these with the seven Beatitudes in chapter 5. What contrasts do you notice? What does this tell us about the difference between religious performance and genuine kingdom character?

Leader’s Note:

The Pharisees are outwardly righteous but inwardly corrupt — the exact inverse of the Beatitudes. The woes are not primarily condemnation but warning: this is what religion looks like when it loses its heart.

.....
.....

03

INTERPRETATION

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says he will build his church on “this rock.” What is the rock — Peter himself, Peter’s faith, or Peter’s confession? How does your answer shape your understanding of church authority and leadership?

Leader’s Note:

This is one of the most debated verses in church history. The Catholic tradition reads it as Peter himself; the Protestant tradition reads it as Peter’s confession of faith. Both agree that the church is built on the person and work of Jesus Christ.

.....
.....

04

INTERPRETATION

The Parable of the Sheep and Goats (Matthew 25:31–46) suggests that judgment is based on how we treated “the least of these.” Does this mean salvation is by works? How do you reconcile this with Matthew’s emphasis on faith and grace?

Leader’s Note:

The parable does not teach salvation by works but the fruit of genuine faith. Those who truly know the King will naturally serve his people — not to earn his favor but because they have received it. Works are the evidence of faith, not its substitute.

05

APPLICATION

Jesus says in Matthew 6:24: “You cannot serve both God and money.” In what specific ways does money compete with God for your primary loyalty? What one practical step could you take this week to loosen money’s hold on your heart?

06

APPLICATION

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20) ends with a promise: “I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” How does the promise of Christ’s presence change the way you approach the command to make disciples? Who in your life is God calling you to invest in?

07

PRAYER PROMPT

Close by reading the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13) together slowly, phrase by phrase. After each phrase, pause and ask: what would it look like for this to be genuinely true in my life this week? Then pray the prayer together as a group, meaning each word.

08

KEY CHARACTERS

Jesus

Presented as the Son of David, Son of Abraham, and Son of God — the Messiah who fulfills all of Israel’s hopes and commissions his followers to make disciples of all nations. Matthew’s Jesus is the



Joseph

The righteous man who obeys God’s angel and protects the infant Jesus, modeling the faithful discipleship Matthew calls all readers to. Joseph’s obedience is quiet and costly — he risks social



John the Baptist



The forerunner who prepares the way for Jesus, baptizes him, and whose imprisonment marks the transition to Jesus' public ministry. John's question from prison — "Are you the one who is to come, or

Peter



The first disciple called, the one who confesses Jesus as Messiah, and the one who denies him — a portrait of both the heights and failures of discipleship. Peter's story is Matthew's invitation to every reader:

PRACTICAL APPLICATION — LIVING IT OUT TODAY



Live the Sermon on the Mount

The Beatitudes and the ethics of Matthew 5–7 are not ideals for a future age but the character of the kingdom now. Choose one specific teaching from the Sermon on the Mount this week — loving an enemy, forgiving a debt, giving without recognition — and practice it concretely.



Pray the Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9–13 gives the church its model prayer. Use it not as a formula but as a framework for daily conversation with God. This week, pray through each phrase slowly, letting it shape your requests, your gratitude, and your dependence on God.



Obey the Great Commission

Matthew 28:19–20 is not a command for missionaries only. Every disciple is called to make disciples — in their neighborhood, workplace, and family. Identify one person in your life you could intentionally invest in this month, sharing both your life and the gospel.

MATTHEW

STUDY JOURNAL



1 TODAY PASSAGE _____



2 WHAT I OBSERVE _____



3 KINGDOM TRUTH _____



4 HOW IT CHANGES ME _____



5 MY PRAYER _____



Matthew 28:19

Illuminate Your Journey with BibleLum Premium.

Start your 3-day full-access journey today. Explore every Study Pack, AI insights, and visual guide — unlocked for your spiritual growth.

Full Access Trial

3 days to explore all 66 books.

AI Theological Guide

Get instant answers as you study.

Seamless Experience

Ad-free, focused, and deeply visual.

Activate your trial now to download the “Complete 66-Bible-Book Study Pack” PDF — yours to keep forever.



Scan to Start Your 3-Day Full-Access Trial

www.biblelum.com/study-pack/matthew

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

— Matthew 28:20