INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUR GOSPELS

How could an obscure Galilean peasant and carpenter with no academic training and no social status, one who died the most ignominious death imaginable, establish a movement that would conquer the Roman world and become a worldwide religious force? Moreover, how do we affirm the historical trustworthiness of such incredible stories about a man who controlled nature’s forces, healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead, and was raised himself after being crucified?

The Gospels tell us the story of Jesus—his virgin birth and childhood; his inauguration to ministry; his impact on the people of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Phoenicia during his messianic ministry; and his death and resurrection. It is the most important story that history will ever tell, for it chronicles the life of the extraordinary Son of God who has come into this world.

SETTING
The setting for the Gospels includes both Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures (see also “The Historical Background of the Intertestamental Period,” p. 1552). Jesus lived and died in the Jewish world of the first century, and Jesus and his disciples ministered primarily to the Jewish people. But Jesus was raised in Galilee and conducted his ministry mainly in “Galilee where so many Gentiles live” (Matt 4:15), so he also reached out to Gentiles, and his resurrection inaugurated the mission to Gentiles (Matt 28:19).

During the time of Jesus, Jewish territories were ruled by the descendants of Herod the Great and by Roman governors like Pontius Pilate who resided at Caesarea but came to Jerusalem for festivals. Jewish civic affairs were handled by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high council that consisted mainly of Sadducees and Pharisees (see “The Pharisees” at Matt 3:7, p. 1581; “The Sadducees” at Matt 16:1-12, p. 1610).

THE FOUR GOSPELS
Each of the four Gospels presents Jesus’ life in a different way with different themes, showing different nuances of Jesus the man and of the various groups who encountered him.

• Matthew’s Gospel is the Jewish Gospel. It shows how Jesus fulfilled the Torah and provided the final understanding of it. It represents Jesus as the descendant of David who fulfills the OT promises for the Messiah, the King of Israel. In Matthew, Jesus gives the principles for living as citizens of God’s Kingdom (e.g., Matt 5–7). Jesus leads the disciples to overcome their failures and find understanding, in spite of their “little faith.”

• Mark centers on Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. Mark reports the disciples’ difficulties: They misunderstand and fail as they try to follow Jesus. Mark shows the nature of true discipleship through characters who appear briefly, like the woman from Phoenicia, the father of the demon-possessed boy, and blind Bartimaeus.

• Luke has more on the subject of social concern than any other Gospel. Luke also highlights the importance of prayer, the Spirit, and worship. He shows how, through Jesus, God has worked out his salvation in human history and become Lord of all.

• In John, Jesus is the living revealer of God who encounters all people with the “light of the world” and the “bread of life” and with the need to believe. Jesus is “the unique One, who is himself God” and has entered this world and brought the glory of God’s presence into the world and among his own people.

Each Gospel is meant to be studied on its own. Each has unique perspectives and theological messages that supplement the others and challenge readers in important ways. God chose to inspire four different writers because each perspective is important for the church.

SUMMARY
All four Gospels tell the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Two of the Gospels (Mark and John) contain prologues that describe Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, the “Word” or living voice of God, and God incarnate. The other two Gospels (Matthew and Luke) begin with accounts of Jesus’ genealogy, birth, and childhood. Matthew relates how God supernaturally overcame Herod’s evil attempt to thwart the divine plan of Jesus’ coming into the world. Luke relates the births of the prophet John the Baptist and Jesus, the greater prophet.

Only John tells of the early months of Jesus’ ministry, how he drew his first disciples from the group following John the Baptist and then traveled frequently from Galilee to Jerusalem for festivals (John 1–7). Matthew, Mark, and Luke—the “synoptic” Gospels that have the “same look”—focus on Jesus’ ministry in Galilee.

None of the Gospel writers take a chronological approach to Jesus’ life. Instead, the Gospels are more topical, organized to provide a theological portrait of Jesus’ actions, teachings, and impact.

From the start Jesus combined miracles with teaching, so that the crowds were astounded with his words and deeds (Mark 1:21-28). He controlled every aspect of his creation: He could stop the forces of nature, heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons (Mark 3:27), and he gave the same authority to his disciples (Mark 3:14-15). He chose twelve disciples, included them in his ministry, and frequently sent them out on missions (Luke 9–10).
INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUR GOSPELS

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1562

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUR GOSPELS

The words an author chooses to convey his or her message is still to come. God is the Author and has achieved a new age of salvation through his son Christ. The Gospels are concerned with how the gospel message is spread (e.g., Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Origen). For more about authorship, see the introduction to each Gospel.

HISTORICAL RELIABILITY

There has been significant debate regarding the historicality of the Gospels. In the twentieth century, Rolf R. Buurtmang and his disciples (along with the more recent Jesus Seminar) argued that very little trustworthy material could be found in the four canonical Gospels. The sayings and stories about Jesus, they claimed, were not of historical interest. Matthew centered on their sayings, Mark on their actions, Luke on their teaching, and John on their death. Other scholars think John was written by a group of John’s disciples, but the bibliography I included that belief that Jesus and Thomas did not have been written by the apostle John himself.

2. Study the grammar and words of the passage

The words an author chooses to convey his or her message is still to come. God is the Author and has achieved a new age of salvation through his son Christ. The Gospels are concerned with how the gospel message is spread (e.g., Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Origen). For more about authorship, see the introduction to each Gospel.

MEANING AND MESSAGE

Jesus is the Son of God and is living with his Father and Jesus Christ as his Son. Jesus has a unique relationship with his Father and ours—Jesus as the Son of God and his Fath
**THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS**

Jesus' life is recorded in the four Gospels, which include quite a few details that help us to set Jesus' life chronologically into the flow of history. Nevertheless, some of the key dates in Jesus' life are uncertain. Three central issues are the date of his birth, the beginning of his ministry, and the date of his crucifixion and resurrection.

**Jesus' Birth**

*The Reign of Herod the Great.* When Jesus was born, Herod the Great was king of the Jews (Matt 2:1; Luke 1:5). Herod reigned from 37 to 4 BC and died in mid-March 4 BC. Jesus was a small child at the time, probably having been born at least several months before Herod died.

*The Census Recorded in Luke.* Jesus was born during a census of the Roman world commanded by Augustus Caesar, according to Luke (Luke 2:1-5). Roman historians, however, make no mention of a census around 4 BC. Yet we know that the Romans took their censuses throughout the empire, and we have documentation that censuses were taken in Egypt every fourteen years from AD 33/34 to AD 257/258. Furthermore, recent evidence has revealed that censuses were taken in Egypt in 11/10 BC, 4/3 BC, AD 4/5, and AD 11/12. It is reasonable to suppose that the census of Egypt in 4/3 BC also included Judea, or that a similar one was carried out there, in harmony with Luke 2:1.

Another difficulty is that Luke locates the census in the time when Quirinius served as governor of Syria. Josephus noted that Quirinius became governor after one was carried out there, in harmony with Luke 2:1. Some scholars see Jesus' ministry as lasting at least three years. Most scholars see Jesus' ministry as lasting at least three years.

**Jesus' Age at the Beginning of His Ministry.** According to Luke, Jesus began his ministry when he was "about thirty years old" (Luke 3:23). This description is approximate, giving a rough indication of time (cp. John 8:57). Luke, as a responsible historian, placed the public ministry of Jesus in relation both to world history (Luke 3:1-2) and to the national repentance movement spearheaded by John the Baptist. If Jesus' ministry began around AD 28, he was 32-34 years old.

**The Temple.** When Jesus visited Jerusalem at Passover early in his ministry (John 2:13-3:21), he was told that the Temple had been under construction for forty-six years (John 2:20). Herod's work on the rebuilding of the Temple began in the eighteenth year of his reign (Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.11.1), which was 20/19 BC. So that occasion of Jesus' visit to the Temple occurred about AD 28.

**The Length of Jesus' Ministry.** Although the synoptic Gospels only mention one Passover festival during Jesus' ministry (Matt 26:17; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1), the Gospel of John records three (John 2:23; 6:4; 11:55). Thus, different scholars have proposed that Jesus' ministry was as short as one year and as long as four. Most scholars see Jesus' ministry as lasting at least three years.

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1. Jesus' birth has a BC or "before Christ" date because Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century made a mistake in calculations, and this mathematical error has remained in our calendar.

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**JESUS' MINISTRY**

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<td>15 AD</td>
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JESUS’ DEATH  The Day of Jesus’ Death. All four Gospels report that Jesus was crucified on a Friday, the day before the beginning of the Sabbath (Matt 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:31, 42). They all agree that Jesus was raised on Sunday, the third day according to Jewish reckoning.

Jesus’ last supper with his disciples occurred in conjunction with the Passover celebration. According to the synoptic Gospels, the Last Supper was the Passover meal (Matt 26:17-35; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:7-38). In these three accounts the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus take place on the day following the Passover meal. John’s account seems to suggest that the Last Supper took place one day before Passover, but a careful reading of John’s description indicates that he is in harmony with the other Gospel writers (see note on John 19:14).

The Year of Jesus’ Death. In the Jewish calendar, the Friday on which Jesus died was 14 Nisan, the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread (see charts, “Israel’s Annual Calendar,” p. 145, and “Israel’s Festivals,” p. 235). Therefore, Jesus’ death occurred in a year in which 14 Nisan fell on a Friday. He must have died after AD 29 (even by the shortest calculation his ministry was at least a year) and before AD 36, the year that Caiaphas ended his high priesthood and Pontius Pilate ceased governing Judea. The two years that meet these criteria are AD 30 and 33. If his ministry was no longer than two or three years, he died in AD 30 at about 35 years old. If his ministry was longer, he died in AD 33 at about 38 years old.

CONCLUSION The record of Jesus’ life can be set into known historical facts without much difficulty, and the available evidence gives us confidence to believe that Jesus’ life is historical and that the record of his life in the four Gospels is accurate. Yet there are many gaps in our historical knowledge of Jesus’ life. As the apostle John later said about Jesus’ ministry, “Jesus also did many other things. If they were all written down, I suppose the whole world could not contain the books that would be written” (John 21:25).
THE NLT HARMONY OF THE
FOUR GOSPELS

Ever since the time of Christ, many attempts have been made to harmonize the four Gospels, either into a single narrative or into a synopsis showing the relationships among the Gospel passages. Tatian’s Diatesseron (about AD 170) is the earliest example of a single narrative made from the Gospels. Later, Eusebius of Caesarea (early 300s AD) developed a well-known synopsis and tables of cross-references for use in comparing the four Gospels. Many other similar works have since been done.

The NLT Harmony of the Four Gospels is a synopsis. Its primary purpose is to help readers understand the relationship among the Gospel passages, not to establish a strict chronology of Jesus’ life. The authors of the Gospels themselves were more concerned with Jesus’ message and the meaning of his life, death, and resurrection than with the details of historical chronology. By comparing and contrasting similar accounts in the different Gospels, readers can understand the message that each Gospel writer was emphasizing and their differences in perspective concerning the events of Jesus’ life and his teachings (see “Introduction to the Four Gospels: Interpretation,” p. 1562).

In addition to this synopsis, the NLT Study Bible includes parallel passage notations in the NLT text of the four Gospels. Those parallel notations are somewhat different from this synopsis, because they serve a different purpose. Whereas this synopsis provides an overview and includes every passage in the Gospels, the parallel passage notations provide much finer detail in comparing the different Gospel accounts. The reader is encouraged to use this synopsis for general overview and comparison, and then to use the parallel passage notations to compare the Gospel parallels more closely.

FURTHER READING
KURT ALAND, ED.
Synopsis of the Four Gospels (1987)

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
Matthew

Matthew demonstrates that Jesus of Nazareth is the long-awaited Messiah, the king of Israel, who fulfills the Old Testament promises yet turns the expectation of his contemporaries on its head. The Gospel of Matthew shows how both Jewish and non-Jewish people fit together in God's unfolding Kingdom. It challenges the reader to live with total commitment to Jesus Christ as king.

SETTING
Matthew wrote his Gospel when the early Christian community was at a crossroads. Would it remain a sect of Judaism or separate itself from Judaism and become a separate faith? Matthew's Gospel derives from a Christian community near Jerusalem, surrounded by Jews who had not left their Jewish faith. This community, unlike the Christians of Paul's churches, had to answer socially to the stipulations of Jewish law on a daily basis.

The Christians reading Matthew's Gospel were challenged to live as Jewish Christians among Jews who were fully committed to the Torah. The letter from James similarly evokes a Christianity that is still firmly attached to the synagogue (Jas 2:1-13). It uses categories so typical of Judaism that one is unsure if it is Christianity or Judaism (Jas 1:26-27; 2:14-26) as it presents its own vision of Christianity in terms of wisdom and obedience (Jas 3:13-18; 4:1-12). Here is a Jewish Christianity that remains as firm in its commitment to the Jewish community as to its glorious Lord (cp. Acts 15).

Matthew's Gospel tells how the life of Jesus affected Jewish Christians who were struggling with ritual, legal, social, and political concerns. For those early Christians, Matthew answered the pressing question, "How are we to follow Jesus in our day, surrounded as we are by Judaism, while seeking to declare the Good News of the Kingdom to all?"

SUMMARY
Matthew's story follows Jesus from before his birth until after his death and resurrection. Jesus experiences a series of potential dangers as a child (2:1-23). As an adult, he embarks on a very short career, proclaiming God's righteousness (3:1-7:29) and performing astounding miracles (8:1-9:34); he broadens his reach by sending out twelve apostles (9:35-11:1). Most of Jesus' experience, however, is utter rejection at the hands of Galilean and Judean Jews (chs 11-17). He confronts the Jewish leaders in the Temple during his last week (chs 21-22), announces a final series of woes against authority figures who lead people astray (ch 23), and predicts that God will judge and destroy Jerusalem (chs 24-25). Jesus is arrested, tried, and executed by crucifixion (chs 26-27) for opposing the Jewish leaders and challenging the status quo. Then he is vindicated by his resurrection and gives the great commission to his disciples, to make disciples of all the nations (ch 28).

Matthew shapes his Gospel according to two structural principles. First, following an introduction (chs 1-4), Matthew alternates teaching material with narrative material. Thus, we have discourse and teaching in chs 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25; and we have narrative in chs 8-9, 11-12, 14-17, 19-22, 26-28. Second, Matthew records Jesus' confrontation of Israel with God's message about the arrival of his Messiah (chs 26-27) for opposing the Jewish leaders and challenging the status quo. Then he is vindicated by his resurrection and gives the great commission to his disciples, to make disciples of all the nations (ch 28).

Matthew therefore composed the oracles in the Hebrew language [or, "in a Hebrew style"] and each interpreted them as he was able.

TIMELINE
about 6-4 bc
Birth of Jesus
about AD 28
Jesus' baptism by John
Passover, AD 30 or 33
Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection
AD 49-50
The council in Jerusalem
AD 65-80
Matthew writes the Gospel of Matthew
AD 66-70
War between Romans and Jews at Jerusalem
AD 70
Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed

AUTHORSHP
Matthew therefore composed the oracles in the Hebrew language [or, "in a Hebrew style"] and each interpreted them as he was able.

PAPYRUS OF HIERAPOLIS, Eusebius, Church History 3.9.15-16

Matthew was a tax collector whom Jesus befriended and called to a life of justice and obedience (9:9). Matthew invited many friends to spend an evening with Jesus (9:10-13), and Matthew is named among the twelve apostles (10:2-4; see also Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). Early church tradition reports that after he composed the first Gospel, Matthew...
moved from Palestine in the AD 60s to evangelize India (Eusebius, Church History 3.24.6).

An important statement was made in the early AD 100s by Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (see above). Papias’s statement is traditionally understood to mean that the apostle Matthew wrote a Gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, because Matthew’s Gospel does not appear to be “translation Greek” (i.e., the type of Greek that is often found in materials translated from other languages).

In the 1800s, scholars became convinced that Matthew had used Mark’s Gospel as a source. These scholars argued that since an apostle would not have used another Gospel (and one written by a non-apostle at that!) to record Jesus’ life, Matthew was not the author of the Gospel bearing his name. Early tradition connects the Gospel of Mark with the apostle Peter, a fact that makes Matthew’s dependence on Mark more understandable. There is no conflict with one apostle (Matthew) using the accounts of another apostle (Peter) as a convenient source from which to shape his own report.

**The Gospel according to Matthew is among the most influential books ever written. . . . It is wonderfully complete, linking Jesus with his Jewish origins and Old Testament background, pointing forward to the growth of the Gentile Christian community, and embodying . . . the teaching, actions, parables, miracles, death, and resurrection of the central figure.**

Michael Green, The Message of Matthew, p. 11

A few do follow Jesus. In following the instruction of Jesus, these disciples would evangelize the whole world and build a community (the church) that would include both Jews and Gentiles. In general, however, Israel refuses to follow its Messiah, and Jesus utters disastrous warnings that they will experience the judgment of God (chs 23–25) unless they repent.

Matthew’s Gospel is distinctive in its presentation of Jesus as Messiah and Teacher, its emphasis on the Kingdom of Heaven, its strong call to discipleship, its constant pattern of OT fulfillment, its incisive criticism of the Jewish religious leaders, and its universal outlook that includes Gentiles in the Kingdom.

**The Gospel of Matthew.** Matthew emphasizes Jesus as the Messiah (Christ) (1:1; 16:18; 11:2-3; 16:16, 20; 23:10). He focuses on Jesus as the fulfillment of OT expectations, though not in the manner his Jewish contemporaries expected. For Matthew, Jesus is clearly the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary in order to bring salvation to his people (1:21). In short, Jesus is “Immanuel, God with us” (1:23; 28:20).

**The Kingdom of Heaven.** The expression “Kingdom of Heaven,” used thirty times by Matthew, is a roundabout way for Jews to say “Kingdom of God.” Matthew uses this term to evoke (1) the invisible but present rule of God on earth through the saving work of Jesus the Messiah; (2) the fulfillment of OT promises (4:17; 11:11-15); (3) the saving activity of God, often through quiet and humble means (11:25; 13:4-34; 26:14-20); (4) the power and strength of God’s activity (11:2-6; 12:13; 12:28); (5) the coming of the Kingdom within a “generation” (10:23; 16:28; 24:34); (6) the final, climactic judgment of God (25:31-46); and (7) the perfect fellowship of all God’s holy people with the Father (8:11-12; 13:43; 22:14; 26:29). The Kingdom of Heaven shows God’s perfect reign through Jesus the Messiah among his people, beginning with the church and consummated in the eternal Kingdom of glory and fellowship.

**Discipleship.** Matthew’s Gospel stresses Jesus’ call to men and women to be baptized, to follow him as disciples, to obey his teachings (28:20), and to enjoy fellowship with him. Jesus summarizes the requirements of discipleship in his Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7; 28), and this theme recurs throughout Matthew (e.g., 10:1-42; 16:24-26). Matthew shows the disciples overcoming their failures through Christ’s help (see 14:28-33; 16:5-12).

** Fulfillment of the OT.** More than any other Gospel, Matthew stresses the deep correspondence between OT expectations and promises and their fulfillment in Jesus. In the style of a Jewish commentary, Matthew links OT texts to events in the life of Jesus that fulfill those texts and frequently draws out analogies between the OT and the NT. Matthew’s procedure is anchored in the belief that what God has done once in Israel, he is doing again, finally and fully, in Jesus the Messiah.

**Universal Outlook.** In a book so strongly Jewish in orientation, it is surprising to find such an emphasis on the inclusion of Gentiles in the Messiah’s saving work. More than any other, this Gospel emphasizes that the Good News is for all, including Gentiles. This stance put Matthew at odds with the Jewish community of his time on two
1:1–2:23 This account demonstrates The phrase 1:1 introduces Jesus as Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham; 2 Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar). Perez was the father of Hezron. Hezron was the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab. Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the father of Salmon. Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Ruth). Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth). Obed was the father of Jesse. Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah). Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.

Abijah was the father of Asa. Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram. Jehoram was the father of Uzziiah. Uzziiah was the father of Jotham. Jotham was the father of Ahaz. Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh. Manasseh was the father of Amon. Amon was the father of Josiah. Josiah was the father of Jehoiaiah and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon).

1:2 After the Babylonian exile: Jehoiaiah was the father of Shallum. Shallum was the father of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud. Abiud was the father of Eliakim. Eliakim was the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Achim. Achim was the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar. Eleazar was the father of Mattan. Mattan was the father of Simeon. Simeon was the father of Micah. Micah was the father of Nathan. Nathan was the father of Obed. Obed was the father of Josiah. Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon).

1:3-17 This genealogy is traced through Joseph, who stands in David's line (see also 1:17). The unusual mention of women with stained reputations (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba), several of them Gentiles, is noteworthy in Matthew's genealogy. Their mention here highlights Jesus' credentials as running from Abraham through David. Jesus' genealogy confirms him as a legitimate heir to the throne of David. While Jesus' genealogy in Matthew goes back to Abraham, the genealogy in Luke goes all the way back to Adam. This is consistent with Luke's emphasis on Jesus as the Savior for all people everywhere.

Genealogy of Jesus (1:1-17)


Genealogies were kept quite accurately in Judaism, as Josephus confirms (Josephus, Life 1). Genealogies were important in the OT and in Judaism because land rights were apportioned to families in Israel and it became necessary to prove lineage from father to son. Genealogies sometimes ran a record from the past to the present to illustrate religious themes, family descent, or political ties, as well as simple chronology (1 Chr 1-9).

Most such lists were representative rather than a complete list of every individual. The purpose of Matthew's genealogy, unlike Luke's (Luke 3:23-38), is to show Jesus' heritage as running from Abraham through David. The genealogy in Matthew highlights Jesus as the promised descendant of the Messiah (1:1).

Jesus' genealogy does not prove that Jesus is the Messiah, but it does make him a possible candidate. His identity as the Messiah becomes evident in other ways (1:11-26). God had providentially guided the course of history to its climax in Jesus Christ. Jesus is presented as the anticipated Messiah of the OT, the Savior of his people, and the King descended from David assuming his throne (see 2 Sam 7:16). He is heir to Abraham and ultimately fulfills God's promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3).

1:17 Matthew states that each epoch in Joseph's genealogy, but the first and third periods list only thirteen. A legitimate Jewish and OT approach would count David in both the first and second groupings and include Jesus in the third grouping. This further reinforces that Matthew is presenting Joseph as the Messiah (see note on 1:17-25). Matthew is highlighting Jesus' credentials as the Messiah (1:1).

1:18 The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream (Luke 1:34-35), who confirmed, that the virgin shall bring forth a son and shall call His Name Jesus (Luke 1:30-33). Joseph was warned not to break the engagement (literally divorce her; see also Mishnah Sotah 11:1-5). Joseph mercifully decided to do the latter quietly 1:20 The angel of the Lord declared to Joseph in a dream (see 2:12-13, 19, 22) that Mary had been neither seduced nor violated; instead, the child conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:34-35), who was to be great, was to be called Jesus (Luke 1:31-34), who would be God's Son and Lord saved. (1:1) genealogy omits Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah (2 Kgs 21:4; 2 Chron 22:1-11, 24-27), perhaps because of their association with Ahab and Jezebel. (1:1) This genealogy is traced through Joseph, who stands in David's line (see also 1:17). The unusual mention of women with stained reputations (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba), several of them Gentiles, is noteworthy in Matthew's genealogy. Their mention here emphasizes God's gracious acts of redeeming even those deemed unworthy by others. Jesus' genealogy does not prove that Jesus is the Messiah, but it does make him a possible candidate. His identity as the Messiah becomes evident in other ways (1:11-26). God had providentially guided the course of history to its climax in Jesus Christ. Jesus is presented as the anticipated Messiah of the OT, the Savior of his people, and the King descended from David assuming his throne (see 2 Sam 7:16). He is heir to Abraham and ultimately fulfills God's promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3).
MATTHEW 1:22

22All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

23 "Look! The virgin will conceive a child.
She will give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel—
which means, 'God with us.'"

24When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took Mary as his wife.

25But he did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Visitors from the East

1:22-23

Look! . . . Immanuel:
indicates
fulfills Isa 7:14. The Hebrew
with Mary after the
was translated
which anticipates Gentile acceptance
of Galilee, Judea, and Samaria (37–4 BC).

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Herod the Great (2:1-20)

Luke 1:5

Herod the Great was the Roman-appointed king of Judea (37–4 bc) at the time of Jesus' birth (2:1; Luke 1:5). He was a strong military leader, a brilliant politician, and a cruel tyrant. Born into an Edomite (Edomite) family with links to the Romans, he rose to power by gaining Roman favor and retaining it by cruelly suppressing his opponents. Herod was known for his reputation as a great builder. He was the one who built Caesarea and made it the Roman headquarters in Palestine.

Herod the Great was also known for his family troubles and brutal treatment of those who opposed him or whom he considered threats. He murdered two of his wives and three of his own sons when he suspected them of plotting against him. Caesar Augustus once said that he would rather be Herod's swine than his son (a play on words in Greek since the two words sound alike—hus, huios), When Jesus was born toward the end of Herod's reign and Herod heard him referred to as a future "King," Herod attempted to have him killed also. Unable to locate the boy, Herod then ordered the massacre of all the boys two years less than two years old in the Bethlehem area (see 2:1-20)—an act typical of his ruthlessness and paranoia.

Though Herod gained the title "king of the Jews," the Jewish people never accepted him as a legitimate king because he was not from the line of David and because he was an Edomite (a descendant of Esau) rather than a Jew. His greatest accomplishment was the renovation of the Jerusalem Temple, making it one of the most magnificent buildings in the ancient world.

Herod was deeply disturbed that he had missed the new birth of the child King. He called a meeting of the leading teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

In Bethlehem, they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote:"

4 "And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah,
which is out of Egypt's land, you will be a mother to me, and from you I will give birth to a people, who will rule in peace out of Zion's house and from Jerusalem's tent.

5 Foretell me, who I see with the Star! The Star of the East shall come to me; which the Angel's message said to the magi, "To you is born a King of Jews; you shall find him in the village of Bethlehem, which is in Judea."" 9

Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared.

Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!"

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. 12 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! 13 They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

14 When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

The Escape to Egypt

15 After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

16 That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child, took Mary with him, and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: "I called my Son out of Egypt."

17 Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance. Herod's brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

18 "A cry was heard in Ramah—weeping and great mourning. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted, for they are dead."

The Return to Nazareth

19 When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt.

The Herod Family (2:1-20)

Those whose names are in bold type appear in the NT.

A Herod the Great

D. Doris
Antipater
Alexandros I
Berenice

A Herodias
Antipas I
Antipas II

A Philip
Herod the Tetrarch

A Herod Philip
Herodias
Antipas

A Salome

M. Malthace
Cleopatra of Jerusalem

1:22-23 Look! . . . Immanuel: Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10 (Greek version). Jesus' birth from a virgin fulfills Isa 7:14. The Hebrew term 'al'mah (virgin or young maiden) was translated parthenos ("virgin") in the Greek OT that Matthew quotes. Matthew understands the 'al'mah of Isaiah as foreshadowing the Virgin Mary.

1:25 Until probably implies that Joseph had sexual relations with Mary after the birth of Jesus. *And Joseph named him Jesus, thus showing his acceptance of the child as his own.*

2:1-2 Antinestus to the star indicates that the wise men believed Mary's awareness of the OT (perhaps Num 24:17) suggests that they were from Babylonia, the land of the wise men. Numerous. The men were Gentiles, which anticipates Gentile acceptance into the Kingdom of God (8:11-12; 15:23-28; 18:16-20). Throughout the entire Gospel, unlike Gentiles worship the Jewish Messiah, while the Jewish leaders (Herod, high priests, teachers of religious law, Pharisees) oppose him.

2:1 Bethlehem see on note 2:6 was David's hometown (1 Sam 16:1-13; John 7:4-5). *King Herod, or Herod the Great,* had a meteoric career; he rose from being governor of Galilee to being king of Galilee, Judea, and Samaria (37–4 bc). His career was marked by unflinching loyalty to Rome, magnificent building projects (including a substantial renovation of the Temple in Jerusalem), family hostility, suspicion, and ruthless murder of his own family members (Josephus, Antiquities 15:1.5-4) and of innocent children (2:16-18).

2:2 Or royal astronomers; Greek reads magoi; also in 2:17, 16.

2:2 Star or it rose: Or star in the east.

2:3 Herod was deeply disturbed because he feared this child would rival him as king of the Jews.

2:4 The leading priests had political and religious clout and ministered predomi-

nately in the Temple (see 2:22). Herod gathered the teachers of religious law because they were trained to know OT prophecies and were often influential Pharisees.

2:6 The quotation is from Mic 5:2-4; 2 Sam 5:2. *Bethlehem,* a small village, had a privileged status as the birthplace of King David. The religious leaders knew from the prophets (2:22) that the Messiah would be born there.

2:13-15 Flee to Egypt . . . until I tell you to return: This fulfills Hos 11:1 (see note on 4:1-3) and also see Gen 15:13-16, 46:1-5; Exod 15:1-21.

2:15 I called my Son out of Egypt: See Hos 11:1, which refers to the Exodus.

2:20 The tradition that there were three wise men originated from the number of gifts, but the text does not specify how many wise men there were.
2:21-21:21 Jesus’ return to Israel fulfills Hosea 11:1-11, 12:1-23:7. This return to Israel, like a father returning to his exiled children, is a sign of God’s love. Jesus is the promised king of Israel who will reign over his people.

2:22-23:7 Archeus, like his father, governed brutally, immorally, and tyrannically. He tried to kill Jesus, as the Pharisees and Sadducees tried to have Jesus killed. Jesus escaped to Egypt, as the prophet Jeremiah predicted (Jer 31:15).

3:1 John the Baptist’s announcement comes (Mark 1:1-11, 12:1-23:7). John’s ministry was rejected by the religious leaders of the time. He was imprisoned and ultimately killed. Despite this, John’s message lived on in the ministry of Jesus.

3:16-26 John’s message includes the call to repentance and the promise of a new creation. This message was received by some, but rejected by many. John’s baptism was a sign of this new creation, and the sign of Jesus’ identity as the Messiah.

3:20-21 Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom of heaven. Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is not like a kingdom on earth. It is a kingdom of God, where the poor are blessed, the hungry are satisfied, and the meek inherit the earth. This is a kingdom that is opposed to the kingdom of the world, which is characterized by violence, sin, and death.

3:22-36 Jesus’ teaching on the righteousness of the kingdom. Jesus taught that righteousness is more important than sacrifices and rituals. He taught that true righteousness is characterized by love, compassion, and mercy.

3:31-36 Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom of heaven continues. Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is not something that is waiting to happen. It is already present among those who believe in Jesus. Those who believe in Jesus are part of the kingdom of heaven.

3:37-48 Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom of heaven concludes. Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is not something that can be earned. It is a gift from God to those who believe in Jesus. The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of love, peace, and joy.

3:49-50 Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom of heaven continues. Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is not something that can be destroyed. It is a kingdom that is eternal. The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of life.

3:51-34 Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom of heaven concludes. Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of grace. It is a kingdom where God’s mercy is greater than our sin. The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of grace.
The Temptation of Jesus: Satan Tests the Messiah

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. During that time the devil approached him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’”

Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’”

Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

3. THE MESSIAH CONFRONTS ISRAEL
(4:12–11:1)
NARRATIVE: Introduction to Jesus’ Ministry
(4:12-25)
The Ministry of Jesus Begins

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee. He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zanath and Naphal. This fulfilled what said God through the prophet Isaiah:

4:11-12
[Isaiah 11:1-2 (Greek version)].

Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. “I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.”

10Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’”

11Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

4:12-11:1
Parallels between Adam and Jesus are obvious in this account of Jesus’ temptations. Jesus is the second Israel (2:15). In contrast to the ancient Israelites, he fulfilled Israel’s history by successfully wandering through the desert without a guide. He proved himself the obedient Son of God by defeating Satan in spiritual combat. And because he underwent temptation himself, Jesus is able to sympathize with the temptations we face (see Heb 2:16, 18) and help us overcome them (see 1 Cor 10:13).

4:1 Jesus was led by the Spirit: The temptation was arranged by God as a test of a Messiah. God’s character, initiated by God (see Isa 1:13-14), was accomplished through the devil’s own desire to lure Jesus into sin.

4:2 forty days and forty nights (see Exod 40:1-2; 34:28; 1 Kgs 19:9). Israel was tested in the wilderness for forty years (Exod 16:35; Deut 1:3).

4:3 Jesus refused to use his supernatural powers to get himself out of the desert. He trusted God to provide. Unlike the people of Israel, who sorely tested God through complaint and unbelief (see Exod 16), Jesus refused to question God’s faithfulness. Instead, he trusted God to provide for his true need, the sustenance of every word that comes from the mouth of God.

4:3 the devil: Literally the tempter. 4:4 Jesus was quoting Deut 8:3.

4:5-7 Jesus refused to test God by presuming upon God’s protection. 4:6 Now the devil quotes Ps 91:11-12.

4:7 The Scriptures also say: Countering the devil’s appeal to Jesus, Scripture invoked a deeper spiritual principle of honoring God, which the devil ignored. See Deut 6:16.

4:8-10 Satan, called the ruler of this world (John 12:31), offered to hand over all the kingdoms of the world and their glory to Jesus to keep him from accomplishing the will of his Father. Glory refers to political power and dominion (e.g., 6:29), Satan’s strategy was to get Jesus to abuse his sonship, thus diverting him from the path of suffering and obedience that climaxled at the cross. You must . . . only him: Deut 6:13.

4:11 Then the devil went away: Jesus’ rebuff of Satan here foreshadowed his victory over demons (12:28), Satan’s defeat through the Cross (Col 2:14-15), and the final victory at the end of history (Rev 20:15; Rev 22:1-7, 20-3:10). Angels, who had already been involved in the Messiah’s arrival and protection (1:20-24, 2:13-19), now came and took care of Jesus after his temptation, in fulfillment of the OT (4:6; see 91:11-12).

4:12-11:1 Having been announced by John and the Father (4:17), and having obediently endured the testing in the wilderness (4:1-11), the Messiah was prepared for his ministry. He first confronted the Galilean Israelites with the message of the Kingdom.

4:12 had been arrested by Herod Antipas: Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, where John was probably working. See John 1:23. 12Jesus withdrew to avoid martyrdom before finishing his work of revealing the Kingdom.

4:13 Capernaum was in Galilee, a district viewed negatively by God’s faithfulness. Instead, he trusted the message of the Kingdom.

4:17 Jesus’ message centered on the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven and the repentance that it required (see 2:3; 10:7). *Is near:* Or 10:5-15; 13:47-51; Ezek 29:4-5; Amos 9:7.

4:18-22 The call of the first disciples illustrates one of the purposes of Jesus’ ministry: to call people to follow him in self-denying obedience (cp. 4:17, 23).

4:19-20 Jesus left the boat and their father: Following Jesus as his disciples involved both commitment and cost on the part of the believers (see 8:22-21; 10:38; 16:24, 19:21).

4:23 This summary marks the central theme of the section (4:23-9:38): the ministry and message of the Messiah. In ancient writings, chapter divisions were unknown; authors instead often begin and end a section with the same expression (called an inclusio; see 9:35).

4:25 The Messiah’s ministry has three main features: teaching, announcing the Kingdom, and healing (Matt 4:23; 10:5-15; 15:28-20:34). The synagogues were centers for prayer, study, and exposition of Scripture and tradition. They were the social centers of many Jewish villages. The hypocrisy and hostility of the Jewish leaders was not surprising (Matt 16:17; 5:16; 17:12-14; 35:13-24, 34). *Announcing the Good News means sharing the message about the Kingdom of Heaven (9:35; 24:14; 16:3) . . .* Announcing the Good News means sharing the message about the Kingdom of Heaven (9:35; 24:14; 16:3; also Mark 1:1; Rom 1:9). Often, the message invokes hostility (see 9:32-34; 10:27-28; 13:1-9).

4:24-25 During Jesus’ day, much of Palestine was in the Roman jurisdiction of Syria (a term that could refer to the entire eastern part of Syria, or the region of Damascus, Antioch, Tyre, and Sidon), where some people considered Galilee was Galilee to mean the Galilean countryside southeast of the Sea of Galilee (Damasus, Raphana, Hiphos, Abila [or Canatha], Padara, Sardis, Acre, Caesarea, and Philadelphia [Amman]). These cities were predominantly Gentile and Hellenistic in culture.
The Sermon on the Mount: Jesus’ Call to Righteousness

Matthew 5:1-12

11 One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountain side and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:5-16

12 “Blessed are those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

4 God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted;

5 God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be satisfied.

6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be filled.

7 God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be satisfied.

8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

9 God blesses those who work for peace, for they will see God.

10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

11 God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. I’m happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Teaching about Salt and Light

Matthew 5:13-16

12 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

13 “You are the light of the world—a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 14 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.

15 “So be it with you. You are the light of the world. Let your light shine for everyone to see, so that everyone may praise your heavenly Father.

Teaching about the Law

Matthew 5:17-20

16 “Do not misunderstand what I have come to do. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. 17 Tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.

18 So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

19 “But if you are unwilling to give your righteousness better than the righteousness of the religious leaders and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

20 “You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I tell you...
say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment. If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of hellfire. 23 So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, 24 leave your offering there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice.

5:24 When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. And if that happens, you will surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.

Teaching about Adultery
24 You have heard the commandment, ‘You must not commit adultery.’ 25 But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman desires her in his heart, and it is the same for marriage.

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5:37 ‘But the leaders of the Pharisees’ council—hupokrites—were not like this. 38 They put a stumbling block in front of the little ones. They were like stumbling blocks for the blind and they were like a trap in front of the soul. 39 But I say to you, every one who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

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6:7-8 God cannot be caged by endless repetition. The Lord's Prayer (6:9-13) is a model of simplicity in contrast with pagan wordiness.
6:9-13 The Lord's Prayer is similar in form to a common Jewish prayer (the 'ielah)4
6:14-16 Why fast, ' comb your hair and wash your face. 15Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.
6:16-18 Teaching about Fasting
16 And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. 17Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! 18Pray like this:
19 ‘Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. 20May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done, as it is in heaven. 21Give us today the food we need, 22and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. 23And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.
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32 ‘If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 33But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Teaching about Money

6:32-34 Teaching about Money and Possessions
32 And don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and thieves destroy them, and where thieves break in and steal. 33Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. 34Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.
35 Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your body is healthy, your wholebody is filled with light. 36But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!
37 No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love another; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.

Teaching about Fasting

6:1-18 Teaching about Fasting
1And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them, and where thieves break in and steal. 2And when you fast, and weep with a reflection of a repentant, regenerate heart, which makes our own forgiveness possible. Jesus' disciples had aban- doned all (4:18-22; 9:10-15); Jesus gave them comforting reassurance that he will certainly tend to the disciples' needs. 3Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. 4So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Today's trouble is enough for today.
5 Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. 6For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.
7 And why worry about a speck in your eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.
8 "Whoever can bear a large burden is also capable of bearing a small one." (Literally)
I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.

Building on a Solid Foundation

8 Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 9 Though the rain comes in torrents and the floods rise and the storms beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. 10 But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. 11 When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.

Response to the Sermon

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching. For he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

Narrative: Jesus’ Ministry (8:1–9:34)
Jesus Heals a Man with Leprosy
Matt 8:1-4 // Luke 5:12-16

8 Large crowds followed Jesus as he came down the mountainside. Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached him and knelt before him. “Lord,” the man said, “if you are willing, you can heal and make me clean.”

Jesus touched and healed him. “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!” And instantly the leprosy disappeared. Then Jesus said to him, “Don’t tell anyone about this. Instead, go to the priest and let him examine you. Offer the required sacrifice in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy. This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed.”

The Faith of a Roman Officer
Luke 7:1-10

When Jesus returned to Caesarea, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, “Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.”

Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.”

But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed.”

“I was not worthy to have you come under my authority, but only a servant. So one’s life indicates that God will grant extravagant desires. The reference to Jesus being the door and the shepherd. The idea that God will grant extravagant desires.

The storm is a metaphor for the power of the Devil. The emphasis in this whole sermon (5:21–7:27) is on doing what Jesus taught by walking in righteousness. The storm is a metaphor for the power of the Devil. The emphasis in this whole sermon (5:21–7:27) is on doing what Jesus taught by walking in righteousness.

The centurion was a Gentile soldier, and many biblical scholars have seen strong evidence from both the nationalistic and the separatist wings of Jewish society. 8 Caesarea is located on the Sea of Galilee, about two and a half miles east of the Sea of Tiberias. In Jesus' day, it was a prosperous fishing village. Standing at a crucial junction on the coastline and the borders of the Roman Empire and Egypt, it was an international village, and much of Jesus’ ministry was centered there (e.g., Acts 1:14; 8:14-17; “a Roman officer” (Greek a[nn]e[le]u[t]or, see Acts 23:24-25); see also Acts 2:10, 15-16; 14:9-17; 16:1-40; 21:21-27). 7 Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.”

Healing the Centurion’s Servant

The centurion recognized Jesus’ authority. From his own experience, he knew that when he gave orders, they were always followed. He knew that God had entrusted Jesus with authority to work miracles. The centurion’s 7-6:8 Rabbits often referred to important ideas or Scripture verses as pearls. The mystical wisdom of the ancients, it seems, was also a carpet

10 But one of the scribes said to him, “Teacher, when did we never receive, even though they did great things in God’s name.

True Disciples

Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven. Only those who truly do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. 2 On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord!’: We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.” But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

Don’t give the sacred to dogs. Don’t waste what is valuable on pigs.

8:8-9

They will trample the pearls, then turn and cast them to the pigs.

Wisdom: The Golden Rule
Matt 7:12-16 // Luke 6:31

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