

# Matthew

## Introduction

Matthew focuses on Jesus as the promised Messiah ("Deliverer") who would be King over Israel (and over the whole earth). The Old Testament is often quoted or referred to, in order to prove this. In the book, we read about Israel's present rejection of the King, its significance to the rest of the world (salvation to the ends of the earth), and Israel's future.

A theme found throughout the book is the "kingdom of heaven" and what it means. (After all, Jesus *is* the king!)

## Interesting Features

The main section of the book, which focuses on Jesus' ministry, is arranged in five sections, each beginning with a description of what Jesus did (his *actions*), and ending by telling us what Jesus said (his *teachings*). Some sections are arranged in *topical*, rather than in *chronological*, order. Teachings or activities may be mentioned side-by-side, which actually occurred at different times.

## Outline

1. The coming of the King: Jesus' birth and infancy (1:1-2:23).
  - 1. Jesus' genealogy (showing his legal right to be King of the Jews); his birth.
  - 2. Visit of the Magi ("wise men"); escape to Egypt; return to Nazareth.
2. The Kingdom of Heaven.
  - a. Introducing the Kingdom.
    - i. Events: Jesus' introduction and preparation for his ministry (3:1-4:25).
      - 3. Introduced by John the baptizer; Jesus is baptized; the Spirit of God affirms who Jesus is.
      - 4. Jesus is tested in the desert and overcomes the tempter; he begins his ministry and calls his first disciples.
    - ii. Discourse: The Sermon on the Mount: Who does the kingdom belong to? (5:1-7:29)
      - 5. What it means to be blessed; living as a disciple: the differences between God's Law and distortions of it.
      - 6. Living for the Father, rather than for people's praise; trusting God and giving him priority in all of life.
      - 7. Deal with your own sins first; trusting God and having the fruit of salvation. *The need to pay attention to what Jesus just said!*
  - b. Preaching the Kingdom.
    - i. Events: A variety of miracles, interspersed with teaching (8:1-9:38).
      - 8. Healing the sick; the cost of following Jesus; calming the storm; healing the demon-possessed men.
      - 9. Healing a paralytic; the call of Matthew (also called Levi); comments about fasting; more healing; the need for more workers.
    - ii. Discourse: What is expected of those who follow Jesus (10:1-42).
      - 10. Choosing and preparing the 12 apostles; what it means to preach the kingdom of God.
  - c. Understanding what the Kingdom is.
    - i. Events: Increasing conflict with the religious leaders (11:1-12:50).
      - 11. Comparing the ministries of John the baptizer and Jesus; how horrible it will be for those who reject Jesus; but those who follow him will be given rest.
      - 12. Jesus is the "Lord of the Sabbath" (who explains its original intent) and God's "chosen servant" (who would bring the nations hope); hated by his enemies (who demand miracles, but claims he does them by the devil's

power). Defining who is "family" in the kingdom of heaven.

- ii. Discourse: Explaining the kingdom in ways that only those willing to learn would do so (13:1-52).
  - 13. (13:1-52) A variety of parables; the reason for parables.

d. Living in the Kingdom, while living in a hostile world.

- i. Events: The hostility intensifies; Jesus' death is at hand - but so is his resurrection (13:53-17:27).
  - 13. (13:53-58) Jesus is rejected by his home town.
  - 14. John the baptizer is killed; the feeding of 5000; Jesus walks on water, and teaches about the nature of trust.
  - 15. Jesus opposes the religious leader's man-made rules; the faith of the foreign woman; the feeding of 4000.
  - 16. Further hostility by the religious leaders; Jesus warns about their teachings. Peter acknowledges that Jesus is the "Christ" (Messiah). The citizens of Jesus's kingdom ("church") will never be overcome; his people will act on his behalf; but Jesus must first die and come back to life. (We must also be willing to die, if we want life.)
  - 17. A glimpse of Jesus' future glory (with a warning that death will come first); a miracle that demonstrates the need to trust God; avoiding unnecessary offenses with the world.
- ii. Discourse: Teaching the values of the kingdom (18:1-35).
  - 18. The least are the greatest; warnings against leading others astray; the value of even the "least important" person; rebuking and forgiving others; what will happen if you don't forgive.

e. The future aspect of the Kingdom.

- i. Events: Final warnings and appeals, but the ultimate rejection of Jesus (19:1-23:39).
  - 19. The permanency of marriage in this life is *not* nullified by loyalty to the kingdom (but see ch. 22); the value of children in the kingdom; the necessity of valuing Jesus more than possessions.
  - 20. God's generosity to the least deserving; another warning of Jesus' death and resurrection; the need to have a servant attitude; one last public miracle.
  - 21. Jesus offers himself as the King; temporary acceptance by the common people, but rejection by the leaders. The fig tree withers (a warning). Parables to warn the religious leaders about the consequences of their rejection.
  - 22. Parable about the religious leaders (cast out of the kingdom), contrasted to the "undeserving" (welcomed into it). Give God what belongs to him. Marriage in this present life does *not* transfer to life after the resurrection. The two greatest commands: Love for God and for neighbor. Jesus, son of David, is Lord over David.
  - 23. A final warning: Pay attention when the religious leaders teach Scripture, but reject the way they live (hypocrisy). How horrible it will be for them at the judgment! Sorrow for Jerusalem, because of the judgments about to come. They will not see Jesus again, until they are ready to receive him for who he is (after the events mentioned in the following discourse).
- ii. Discourse: What to expect, because the nation has rejected Jesus (24:1-25:46).
  - 24. Terrifying events, false teachers, almost utter destruction; but the good news will be preached and Jesus will return. We don't know when he will return; we just need to be in a constant state of readiness.
  - 25. The need to be ready - three illustrations. Our attitude and actions will influence our eternal destiny.

3. The conquest of the King, through death and resurrection.

a. His suffering and death.

- 26. Plans to kill Jesus; Jesus anointed in preparation for his burial; the Passover supper; Peter's betrayal predicted; the garden of Gethsemane and betrayal; Jesus arrested and taken to trial; Peter disowns Jesus.
- 27. Judas hangs himself; Jesus before Pilate; Jesus mocked and crucified. Jesus' death and burial; the tomb guarded.

b. His resurrection and the commissioning of his followers.

- 28. Jesus comes back to life; the guards are bribed to lie about it. Jesus commissions his followers: it is *their* responsibility to make disciples (followers) of all nations... and to teach the new disciples to do the same. Jesus is with us, as we obey him.