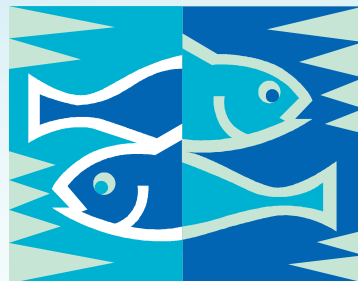




New Testament Survey

Jesus Christ is the Messiah and King

Studying the Gospel of Matthew



*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten
from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 1:14

2



CBLT

Contents

Matthew's View of Jesus	3
I. Introduction	4
II. The Person of Jesus, the Messiah.....	5
III. The Proclamation of Jesus the Messiah.....	7
IV. The Passion of Jesus the Messiah	8
Conclusion	9
Jesus: Messiah-King.....	12
I. Background Information.....	13
II. Special Emphases	16
III. Jesus: The Promised Messiah	17
Conclusion	21
Appendix 1. The Parables and Miracles of Jesus.....	25
Appendix 2. Let's Look At Matthew	27

Matthew's View of Jesus



LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. The Person of Jesus, the Messiah (1:1—4:16)
 - A. The Genealogy of Jesus (1:1-17)
 - B. The Birth of Jesus (1:18—2:23)
 - C. The Baptism of Jesus: Son of God (3:13-17)
 - D. The Temptation of Jesus (4:1-16)
- III. The Proclamation of Jesus the Messiah (4:17—16:20)
 - A. The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand (4:17-25)
 - B. Proclamation in Word (5:1—7:29)
 - C. Proclamation in Deed (8:1—16:20)
- IV. The Passion of Jesus the Messiah (16:21—28:20)
 - A. Jesus Prepares for His Death (16:21—20:34)
 - B. Jesus in Jerusalem (21:1—25:46)
 - C. Jesus' Passion and Resurrection (26:1—28:20)

Conclusion

LESSON OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson you should:

1. Be able to relate the major characters and subjects of the book of Matthew to the main events and the locations in which they took place.
2. Have examined the miracles and parables of Jesus as they are presented in Matthew.
3. Have discovered new truths about the trials of temptation.
4. Be familiar with the content of the Sermon on the Mount.
5. Demonstrate in your teaching and preaching greater skill in Bible study and increased knowledge of the content of Matthew.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

1. Work through the lesson answering the questions and completing the exercises. Don't forget to check your answers!
2. Read the entire Gospel of Matthew as you complete the lesson.
3. Fill in the charts in Appendix 1 on the miracles and parables of Jesus in Matthew.
4. Complete the Practical Assignment (teach), and Study Project (kingdom references); bring the completed work or a written report to the next seminar.

WORD STUDY

Pharisee — a member of an ancient Jewish sect noted for strict obedience to Jewish traditions

Sadducee — a Jew who belonged to the aristocratic and political party which were the rivals of the Pharisees; they denied the existence of spirits, the resurrection, and the immortality of the soul

Sanhedrin — the highest religious and civil court of the Jews

Scribes — in New Testament times the scribes were the students, interpreters, and teachers of the Old Testament Scriptures, and were held in high esteem by the people; they were also called lawyers

High priest — the most important spiritual leader of the Jews; during Jesus' time this man also served as a civil leader

Samaritans — a mixed race living in the province of Samaria, who were despised by the Jews because they were not of pure Jewish blood and because of their idolatry mixed with "fear of the Lord"

I. Introduction

In this lesson you will be reading through the book of Matthew to see what perspective the author had for us on the life of Christ. As you read you may want to refer occasionally to your study on the book of Mark to see what the similarities and differences are. You will also chart the miracles and parables that are found in Matthew, as you did in Mark.



Exercise 1

Fill in the chart of the miracles of Jesus. As you read through Matthew and answer the questions you will also want to fill out the chart in Appendix 1 as you did for the book of Mark. Fill in chronological order the Scripture references of each miracle, what the miracle was, where it took place, and the reaction from the people involved or those who saw it.



Exercise 2

Fill in the chart of the parables of Jesus. In the chart in Appendix 1, write the reference of the parable, what it was and what Jesus was teaching from it.

II. The Person of Jesus, the Messiah

(1:1—4:16)



Study Project : Note Kingdom References in Matthew

As you complete the following readings, questions, and exercises note every reference to the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, or the King, as it might have reference to God or Jesus. First, mark the verse in your Bible by either highlighting it with a colored pencil or underlining it with a pen. Then write the reference and the verse in your notebook and beside or below it explain what each verse tells us about the kingdom of God. You will need this research for a future assignment.

A. The Genealogy of Jesus (1:1-17)

The genealogy in Matthew is the genealogy of Jesus through the line of Joseph, who was considered His father. This genealogy focuses on the fact that Jesus was a descendent of King David. The Jews knew that the Messiah had to be from the line of King David, so Matthew started his book by pointing out that Jesus did indeed come from the line of David, just as had been predicted.



Question 1 How far back does this genealogy trace the line of Jesus?



Question 2 Why do you think Matthew chose to start with this person?



Question 3 What four women, other than Mary, are included in Jesus' genealogy?

It is interesting to note that two of these women were not of Israelite descent, and that the other two were both adulteresses and yet God still chose to use them all as part of the line of Jesus.

B. The Birth of Jesus (1:18—2:23)



Question 4 According to Matthew what is the first prophecy that Jesus fulfilled?



Question 5 What question did the magi ask that upset Herod?



Question 6 Why did this question upset Herod?



Question 7 Why do you think this question upset the Jews?



Question 8 How many prophecies does Matthew record Jesus fulfilling in chapter 2?

C. The Baptism of Jesus: Son of God (3:13-17)



Question 9 What event of the early church did John the Baptist prophesy?



Question 10 Why didn't John want to baptize Jesus?



Question 11 What happened as Jesus came out of the water?

D. The Temptation of Jesus (4:1-16)



Question 12 What was the first thing that the Holy Spirit did with Jesus?



Exercise 3

Meditate on the importance of fasting. According to Matthew 4:2 Jesus fasted for forty days and nights. Why? After all He was God, so why would He need to fast? What would fasting give to Jesus? Answer these questions in your notebook, then based on your answers, answer the following questions: Is it important for us to fast? Should we be teaching fasting in our churches? Refer to Matthew 6:16-18 and 9:14-15.



Question 13 How did Jesus meet each temptation?



Question 14 From what books did He quote?

Jesus did not use supernatural power to overcome Satan and his temptations. He was tempted in all points "like as we are" (Hebrews 4:15). Think about it.



Exercise 4

Meditate on the significance of the Temptation of Jesus. In your notebook answer the following question.

- Why did the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into the path of temptation?
- Spend at least 10-15 min. meditating on this and reading this passage in Matthew 4:1-11. Write down as many answers as you can think of.
- The Spirit compelled Jesus to go to the wilderness even though He knew that Jesus would be tempted there. What should we learn from this? How can we apply this truth to our own lives? Write your answers in your notebook.

III. The Proclamation of Jesus the Messiah

(4:17—16:20)

A. The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand (4:17-25)



Question 15 What did Jesus promise Peter and Andrew when He called them to follow Him?



Question 16 Which four of Jesus' disciples were originally fishermen?



Exercise 5

Record the geographical areas mentioned in Matthew 4:25. On the map shade in the areas from which people came to follow Jesus. Highlight Galilee in a separate or darker color. Notice the distances that people traveled to see Jesus; remember that people traveled by foot in Jesus' day so they would have spent the same amount of time in travel as it would take for us to travel 800 or more kilometers today.

B. Proclamation in Word (5:1—7:29)



Exercise 6

Outline the Sermon on the Mount. Read through the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1—7:27) once or twice; then in your notebook outline it. Be prepared to defend your divisions at the next seminar. After outlining the Sermon on the Mount summarize the main point of Jesus' teaching in a short two to four sentence paragraph.

C. Proclamation in Deed (8:1—16:20)

These eight chapters focus on the proclamation of Jesus the Messiah through His actions. Previously we have seen angels, wise men from the east, and John the Baptist proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah. Then we heard



Jesus teach of the new kingdom that He is creating for us. Now we see Him proving Himself the Messiah by His actions and proving that this kingdom can be a reality if people are willing to have faith in Him.

These chapters contain much of the same information as Mark 2-9, which we have already covered, so we will not deal with them here. What was not covered in Mark will be studied later in the lessons on Luke. However, do not forget to read these chapters carefully and note how Matthew relates the stories with a different emphasis than Mark. You will need to continue Study Project 2 as you read these chapters as well as filling in the charts on the miracles and parables. If you have any specific questions on these chapters, record them in your notebook so that you can discuss them at the next seminar.

IV. The Passion of Jesus the Messiah

(16:21—28:20)

A. Jesus Prepares for His Death (16:21—20:34)

Take time to read Matthew 16:21-20:34 slowly and thoughtfully. Notice how Jesus approached His death and what He taught in these last few weeks before His death. There are many important kingdom teachings in these few chapters.



Question 17 How many times did Jesus predict His death in these chapters?



Question 18 What condition does Jesus give for remaining single?



Question 19 What was the result of Jesus' healing of the two blind men?



Practical Assignment 2: Teach on Matthew 20:1-16

The parable of the Generous Landowner is unique to Matthew's gospel account. Read it again (you'll find it in Matthew 20:1-16), then read it in relation to its context. Write down your thoughts about what Jesus was teaching in this parable as well as what He was teaching in the preceding and following context. Note several specific applications of this parable. Then write a preaching or teaching outline and share it in your church. Record all of your research in your notebook and be prepared to discuss this parable in the next seminar.

B. Jesus in Jerusalem (21:1—25:46)



Question 20 As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey why did the people lay their garments on the ground for Him to ride over?



Question 21 Why do you think Jesus chose to do and say what Matthew has recorded in 21:12-16? And why at this point in time, not earlier or later?



Question 22 What was the popular opinion of Jesus at this time?



Exercise 7

Express your thoughts about the last days. In Matthew 24-25 Jesus prophesied and taught about the last days. Some people find this teaching disturbing, others find it confusing or frightening, and some find it comforting. Write down your thoughts and questions about this passage for discussion at the next seminar. Make sure to note the specific references of the verses you refer to in your notebook.

C. Jesus' Passion and Resurrection (26:1—28:20)

Read over these chapters carefully. Note how Matthew's record differs from and agrees with the other gospel accounts. Remember that Matthew is portraying the King's last days.

Conclusion

The Gospel of Matthew focuses on Jesus the King who has come to establish His kingdom here on earth. The Gospel of Mark focuses on Jesus the Servant, but the "Good News" which is presented in both gospels is the same. In Mark 1:15 Jesus states, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." This links Mark to Matthew not just in that both gospels tell of Jesus, but they both present the same claim—the kingdom of God is at hand—and ask us to respond to it.

Answers to Questions



- 1.** To Abraham.
- 2.** Your answer. Perhaps Matthew chose to start with Abraham because he was the father of the Jewish nation and Matthew wanted above all to prove that Jesus was a Jew and that His claims to the throne were legitimate.
- 3.** Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba.
- 4.** “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14
- 5.** “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?”
- 6.** Herod was upset by this question because he was worried about someone usurping his throne.
- 7.** The Jews were upset by this question because they knew that it referred to the Messiah, but they did not believe.
- 8.** Four.
- 9.** Pentecost, see vs. 11.
- 10.** Because he knew who Jesus was and recognized that he was not even fit to serve Jesus, let alone baptize him.
- 11.** The Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove.
- 12.** The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- 13.** By quoting Scripture.
- 14.** Deuteronomy and Psalms
- 15.** “I will make you fishers of men.”
- 16.** Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
- 17.** Three (see Matthew 16:21-28, 17:22-23, 20:17-19).
- 18.** “Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given.” (19:11)
- 19.** They followed Him. (20:34)
- 20.** This was probably a sign of their respect and honor for this man that they considered to be a great prophet.
- 21.** Think about it! Through these words and actions Jesus asserted His authority. However, this was also a calculated measure to upset the priests and Pharisees so that later in the week they would kill Him. Jesus had restrained himself earlier, because His time on earth was not yet complete.
- 22.** He was considered a prophet.

Answers to Exercises



1. Your answer. Do the best that you can. Your facilitator will be able to help you if you have any problems, but you must start on it yourself. You may wish to fill in the references in pencil the first time to make sure that you have all of the miracles.
2. Your answer. Remember you will be able to use this in the future for sermon and lesson preparation.
3. Your answer.

Jesus is God, and so in some respects did not need to fast. If He was fasting to convince God to do something or to indebted God to Himself then there was no need for Him to fast, as there is no need for us to fast for such reasons. However, if Jesus was fasting for the purpose of drawing close to God, strengthening His relationship with Him and drawing strength from Him then Jesus obviously needed it just as much as we do today.

Consequently, it is important for us to fast and to teach fasting in our churches. In Matthew 6:16-18 you will notice that Jesus said "when you fast" not "if." Also there may be appropriate times to fast and inappropriate according to chapter 9.
4. Your facilitator will share some suggested answers with you at the next seminar.

Your answer. Temptation was as much a part of the preparation of Jesus for His work as was His baptism. We should not fear temptation. Temptation itself is not wrong and indeed God often places us in the way of temptation so that we can be strengthened in Him and learn to lean more on Him for strength and help. Next time when you are tempted remember that God has provided a way out if we are willing to take it. And don't forget that each temptation that we resist makes us stronger and more Christlike!
5. See map on page 29 if you have any questions.
6. Your answer. Your outline should follow the divisions that *you* see in the passage (be careful not to force divisions where there are none). Don't forget to bring your work to the next seminar for discussion.
7. Your answer.

Jesus: Messiah-King



LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Background Information
 - A. Authorship
 - B. Date
 - C. Audience
 - D. General Background
 - E. Geography of Matthew
 - II. Special Emphases
 - A. Prophecies fulfilled
 - B. The Kingdom
 - C. Systematic teaching
 - D. Key Verse
 - III. Jesus: The Promised Messiah
- Conclusion

LESSON OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson you should:

1. Be able to give from memory the following information about the book of Matthew: name of author, date of writing, persons to whom written, and the purpose of writing.
2. Be able to describe in your own words: the main theme, major events, and most important characters.
3. Know the key verse of Matthew.
4. Have a fresh insight into miracles.
5. Have a new understanding of the role of prophecy in Matthew.
6. Have evaluated your position as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
7. Be prepared to present what you have learned to others.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

1. Complete the study questions and exercises and check your answers.
2. Read “Matthew: The Promised Messiah,” in Appendix 2.

We will now switch our focus from the big picture of the Gospel of Matthew to some of the details in that picture. The previous lesson established the foundation for what we will be studying here. Without that foundation the information in this lesson has little value. We will be looking at a few of the background details to Matthew, but since that information is similar to the background information that was presented in Lesson 2 about Mark we will quickly move on to focus on Jesus—the King—and His kingdom.

I. Background Information

A. Authorship

Most people would agree that Matthew, the disciple of Jesus and one of the Twelve, was the author of the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew was also known by the name of Levi, son of Alphaeus. Before meeting Jesus he was a tax collector in the employ of the Romans—a position hated by the Jews.

Some have suggested that Levi adopted the name Matthew after becoming a disciple of Jesus: a new name to show a new heart. Matthew is mentioned by name very few times in the gospels, so very little information can be gleaned about him. Luke records the calling of Matthew and his response in Luke 5:27-29. Take time to read that passage now.

B. Date

As with the date of every New Testament book, it is impossible to place exactly when the Gospel of Matthew was written. Most evangelical scholars believe that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but the suggested dates range from 37 A.D. to 64 A.D. This means that the gospel was mostly likely written within 30 years of Jesus’ ministry on earth.

C. Audience

Matthew was a Jew, writing to Jews. This makes his gospel very special. In writing to the Jews, Matthew knew that the fulfilment of Jewish Scriptures would be very important to them. He quotes some sixty times from nineteen books of the Old Testament. A key phrase is “that it might be fulfilled.” His gospel contains the most references to Old Testament Scriptures that were fulfilled through the coming of Christ, and he presents Jesus as being the Messiah of the Jews. Matthew does not exclude the Gentiles or ignore them, but he focuses on Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews. What a special gift this is to us! This is an important link between the Old and New Testaments, which lets us see Jesus as a Jew and a prophet among His own people.

In the preparation of this Gospel, characteristics of the Jew must be considered. The one fact that had been impressed upon the Jewish mind from the beginning of their history was that they were divinely chosen and set apart as a peculiar people through whom the redemptive purposes of Jehovah would be achieved. They made a special point of the fact that “We be Abraham’s seed and heirs to the promise of God.”

To present Jesus to the Jew required an understanding of their religious system. This system was typical and symbolic. It was the shadow and not the substance. Jewish errors in regard to this system must be corrected and the Messiah as the fulfillment of it must be clearly shown.

The Gospel for the Jew must be the Gospel of the fulfillment of prophecy. It must deal with the people having the Old Testament, who were familiar with the prophecies relative to the Messiah. At the very beginning Matthew meets these needs by presenting the credentials of Jesus relative to His covenant and royal descent in tracing His lineage to David and Abraham and not through the earlier members of the Messianic line, as in the case of Luke's genealogy. In this he takes the Jew back to the genesis of his nation and the Abrahamic Covenant.

Matthew constantly keeps before his people the Old Testament Scriptures and by quotations and allusions refers to them nearly one hundred times and to the prophets about fifty times. It abounds in statements to show that Jesus fulfilled the prophetic Scriptures. The Jew would require such a procedure and in this manner only could the Messianic claims of our Lord be established.

Thus in His person, words, and works is furnished the proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. It is the Gospel of the Kingdom. In the training of the Twelve, by His earlier discourses, Jesus presented the law of the Kingdom, and by parables the progress of the Kingdom, and by many details peculiar to this Gospel is the fact that our Lord is the promised King.¹

As Matthew presented Jesus as the fulfillment of Jewish hopes, he forced people to choose whom they would follow: Jesus or the religious leaders who were so adamantly against Him? Each reader of the Gospel, then and now, has to choose: "Either he must align himself with the Jewish leaders who repudiated Jesus and would not acknowledge his claims under any circumstances, or else he must himself become a disciple."² Matthew asks us to choose whether we believe Jesus is the Messiah, the King of the Jews, or a fraud.

D. General Background

Matthew is a key book in linking the Old Testament to the New. It provides the transition from the Israel-oriented Old Testament to the worldwide-oriented New Testament.

The opening verses of Matthew's Gospel take us back to the Old Testament in giving the covenant and royal descent of our Lord. The New Testament constantly quotes and alludes to the Old Testament so that the Old is interwoven into the very structure of the New. The one gives us the history of the Messianic nation, the other the life, labors, and teachings of the Messiah, the great central fact of the Old Testament.³

Matthew, of all the gospels, focuses on Jesus as the Messiah, the Fulfiller of the Old Testament covenants and prophecies. "Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Messiah." Both mean the Anointed One. This is the transitional link that the New Testament needed. Matthew presents Jesus not just as somebody who began a new religion, but rather as the Fulfiller of Judaism. Thus, the Scriptures of the Jews are made relevant and important for Christians today because they teach about the same God that the New Testament represents in Jesus Christ.

Because Matthew was written by a Jew for Jews we see much more emphasis on the priests and the Jewish ruling powers than on some of the Roman rulers. In truth the priests were one of the chief political powers in Judea.

The high priest acted as advisor to the Roman procurator and not infrequently his political pressure caused the governor to change his policy. Through his influence over the populace

¹ *The Holy Bible*, King James Version, Analytical Ed. (Chicago: John A. Dickson Publishing Co., 1941), 1126.

² Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 152.

³ *The Holy Bible*, King James Version, Analytical Ed. (Chicago: John A. Dickson Publishing Co., 1941), 1087.

the high priest was able to mould public opinion and thus he could bend stubborn officials to his will or else compel them to risk the emperor's displeasure for failing to keep on good terms with their subjects. The cry of the populace at Jesus' hearing before Pilate, "if thou release this man, thou art not Caesar's friend" (John 19:12), was a good example of such machinations; for Mark says that "the chief priests stirred up the multitude" (Mark 15:11).⁴

The priests were the rulers who were closest to the Jewish people. Since they themselves were Jews they understood the customs and traditions of the people, and also knew how to manage them. Although there were also the kings and the procurators who ruled in Palestine, both of these groups were further removed from the people and thus had less direct influence over them. In day to day life the priests were the ones who ruled and gave judgement for the Jews, while the Roman procurator was in charge of keeping the peace and could give the death sentence. The kings such as Herod the Great played a more ceremonial role and actually had little to do with the practicalities of the Palestinian political world.

E. Geography of Matthew

The geography of Matthew is based in Palestine because this is where Jesus' ministry took place. Only once does Matthew record Jesus going out of Palestine (see Matthew 15:21-28). Essentially, the geography of Matthew is the same as that for Mark. This also holds true for Luke and John's Gospels.

Now let's review the background information of Matthew.



Question 1 Who was Matthew?



Question 2 What did Matthew do for Jesus after Jesus had called him?



Question 3 Who did Matthew introduce to Jesus?



Exercise 1

Learn from the tax collector. What valuable lessons can we learn from Matthew's actions immediately after deciding to follow Jesus? How can we relate this to our day and our lives?



Question 4 When was this Gospel written?



Question 5 To whom was this Gospel written and how do we know?



Question 6 What does Messiah or Christ mean?

⁴ Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey*, revised (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 41.



Question 7 Who were the rulers over the people of Israel at the time of Christ, and what role did each play?



Question 8 In what region of Palestine was the majority of Jesus' ministry concentrated according to Matthew?

II. Special Emphases

A. Prophecies fulfilled

As we have already noted above, Matthew places a special emphasis on how Jesus fulfilled Scriptures in His coming and ministry and death. We also saw that Matthew focused on Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews. In the opening chapter of the gospel Matthew brings out another of his special emphases—Jesus as King. Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus from Abraham to David to Christ. This proves that He was a Jew, as a son of Abraham, and that He had a right to the Davidic throne, as a descendant of David. As a king, or rather as *the* King—the Fulfillment of the prophecies and promises about David's line—He needed a kingdom. Matthew's writing shows that Jesus' kingdom was not the kind of kingdom that the Jews had been expecting. It was not a kingdom of military might, but one that changed the very way that men related to God and to each other.



Exercise 2

Think about the fulfilled prophecies recorded in Matthew. As you think about the fulfillment of prophecies recorded in Matthew, think about how this affects the character of the book of Matthew. How does it affect your perception of the Old Testament? How does it help to validate the claims of Jesus? What implications does it give for our understanding of the Gospel and of the Bible as a whole? What about the omnipotence of God? What other thoughts, comments or questions do you have about the prophecies recorded in Matthew as being fulfilled through the coming of Jesus?

B. The Kingdom

Matthew offers a valuable group of parables illustrating the kingdom of heaven. Parables were a favorite teaching method of Jesus. He spoke to the people on the level they lived and understood. This is important for us to remember as we preach and teach. Which part of the pastor's sermon do people remember best and longest? Truth illustrated is truth alive.

This kingdom, this life-changing, earth-shaking kingdom, was what Jesus came to earth to build. Already you have noted the references in Matthew to the kingdom of God. From just a brief review of these references we can see that this kingdom, of which we are a part, is the most unique kingdom to ever be built on the face of the earth. We will study more about the kingdom in Part 5 (Lesson 10).

C. Systematic teaching

Matthew's bookkeeping background is shown in the systematic arrangement of his Gospel. It is largely built around five discourses of Jesus. For instance he groups together seven parables of the kingdom in chapter 13. He records 10 miracles in chapters 8 and 9. Matthew's is the systematic Gospel. **But** this also means that not all of these events and sermons will follow a strict chronological order.

D. Key Verse

From the beginning of Matthew we have his focus in Matthew 2:2: "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him."



Exercise 3

Memorization. Commit Matthew 2:2 to memory. It will help you to remember the theme of Matthew, and Jesus' Kingship. It will be on the exam.

III. Jesus: The Promised Messiah

At this point read Appendix 2, and then answer the following questions. As you read through the chapter make sure that you at least glance through the Bible readings as they are listed. This will give you a much fuller understanding of Matthew and of the textbook.



Question 9 According to the textbook what is the main purpose of the book of Matthew?



Question 10 What is special about Matthew's record of the nativity?



Question 11 What valuable lesson can we learn from the fact that Jesus was thirty when His ministry started?



Question 12 What is the "voice" that we hear in Matthew 3:3?



Question 13 What did the "voice" proclaim?

Matthew is the only book of the Bible which uses the term "kingdom of heaven." The Jews often avoided using the name "God," substituting "heaven" for it. Because Matthew was written to the Jews this expression was chosen. The other Gospels use "kingdom of God."



Question 14 How does Dr. Mears describe the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)?

The Sermon on the Mount is the longest discourse of Jesus found in the Synoptic Gospels. This Sermon is rich in application to our lives in the Kingdom. It is a good measuring stick for our spiritual lives. For instance, in 5:20 we are told that unless our righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees we won't enter the kingdom of heaven. Think about it. Pharisaic righteousness was outward, ceremonial, and legalistic. Is this the kind of righteousness you are depending on? Then observe Christ's warning! Christian righteousness is inward, moral and spiritual. What does God see in your life?

Or look at 5:47 where it says that if we greet only our brothers we are not doing more than the pagans do. Whom do you greet after a church service? Only your friends? Are you driving strangers away from your church by treating them as strangers?

We find a passage to examine whether our desire is for the kingdom of heaven in 6:19-21. What treasures are you seeking? How important is money to you? The true test of a man's religion is how he handles his money. John Wesley said, "Make all you can; save all you can; give all you can." What a wealth of application we have in these three chapters of Matthew.



Exercise 4

Memorization. Memorize Matthew 6:19-21. If you already know this passage word perfectly, then choose another one from the Sermon on the Mount. Is this a part of your life? How can you make it a part of your daily relationship with Jesus?

It is interesting to note that the discourse which is second in length is the Olivet Discourse, named for the fact that it was given on the Mount of Olives. This is the only long discourse found in all three Synoptics. In Mark it is chapter 13, in Luke chapter 21. These parallel rather closely Matthew 24. In chapter 25 Matthew adds three other items—two parables and a description of the final judgment. These are not found elsewhere in the gospels. The two parables fit very naturally here as emphasizing the need of being ready for Christ's coming again.

When reading the Gospel accounts of the miracles we often forget that these were real people and that each miracle was an astonishing event. Instead of being filled with a sense of wonder at the power and grace of God we quickly move on to the next chapter. We need to stop and take the time to experience wonder and amazement as these people must have felt it. This next exercise presents one way of doing this.



Exercise 5

Personalize 4 of the 12 miracles presented in Matthew 8-9. Make a list of the 12 miracles then imagine what they would look like if it happened to someone that you knew. Choose four of these miracles to personalize—not including the one used as an example below. Using the questions given in the example and any others that you can think of, personalize these miracles. Write down your thoughts and feelings as though these miracles had actually just happened to someone you know or know of.

Example: *The Healing of Peter's Mother-in-law*

Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law. What would be your reaction if something similar happened to you? How would you feel if your mother was very ill and some man came and took her by the hand and she was immediately healed, better than new? What would your thoughts be? Whom would you tell? How would you feel about that man? Below is one possibility:

Mom is really sick again today. I've been thinking about taking her to the hospital, but she doesn't want to go. I don't know what to do, she has such a high fever!

Wow! Yesterday was an incredible day! This guy came, I think he's a cousin of John. John brought him by the house and we were chatting and I mentioned about mom being sick. The next thing I know the guy is asking if he can see her. He goes in her room and then a minute later reappears with her by his side! Just like that she's better! I had checked on her just a few minutes before and she was even worse. If John hadn't come just then I would have been on my way to the hospital even now! I just can't believe it—I don't know quite what to think. On the one hand, I can't stop praising God; on the other I'm afraid that maybe the guy is a warlock or something like that. What if it's all fake? And yet ... I just can't stop praising God!

Now take a brief moment to picture the practical difference Jesus must have made in the lives of the Jews at that time. Often there are just one or two verses in between other accounts which tell us that Jesus healed multitudes and all that came to Him. John says that not the whole world could contain enough books to record all that Jesus did. How many people do you know that have some ailment or another? How would their life or yours be changed if Jesus came to your town today? Would you remember to give Him thanks, praise, glory and honor? Or would you just continue on your way?

Dr. Mears notes that Jesus did not choose men who had a lot of spiritual training or who looked like they had the necessary qualifications, rather He chose men who had everyday jobs and no previous spiritual leadership experience. How encouraging for those of us who are normal people like Jesus' disciples were!



Exercise 6

Discover the qualifications for being a disciple of Jesus. Read Matthew 10 again with your notebook beside you and carefully note down all the warnings and instructions about being a disciple that are mentioned in this special passage. Make them into a list of the requirements of being a disciple. According to these requirements can you call yourself a disciple?

In chapter 10 Jesus sends the disciples out to preach, "The kingdom of heaven is near." These men were still untrained, but Jesus sent them out with a fresh and urgent message. Their method of preaching was in the form of teaching and witnessing. They would teach for hours at a time in a house. This same practice continued after Pentecost in addition to public preaching. What would happen if every Christian would go out and start teaching and witnessing to what they already know? Sometimes we are so concerned about doing it "right" that we never get around to doing it at all!



Exercise 7

Think about witnessing. The evangelization of the world is a huge task. Dr. Mears wrote, “We see no bright picture of a converted world.”⁵ Reread the paragraph in which those words are found. Do you find Dr. Mears’ statement encouraging or discouraging? Why?

We need not get depressed that the job is too big for us, or that there is nothing that we can really do to make a difference. We must only do what God asks of each one of us—to reach those who are nearest to us in heart and in proximity. And when our plans do not always turn out the way that we had hoped, we can remember that God is the “Knower” of men’s hearts and He is the only one who can truly know who belongs to His kingdom and who does not; He also knows if we have done what He has asked us to or if we have turned away from His clear instruction in the Word.



Question 15 According to Mears what change can be noted from Matthew 12 on as compared to the first half of Matthew?



Question 16 What question that Jesus asked His disciples is equally important today? See Matthew 16:13.



Question 17 How would you answer that question?



Question 18 What is the significance of Palm Sunday?



Question 19 On what grounds was Jesus delivered up to Pilate?



Question 20 What descriptions about the humiliation of Jesus by the soldiers does Matthew particularly note that have special significance because of Jesus’ claims as Messiah-King?



Question 21 What important event is left out of Matthew’s account and how does Dr. Mears explain this omission?



Exercise 8

Consider the Great Commission. On what mission has every Christian been sent? How are you presently fulfilling that mission?

⁵ Henrietta Mears, *A Look at the New Testament* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1971), 14.

Henrietta Mears provides us with this little outline of the Gospel according to Matthew:

OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW	
I. Coming of the King	(1 – 2:23)
II. Proclamation of the Kingdom	(3:1 – 16:20)
III. Rejection of the King	(16:21 – 20:34)
IV. Triumph of the King	(21 – 28)

In four lines she sums of the whole of Matthew's Gospel. You should memorize this outline to help you remember the key to Matthew in the future. It will also be on the exam.

Conclusion

The Gospel according to Matthew is a personal look at the life of the Jewish Messiah. Matthew presented a very persuasive case for the Messiahship of Jesus. He did not hold back any detail that he felt would prove that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. He pulled every prophecy out of his memory and understood many of the signs in the Old Testament that point to Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. However, in all of his desire to show that Jesus Christ was really who He claimed to be Matthew did not overlook the fact that this Jewish Messiah had also come to save the Gentile world. Thus, this gospel account which was written originally for Jews is equally profitable for Gentiles: for us; for you and me.

Eugene Peterson sums it up the importance of Matthew:

Matthew opens the New Testament by setting the local story of Jesus in its world historical context. He makes sure that as we read his account of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we see the connections with everything that has gone before. ... Matthew provides the comprehensive context by which we see all God's creation and salvation completed in Jesus, and all the parts of our lives—work, family, friends, memories, dreams—also completed in Jesus. Lacking such a context, we are in danger of seeing Jesus as a mere diversion from the concerns announced in the newspapers. Nothing could be further from the truth.⁶

⁶ Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002), 1743.

Answers to Questions



1. Matthew was one of Jesus' disciples, a tax collector employed by the Romans, also known as Levi the son of Alphaeus.
2. He threw a party for Jesus.
3. His friends: tax collectors and "other" people
4. Sometime between 37 AD and 64 AD.
5. It was written to the Jews. The whole focus is on the fulfillment of the Old Testament with Jesus as the promised Messiah to the Jewish nation.
6. Anointed One.
7. The priests were closest to the people and had the daily rule and everyday judgments. The Roman procurator was in charge of keeping the peace and had power to give the death sentence. The kings basically played a ceremonial role.
8. Galilee and Judea.
9. To show that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah predicted by Moses and the prophets.
10. Only in Matthew is there a record of the wise men coming to worship Jesus.
11. God uses time to train us, so that when His time is right we are ready to do the task quickly and well.
12. John the Baptist.
13. "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ... Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."
14. She describes the Sermon on the Mount as the laws and standards of the Kingdom of Heaven. She writes, "The Sermon on the Mount sets forth the Constitution of the Kingdom."

Note: "Constitution" means the law(s) determining the fundamental political principles of a government.
15. Controversy about Jesus begins to build from the 12th chapter on.
16. "Who do you say I am?"
17. Your answer.
18. Jesus' rights as Messiah-King were publicly recognized for the first time.
19. He was delivered up on grounds of blasphemy and of claiming to be the King of the Jews, which made Him an enemy of the Roman Emperor.
20. The mock array of Jesus with the crown of thorns, the scepter made out of a reed, and the purple robe.
21. The Ascension. Dr. Mears says that the Messiah will reign on earth.

Answers to Exercises



1. Your answer. Possible answer follows:

Matthew did not immediately shun his old friends and acquaintances; rather he brought Jesus to them, knowing that they would probably never go to Jesus alone. He wanted others to know Jesus.

We can be like Matthew (and Jesus) by not just rejecting our “sinner” or “worldly” or “unbelieving” friends. Rather we perhaps could, like Matthew, throw a party for these friends, a party to introduce them to Jesus. And when we see someone become a Christian who does not sever all ties from the world, we can encourage them in their witness—not criticize. As they witness to their new life in Christ, their friends will either accept Christ, or eventually reject their “old” friend who has become “new.”

2. Your answer.

3. Your answer. Remember it needs to be word perfect!

4. “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your will your heart be also.” Matthew 6:19-21

5. Your answer. Make sure you bring your work to the next seminar.

The 12 miracles are:

1. The leper
2. Centurion’s servant
3. Peter’s mother-in-law
4. Demon-possessed and all who were ill
5. Calming of the storm
6. Two demon-possessed men
7. Paralytic
8. Synagogue ruler’s daughter
9. Woman with bleeding
10. Two blind men
11. The mute, demon-possessed man
12. Healing of every kind of disease and sickness

6. Some of the requirements of being a disciple as mentioned in Matthew 10 include:

1. Willing to proclaim the gospel
2. Not striving for or being focused on money and material goods
3. Discerning
4. Willing to sacrifice and suffer
5. Willing to be betrayed and hated by those he loves
6. Not fearful of men
7. Willing to trust God with his life

7. Dr. Mears writes, “We see no bright picture of a converted world. There shall be tares mixed with the wheat, good fish and bad, leaven in the loaf. ... Only Christ can determine what is good and what is bad, and at the harvest He will divide.”

Your answer.

- 8.** Christ sent every Christian on a mission to teach, baptize and disciple.

Your answer.

The Parables and Miracles of Jesus

In this appendix we have included charts for you to record the parables and miracles of Jesus. The amount of spaces that we have provided does not indicate how many parables/miracles we expect you to find. We simply wanted to make sure that there was sufficient room for you to record all of your findings.

MIRACLES OF JESUS IN MATTHEW

Scripture	What	Where	Reaction

PARABLES OF JESUS IN MATTHEW

[illegible]

Let's Look At Matthew

Matthew Portrays Jesus Christ, the Promised Messiah

Chapter Two from *A Look at the New Testament* by Henrietta Mears⁷

Coming Of The King

(Read Matthew 1:1-2:23)

The main purpose of the Spirit in this book is to show that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah predicted by Moses and the prophets.

All the maps of the world and all the calendars of time tell of Christ's birthplace and birthday. We don't have to build the story out of the imagination. We are given names and dates. Christianity is a historical religion. The Gospel does not begin with, "Once upon a time," but starts with "Bethlehem in Judea." The town is there, and we can know the very place where Jesus was born. The time is definite, "in the days of Herod the king."

Most people, whenever they begin reading Matthew, with its "begats," and Luke 3:23-38, with its "the son of," wonder what these are all about. We ought to realize that if they were included in Scripture they were put there for a purpose.

A "genealogy" is "the history of the descent of an individual or family from an ancestor" (Webster). There are two genealogies of Christ: Matthew 1:1-17, and Luke 3:23-38. They are not alike, and the reason is that each one traces the descent of Christ back for different purposes.

Matthew traces Christ's line back to Abraham and David to show that He was a JEW (coming from David).

Luke traces Christ's line back to Adam to show that He belonged to the human race.

⁷ Used by permission.

Matthew alone tells of the visit of the wise men from the East. These were Persian magi, scholars, students of the stars. They came to worship and honor a King. These wise men did not come inquiring, "Where is He that is born the Saviour of the World?" but *Where is He that is born King of the Jews?*

The birth of Jesus was followed by twelve years of silence until His visit with the doctors in Jerusalem. Then silence shut Him in again, with only the word "carpenter" to throw any light upon the next eighteen years, and let us know what He was doing. Jesus took thirty years of preparation for three years of ministry.

This is a great lesson for all of us today. Many of us chafe under years of training. We do not realize the value that God places on preparedness. All through the Bible leaders went through a period of getting ready before their great work was done. Think of Abraham, Joseph; Moses, Joshua, Esther and others. Time is never wasted in preparation. If we are prepared for a task, we can do it quickly and well.

Proclamation Of The Kingdom

(Read Matthew 3:1-16:20)

In Matthew we hear the "Voice": *Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight* (Matthew 3:2,3).

The King must be announced! It was the duty of this herald to go before the King, as a Roman officer before his ruler, and command that the roads be repaired over which his master would travel. John the Baptist did this. He showed that the spiritual roads of the lives of men and nations were full of the chuck-holes of sin and sharp turns of iniquity, and needed rebuilding and straightening.

We see the King stepping from His personal and private life into His public ministry. (Matthew 4) He is facing a crisis. Satan met Him. Notice that Satan offered Jesus a shortcut to that universal Kingdom which He had come to gain through the long and painful way of the cross, but Christ came to be a Saviour first, then a King. How strong is the temptation to take a short cut to our ambitions! Jesus stood victor. His shield undented and untarnished. He went forth to conquer all other temptations until His final victory and ascension to heaven as Lord of all. (See I Cor. 10:13.)

Every kingdom must have its laws and standards to control its subjects. The Kingdom of Heaven is no exception. Jesus declared that He came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it. From the lofty pulpit of a mountain, Jesus preached the sermon that contains the laws of His Kingdom. (Matthew 5-7) Read through these chapters and refresh your memory about this most wonderful of Jesus' discourses. Many a person who is not a Christian claims that the Sermon on the Mount is his creed. How little he understands the depth of its meaning. It is important that we do not simply praise this rule as a wonderful theory but that we actually practice it in our own lives. The root of this law is kindness. It is true, if human society would have its standards as theirs, the world would be set in order. One day filled with it would be a bit of heaven. Love would reign instead of lawlessness. Christ shows us that sin lies not just in committing the act but in the motive behind it as well. (See Matthew 5:21,22,27,28.) The Sermon on the Mount sets forth the Constitution of the Kingdom.

We find the King proved by the special miracles which He wrought. (Matthew 8; 9) He met human needs. There are twelve astonishing miracles in these two chapters. What were they?

Jesus not only preached Himself, but He gathered others around Him. It was necessary to organize His Kingdom, to put it on a wider and more permanent basis. A king must have subjects. Jesus still has a great message for the world, and He needs us to carry it. Spiritual ideas cannot stalk alone through the world and be of any value. They must be clothed with men and institutions who will

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serve as hearts and brains, hands and feet to carry them out. This is what Jesus was doing. He was calling men into His companionship to train them to carry on His work.

Where did Jesus find His helpers? Not in the temple, among the doctors or priests, nor in the colleges of Jerusalem. He found them on the seashore mending their nets. Jesus did not call many mighty or noble, but rather chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. (I Cor. 1:27) A list of the disciples is given in Matthew 10:2-4.

Note some of the warnings and instructions for the disciples which Jesus stated in Matthew 10. What were they? If these requirements of discipleship hold true today, can you call yourself a disciple?

The word kingdom occurs some 55 times in Matthew. The expression “kingdom of heaven,” is found 35 times here and nowhere else in the Gospels. Of the fifteen parables recorded in Matthew, all but three begin, *The kingdom of heaven is like . . .* Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to: The Sower, The Tares, A Mustard Seed, Leaven in the Dough, A Hidden Treasure, A Pearl of Great Price, A Dragnet. (Matthew 13)

These parables, called *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 13:11), describe what the result of the presence of the Gospel of Christ in the world will be during this present age until the time of His return when He will gather the harvest. (Matthew 13:40-43) We see no bright picture of a converted world. There shall be tares mixed with the wheat, good fish and bad, leaven in the loaf. Then there is an abnormal growth of the mustard seed, that admits “fowls of the air” to lodge in its branches. This is Christendom. Only Christ can determine what is good and what is bad, and at the harvest He will divide. If we are to have a kingdom on this earth, with the laws which Christ set down, then we must have the King. Some day Christ will come in power and great glory and establish His throne on this earth. We will have peace when the Prince of Peace reigns!

Rejection Of King

(Read Matthew 16:21-20:34)

The sad story reads that Christ *came unto His own, and His own received Him not* (John 1:11). The Kingdom was first presented to the rightful heirs, the children of Israel (Jews), but they refused the offer, rejected the King, and finally crucified Him. From Matthew 12 on, we see much controversy among the leaders concerning Jesus.

Why did the Jews refuse the Kingdom? The world today is longing intensely for the golden age. A millennium of peace and rest is the great desire of diplomats and rulers. But they want it in their own way and on their own terms. They desire to bring it about by their own efforts. They have no longing for a millennium brought about by the personal return on earth of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was just so with the Jews in the days of John the Baptist.

Have you put Christ on the throne of your life? Have you the peace you long for? Have you accepted Christ's terms for your life?

Only in Matthew's Gospel is the “Church” named. When the Kingdom was rejected we find a change in the teachings of Jesus. He began to talk about the “Church” instead of the Kingdom. (Matthew 16:18) Church comes from the word “ecclesia” which means “called out ones.” Because His own would not accept Him as King, Christ said He was calling out anyone who would believe, Jew or Gentile, to belong to His Church, which is His body. He began to lay plans for the building of a new edifice, a new body of people, which would include both Jew and Gentile. (Eph. 2:14-18)

When they were far away from the busy scene in which they lived, Jesus asked His disciples the question: *Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?*

This is the important question today! First asked by an obscure Galilean in that far off solitude, it has come thundering down through the centuries and has become the world's mightiest question. What think ye of Christ? What men think determines what they do and are. The ideas men hold about industry, wealth, government, morals and religion mold society and alter lives. So what men think of Christ is the master force in the world today and more than anything else influences life and thought and civilizations.

The disciples gave the answers to this important question that the men of their day were giving. The answers then were as varied as they now are. All agreed that Jesus was an extraordinary person, at least a prophet or a teacher with an element of the supernatural. Men's opinions of Christ are high. The answer that Jesus was a myth, a dupe, or an impostor, is no longer tolerated.

Jesus now turned the general question into the sharp personal inquiry. *But whom say ye that I am?* Ask yourself this question. Important as the general question is, far more important to each one of us is this personal question. No one can escape it. A neutral answer is impossible. He is either God or an impostor.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God! exclaimed the impulsive, fervent Peter. This confession is great because it exalts Christ as the Son of God and crowns Him with deity. He said to Peter and the disciples, after this answer concerning who He was, *Upon this rock I will build my church.* This is what Christ was going to do—build a Church of which He Himself was to be the chief cornerstone. This Church was born on Pentecost. (Acts 2)

For the first time the fateful shadow of the cross fell across the path of the disciples. From this time on Jesus began to draw back the curtain that veiled the future and to show His disciples the things that would come to pass. (See Matthew 16:21.)

Triumph Of The King

(Read Matthew 21:1-28:20)

On the morning of Palm Sunday crowds were gathering along the road leading to Jerusalem. Jesus was to enter the city that day. This little parade could not have been compared in magnificence with many a procession that has attended the coronation of a king, or the inauguration of a president; but it meant much more for the world. Jesus for the first time permitted a public recognition and celebration of His rights as Messiah-King. The end was approaching with awful swiftness, and He must offer Himself as Messiah, even if only to be rejected.

In the evening the crowds dispersed, and Jesus quietly returned to Bethany. Apparently nothing in the way of making Jesus King had been accomplished. His "hour had not yet come." Christ must be Saviour first, then come again as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Christ's authority is brought into question as He goes into the temple and orders the merchants out, overturning their tables and telling them that they have made the house of God a den of thieves. A bitter controversy follows. *Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk* (Matthew 22:15). He bids farewell to Jerusalem until He will come again to sit on David's throne.

He delivers His Mount Olivet discourse. He foretells the condition of the world after His ascension until He comes back in glory, to judge the nations as to their treatment of His brethren, the Jews. (Matthew 25)

Much of Jesus' discourse in Matthew 24 and 25 is devoted to His second coming. He exhorts men to be ready, in the parables of the faithful servants, then ten virgins, and of the talents.

We have been passing through some of the highlights in the life of King Jesus; now we step into the shadows as we enter Gethsemane. Although a large number of disciples believed in Jesus and followed Him, the opposition of the Jews was bitter and they determined to put Him to death. On the grounds of blasphemy, and of claiming to be the King of the Jews, thus making Himself the enemy of the Roman Emperor, Jesus was delivered up by Pilate to be crucified.

Matthew is not alone in his record of the terrible circumstances of the Saviour's passion; but he makes us feel that in the mock array, the crown of thorns, the sceptre, the title over the cross, we have a witness, though it be only scorn, to the kingly claim.

After hanging on the cruel tree for six hours, the Saviour died, not from physical suffering alone, but of a broken heart, for He bore the sins of the whole world. We hear His triumphant cry, *It is finished!* He paid the debt of sin and became the world's Redeemer!

Christ's Coming

With Angels

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him (Matthew 25:31).

when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels (Mark 8:38).

With Rewards

The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works (Matthew 16:27).

In Power

They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24:30).

In Glory

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me... of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed,

Unknown

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only (Matthew 24:36).

But this is not all of the redemption story. Jesus was put in Joseph's tomb, and on the third day He arose, as He had said. This is the supreme triumph of His kingship. Men thought that He was dead and His Kingdom had failed. By His resurrection, God assured His disciples that the King still lived and that one day He would come back to establish His Kingdom on earth.

The ascension of Jesus is not recorded in Matthew. The curtain falls with the Messiah still on earth, for it is on earth and not in heaven, that the Son of David is yet to reign in glory. The last time the Jews saw Christ, He was on the Mount of Olives. The next time they will see Him, He will be on the Mount of Olives! See Zechariah 14:4; also Acts 1:11.

Jesus has announced His program and a crisis has struck in the history of Christianity. The climax is found in the great commission, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* (Matthew 28:18-20)

On what mission were they sent? To overrun the world with armies and make men submit under the sword? No, but to *make disciples of all nations*.

From the mountain top of His ascension His disciples started forth on this mission, radiating from that center, and they have gone on until they have everywhere reached the rim of the world. Christianity is no national or racial religion. It knows no bounds of mountain or sea but it envelopes the globe.