

# THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE KINGDOM

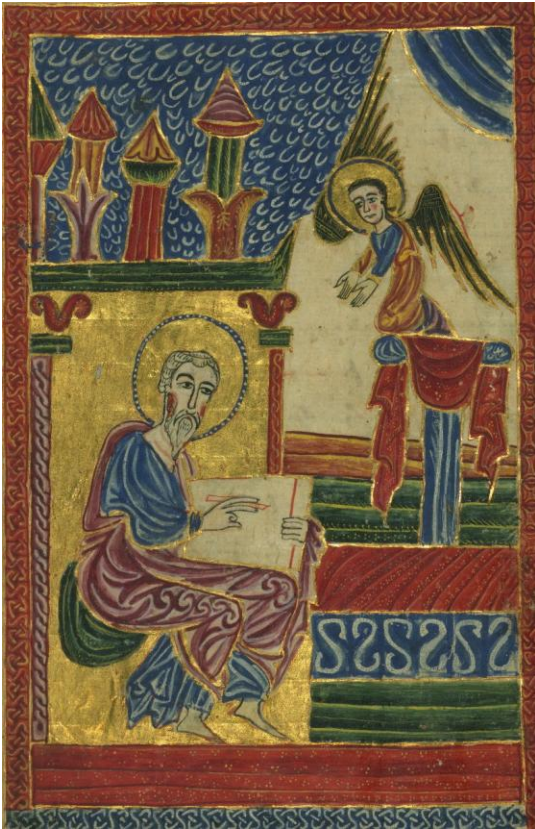
## A Bible Study Guide

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# The Gospel of Matthew

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## INTRODUCTION



The Gospel of Matthew is written in a polished form of Semitic-influenced Greek often associated with synagogue settings. Most modern scholars hold that the author drew on three primary sources: (1) the Gospel of Mark, (2) the hypothetical sayings collection known as the “Q source,” and (3) material unique to the Matthean community, commonly called the “M source” or “Special Matthew.”

Christological concerns appear to have been important for the Matthean community within the broader early Christian movement. Matthew places particular emphasis on Jesus’ identity and authority. Whereas Mark begins with Jesus’ baptism and later highlights the transfiguration, Matthew traces Jesus’ divine sonship back to his birth and repeatedly stresses the fulfillment of Old Testament messianic prophecies (e.g., 1:22; 2:15, 23; 4:14; 5:17; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 27:9). The title “Son of David” presents Jesus as Israel’s promised Messiah, frequently in contexts involving healing and miraculous activity. As “Son of Man,” he is portrayed as the future eschatological judge, a role recognized by his disciples but often misunderstood or rejected by his opponents. As “Son of God,” Matthew depicts Jesus as uniquely revealing God’s will and authority through his obedient mission.

The Gospel also reflects tensions between the evangelist’s community and other Jewish groups of the late first century, particularly in its strong criticism of the scribes and Pharisees. Many scholars interpret this polemic as evidence of an intra-Jewish conflict during a period of separation between emerging Christianity and other forms of Judaism. Matthew does shift in terminology at times between “Israelites” and “Jews,” but the claim that the Gospel teaches a wholesale transfer of the “Kingdom of Heaven” from Jews to the Church is debated among scholars and should be understood cautiously within its historical and literary context.

## AUTHOR

The Gospel of Matthew was included in the New Testament canon largely because the early church regarded it as possessing apostolic authority. In other words, it was accepted as faithful to the teaching of the apostles and therefore authoritative for Christian communities. This recognition, however, does not by itself demonstrate that the apostle Matthew was the direct author of the book.

Many modern critical scholars consider Matthean authorship unlikely, often pointing to the Gospel’s literary dependence on Mark, its polished Greek style, and its apparent distance from eyewitness testimony. Some conservative scholars also question traditional authorship, though many others continue to defend or regard it as plausible.

Because the original manuscript (autograph) of the Gospel has not survived—a situation true of all New Testament writings—absolute certainty about authorship is not possible. What can be said with confidence is that early Christian tradition attributed the Gospel to the apostle Matthew and that the book came to be widely received by the church as authoritative Scripture.

## DATE WRITTEN

The most widely accepted theory among modern scholars is that both Matthew and Luke used the Gospel of Mark as a written source (the so-called Markan priority hypothesis). Matthew reproduces a large portion of Mark's material—often estimated at about 80–90 percent—while Luke incorporates roughly 55–65 percent.

However, the proposed dating in the earlier statement is earlier than the majority scholarly consensus. Most contemporary scholars date Mark's Gospel to around AD 65–70, often in connection with the Jewish War and the period leading up to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70. On this widely held view, Matthew is commonly dated to approximately AD 80–90, with Luke often placed in a similar or slightly later timeframe.

An earlier dating for Matthew (such as the 50s or early 60s) is defended by some scholars, particularly within more conservative traditions. Proponents argue that Matthew's lack of an explicit reference to the destruction of the Temple in AD 70—especially in light of Matthew 24:1–2—may suggest composition prior to that event. Others counter that the evangelist may have written after AD 70 and simply preserved Jesus' prediction in its narrative form without adding retrospective commentary.

Finally, while some scholars have proposed that Luke used Matthew as a source, the dominant view in modern scholarship is that Matthew and Luke worked independently from Mark and from a shared sayings source (commonly called Q), rather than Luke directly depending on Matthew.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who authored the book of Matthew?
2. Approximately when was the book written?
3. What has been suggested as the theme of Matthew's gospel?
4. What three characteristics of the gospel were noted in the introduction?

## OUTLINE

1. **The birth and childhood of Jesus - Mt 1:1-2:23**
  - a. Genealogy of Christ - Mt 1:1-17
  - b. Birth of Christ - Mt 1:18-25
  - c. Visit of the Magi - Mt 2:1-12
  - d. Flight into Egypt and massacre of the infants - Mt 2:13-18
  - e. Residence at Nazareth - Mt 2:19-23
2. **The preparation for the ministry of Jesus - Mt 3:1-4:11**
  - a. The forerunner of Christ - Mt 3:1-12
  - b. Baptism of Christ - Mt 3:13-17
  - c. Temptation of Christ - Mt 4:1-11
3. **The ministry of Jesus in Galilee - Mt 4:12-18:35**
  - a. Residence at Capernaum - Mt 4:12-17
  - b. Call of four disciples - Mt 4:18-22
  - c. General survey of the Galilean ministry - Mt 4:23-25
  - d. The Sermon on the Mount - Mt 5:1-7:29
  - e. Ten miracles and related events - Mt 8:1-9:38
  - f. Mission of the twelve - Mt 10:1-42
  - g. Christ's answer to John, and related discourse - Mt 11:1-30
  - h. Opposition from the Pharisees - Mt 12:1-50
  - i. A series of parables on the kingdom - Mt 13:1-58
  - j. Withdrawal of Jesus following John's beheading - Mt 14:1-36

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- k. Conflict with the Pharisees over tradition - Mt 15:1-20
- l. Withdrawal to Phoenecia and healing of a Canaanitish woman's daughter - Mt 15:21-28
- m. Return to the Sea of Galilee and performing of miracles - Mt 15:29-38
- n. Renewed conflict with the Pharisees and Sadducees - Mt 15:39-16:4
- o Withdrawal to the region of Caesarea Philippi - Mt 16:5-17:23
- p. Instruction of the twelve at Capernaum - Mt 17:24-18:35

## **4. The ministry of Jesus in Perea - Mt 19:1-20:16**

- a. Teaching on divorce - Mt 19:1-12
- b. Blessing of the children - Mt 19:13-15
- c. Interview with the rich young man - Mt 19:16-30
- d. Parable of the laborers in the vineyard - Mt 20:1-16

## **5. The ministry of Jesus in Judea - Mt 20:17-34**

- a. Another prediction of Christ's death and resurrection - Mt 20:17-19
- b. Ambitious request of Zebedee's sons - Mt 20:20-28
- c. Healing of two blind men - Mt 20:29-34

## **6. The ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem - Mt 21:1-25:46**

- a. Triumphal entry - Mt 21:1-11
- b. Cleansing the Temple - Mt 21:12-17
- c. Cursing of the barren fig tree - Mt 21:18-22
- d. Questioning of Jesus' authority and his parabolic answer - Mt 21:23-22:14
- e. Questioning of Jesus by various groups - Mt 22:15-46
- f. Jesus' public denunciation of the Pharisees - Mt 23:1-39
- g. Olivet Discourse - Mt 24:1-25:46

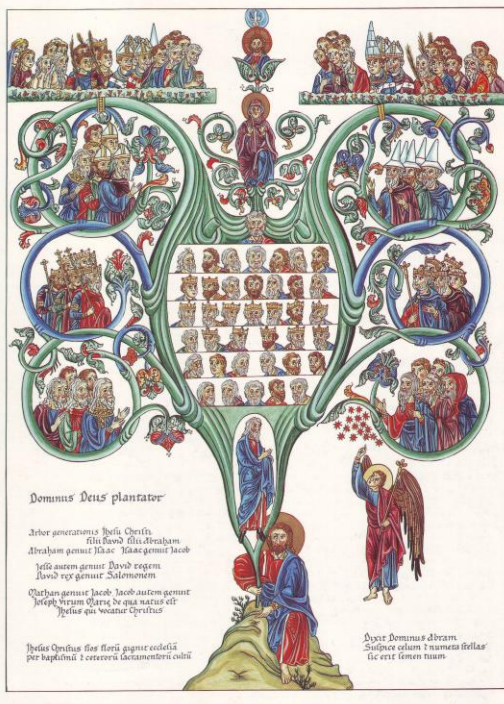
## **7. The suffering of Jesus - Mt 26:1-27:66**

- a. Plot against Jesus - Mt 26:1-16
- b. The final meal - Mt 26:17-30
- c. Prediction of Peter's denial - Mt 26:31-35
- d. Events in Gethsemane - Mt 26:36-56
- e. Events at the Jewish trials - Mt 26:57-27:2
- f. Remorse of Judas - Mt 27:3-10
- g. Events at the Roman trials - Mt 27:11-31
- h. The Crucifixion - Mt 27:32-56
- i. Burial - Mt 27:57-66

## **8. The resurrection of Jesus - Mt 28:1-20**

- a. Discovery of the empty tomb - Mt 28:1-8
- b. Appearance of Jesus Christ - Mt 28:9,10
- c. Report of the soldiers - Mt 28:11-15
- d. The great commission - Mt 28:16-20

## CHAPTER ONE OVERVIEW



Matthew opens his Gospel with a genealogy tracing Jesus' lineage from Abraham through David to Joseph (Matt. 1:1–17). The genealogy is structured into three groups of fourteen generations, for a total of forty-two. Most scholars agree that this arrangement is deliberate. Matthew appears to have compressed the genealogy by omitting certain historical figures—likely for literary and theological purposes rather than strict chronological completeness.

Several explanations have been proposed for the pattern of fourteen. Fourteen is twice seven, a number often associated in Jewish tradition with completeness or sacred order. More significantly, many scholars note that fourteen corresponds to the Hebrew gematria (numerical value) of the name David (14= דוד), which reinforces Matthew's emphasis on Jesus' Davidic lineage. By structuring the genealogy this way, the author highlights Jesus' royal descent from David—an important messianic qualification in Jewish expectation (cf. 1:1–17; 22:41–42).

Matthew then narrates the birth of Jesus, focusing on the angel's announcement to Joseph and the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. The text emphasizes that Mary was a virgin prior to Jesus' birth and that Joseph did not have marital relations with her until after the child was

born (1:18–25).

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The genealogy, comparing it with the one in Luke's gospel
- The prophecies of Isaiah regarding the virgin birth
- The significance of the names given to the child born of Mary

## READ CHAPTER ONE

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Whose genealogy is given by Matthew? (1)
3. What four women are included in the genealogy? (3-6)
4. What was the initial relationship between Joseph and Mary? (18)
5. When and how did Mary become pregnant? (18)
6. What two names would be given the child, and what do they mean? (21-23)
7. What scripture in the Old Testament was fulfilled by the virgin birth of Christ? (22-23)
8. How long did Joseph wait until he "knew" Mary as his wife? (25)

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## CHAPTER TWO OVERVIEW

Unlike Luke, Matthew does not describe the night of Jesus' birth or the visit of the shepherds. Instead, his narrative focuses on events that emphasize Jesus' kingship and divine protection. The Gospel recounts the visit of the magi, wise men from the East, who followed a star to find the child and worship him, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matt. 2:1–12). These gifts symbolically point to Jesus' identity as king, priest, and one who would suffer for humanity.

Following this, Joseph is warned in a dream by an angel to take Mary and Jesus and flee to Egypt to escape King Herod's order to kill the infants of Bethlehem (2:13–15). This event fulfills the prophecy, "Out of Egypt I called my son" (Hosea 11:1), and demonstrates God's providential care over Jesus' early life. After Herod's death, Joseph again receives divine instruction in a dream and brings his family back to Israel. Learning that Herod's son Archelaus rules in Judea, he settles instead in Nazareth of Galilee (2:19–23), fulfilling the prophecy that Jesus would be called a Nazarene and setting the stage for his later ministry.



## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The details of the visit of the wise men from the East
- Fact versus fiction related to the birth of Jesus
- Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by the events in this chapter

## READ CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Why had the wise men from the East come to Jerusalem? (1-2)
3. How did the priests and scribes determine the location of Christ's birth? (4-6)
4. How did the wise men find the young Child? Where did they find him? (9-11)
5. Why did Joseph and his family flee? What prophecy would be fulfilled? (13-15)
6. What prophecy did the slaughter of the innocents fulfill? (16-18)
7. What prompted Joseph and his family to return? Why to Galilee? (19-22)
8. Where did the family settle? What prophecy did that fulfill? (23)

## CHAPTER THREE OVERVIEW



Matthew skips ahead approximately thirty years to describe the events that prepare Jesus for his public ministry. Central to this preparation is the ministry of John the Baptist, who serves as a prophetic forerunner. John preaches in the wilderness of Judea, calling people to repentance and baptizing them in the Jordan River as a sign of spiritual cleansing and renewal (Matt. 3:1–12). He also challenges the religious leaders of the time, warning them to bear fruits worthy of repentance and to turn from their hypocrisy.

Jesus comes from Galilee to be baptized by John, not because he requires repentance, but “to fulfill all righteousness” (3:13). In this act, he identifies with humanity’s need for obedience and points to the inauguration of God’s kingdom. As Jesus emerges from the water, dramatic signs accompany the event: the heavens open, the Spirit of God descends like a dove, and a voice from heaven declares, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (3:16–17). This theophany publicly affirms Jesus’ divine identity and mission, marking the beginning of his public ministry.

Matthew’s account emphasizes both continuity and fulfillment: John’s role as a prophet fulfills Old Testament expectations, while Jesus’ baptism signals the start of a ministry that will embody God’s righteousness, authority, and messianic purpose.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The message and ministry of John the Baptist
- The purpose and meaning of Jesus’ baptism

## READ CHAPTER THREE

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What was the theme of John’s preaching? (1-2)
3. What was John’s mission as foretold by Isaiah? (3)
4. What unique clothing and diet did John have? (4)
5. What was John doing in the Jordan River? (5-6)
6. What did John say to the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized? (8)
7. What did John say the “One” who followed him would do? (11-12)
8. Who came from Galilee to be baptized by John? Why? (13-15)
9. As Jesus came up from the water, what three things happened? (16-17)

# The Gospel of Matthew

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## CHAPTER FOUR OVERVIEW

Following his baptism, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he fasted for forty days and forty nights and faced intense temptation by the devil (Matt. 4:1–11). This period serves both as a time of preparation and a public demonstration of his obedience, spiritual authority, and ability to resist sin. By overcoming these temptations, Jesus affirms his identity as the Son of God and establishes the moral and spiritual foundation for his ministry.

After this, Jesus returned to Galilee and settled in Capernaum, leaving his hometown of Nazareth. He began his public ministry by preaching the same message proclaimed by John the Baptist: the kingdom of heaven is near, and all are called to repentance and faith (Matt. 4:12–17). Early in his ministry, Jesus called his first disciples—Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John—inviting them to follow him and become “fishers of men.”



Jesus then went throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and healing every kind of sickness and disease among the people (4:23–25). His authority in both word and deed quickly attracted large crowds from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan, demonstrating the wide-reaching impact of his ministry. Matthew emphasizes that Jesus’ actions fulfill Old Testament prophecy, revealing him as the promised Messiah who brings both teaching and healing to a world in need.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- How Jesus overcame his temptation by the devil
- The beginning of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee, his message and methods
- The call of Peter, Andrew, James, and John to discipleship

## READ CHAPTER FOUR

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. With what three temptations did Satan challenge Jesus? (3,6,9)
3. How did Jesus respond to each of the three temptations? (4,7,10)
4. Where did Jesus begin His public ministry? Fulfilling what prophecy? (12-16)
5. What was the theme of Jesus’ preaching? (17)
6. Who were the four fishermen called to follow Jesus? (18-22)
7. How did Jesus conduct His ministry in Galilee? (23-24)
8. Where did people come from to follow Jesus? (25)

## CHAPTER FIVE OVERVIEW



Beginning in this section of the Gospel, Matthew records the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7), one of Jesus’ most significant blocks of teaching. A central theme throughout the sermon is the “kingdom of heaven,” first announced in Matthew 4:17 and repeatedly emphasized in the discourse (5:3, 10, 19–20; 6:10, 33; 7:21). The sermon describes the character, ethics, and righteousness expected of those who belong to God’s kingdom.

Jesus opens with the Beatitudes (5:1–12), a series of blessings that describe the attitudes and spiritual qualities of true kingdom citizens. These include humility, mercy, purity of heart, and faithfulness under persecution. The Beatitudes both comfort the faithful and redefine what it means to be truly “blessed” in God’s sight.

He then illustrates the influence of his followers in the world by calling them the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (5:13–16). These metaphors emphasize the preserving, illuminating, and visible role disciples are to have in society. Next, Jesus clarifies his relationship to the

Law and the Prophets (5:17–20). He insists that he has not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it, and he teaches that the righteousness of his disciples must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. This statement sets the stage for the remainder of the chapter.

Jesus then presents a series of six contrasts (5:21–48), often introduced with the formula “You have heard that it was said... but I say to you.” In these teachings, Jesus does not reject the Law itself but deepens and intensifies its ethical demands, moving from mere external compliance to inward transformation of the heart. Issues such as anger, lust, divorce, oath-taking, retaliation, and love for enemies are addressed, illustrating the higher righteousness expected of kingdom citizens.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The meaning of the phrase: ‘the Kingdom of Heaven’
- The blessedness of those in the kingdom, and their relationship to the world
- How our righteousness must surpass that of the Scribes and the Pharisees

## READ CHAPTER FIVE

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What do the beatitudes describe? (3-12)
3. How are citizens of the kingdom to relate to the world? (13-16)
4. What was Jesus’ relation to the Law of Moses? (17-18)
5. What does Jesus expect of those who would be citizens of the kingdom? (20)
6. List the five subjects whose interpretations are contrasted in this chapter (21-48)
7. What phrases illustrate these contrasts? (21-22,27-28,31-32,33-34,38-39,43-44)
8. Then what contrast is being made with these five subjects?

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## CHAPTER SIX OVERVIEW

The Sermon on the Mount continues as Jesus further explains the righteousness expected of those who belong to the kingdom of heaven. In this section (Matt. 6), the focus shifts especially to the inner spiritual life and the proper relationship between human beings and God. Jesus emphasizes that true righteousness must flow from sincere devotion rather than outward display.



He begins by addressing charitable giving (6:1–4), warning his listeners not to practice their righteousness before others in order to be seen by them. Acts of mercy are to be done quietly and sincerely, with the Father—who sees in secret—as the true rewarder.

Jesus then teaches about prayer (6:5–15). He contrasts hypocritical, showy prayer with humble, private communion with God. Within this section he provides the model prayer commonly known as the Lord’s Prayer, which centers on God’s name, kingdom, provision, forgiveness, and deliverance. Jesus also stresses the importance of forgiving others as a condition closely tied to receiving divine forgiveness.

Next, he discusses fasting (6:16–18), again warning against public displays of piety. Like giving and prayer, fasting is to be practiced with sincerity and without seeking human recognition.

Jesus then turns to the subject of material priorities (6:19–24). He teaches his followers to store up treasures in heaven rather than on earth and warns that one cannot serve both God and wealth. This section highlights the necessity of wholehearted devotion to God. Finally, Jesus addresses anxiety and worry about daily needs (6:25–34). Using examples from nature—the birds of the air and the lilies of the field—he teaches trust in God’s providential care. The section culminates in the well-known exhortation to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” with the promise that necessary provisions will follow.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

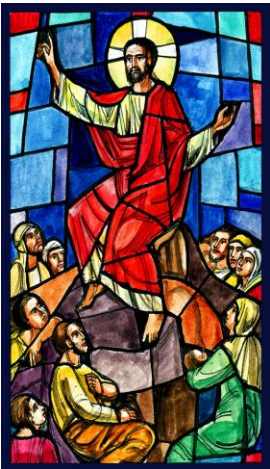
- Performing acts of righteousness in ways that please God
- The danger of materialism and overcoming anxiety about such things
- Making the Kingdom of God and his righteousness our number one priority

## READ CHAPTER SIX

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. As we perform acts of righteousness, what should we avoid? (1-2, 5, 16)
3. How can we ensure that God will reward us for our righteous acts? (4, 6, 18)
4. How else does Jesus teach us to give, pray, and fast? (3, 7, 17)
5. What is the likely purpose of “The Lord’s Prayer”? (9-13)
6. Of things in “The Lord’s Prayer,” on what does Jesus elaborate? (14-15)
7. Where are we to lay up treasure? Why? How? (20, 24; cf. Mt 19:21; 1Ti 6:17-19)
8. What is the key to overcoming anxiety? (25-32)
9. How can we ensure that God will provide what we need? (33)

## CHAPTER SEVEN OVERVIEW



The Sermon on the Mount continues with Jesus addressing kingdom righteousness as it relates to human relationships (Matt. 7). Having focused previously on one's relationship with God, Jesus now turns to attitudes and conduct toward others within the community of the kingdom. He begins with a warning about judging (7:1–6). Jesus cautions against hypocritical and self-righteous judgment while still allowing for moral discernment. His illustration of the “speck” and the “log” emphasizes the need for self-examination before correcting others. The brief saying about not giving what is holy to dogs or casting pearls before swine likely warns against offering sacred truths to those who will only treat them with contempt. Jesus then stresses the importance of persistent prayer and trust in God's goodness (7:7–11). Through the familiar sequence—“ask... seek... knock”—he encourages continual dependence on the Father, assuring his listeners that God gives good gifts to those who ask him.

This section culminates in the so-called Golden Rule (7:12): “Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them.” Matthew presents this principle as a summary of “the Law and the Prophets,” highlighting its central ethical importance. The sermon concludes with a series of solemn exhortations urging listeners to respond decisively to Jesus' teaching. They are called to enter by the narrow gate and walk the difficult path that leads to life (7:13–14), to beware of false prophets who may appear outwardly righteous but are known by their fruits (7:15–20), and to understand that verbal profession alone is insufficient—only those who do the will of the Father will enter the kingdom (7:21–23).

Jesus closes with the parable of the wise and foolish builders (7:24–27), emphasizing the necessity of putting his words into practice. Matthew notes that the crowds were astonished at his teaching because he taught with authority, unlike the scribes (7:28–29). The Sermon on the Mount thus ends with a clear call not merely to hear Jesus' words but to obey them as the true path of kingdom righteousness.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The nature of judging condemned by Jesus
- How Jesus' “Golden Rule” differs from that found in other religions
- The importance of doing the Father's will to being saved

## READ CHAPTER SEVEN

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What sort of judging is Jesus warning against? (1-6)
3. How does Jesus illustrate the need for persistence? (7-11)
4. How does Jesus' “Golden Rule” differ from that found in other religions? (12)
5. Contrast the two “ways” described by Jesus (13-14)
6. How do false prophets operate? How can we identify them? (15-20)
7. Who will not enter the kingdom of heaven? Who will? (21-23)
8. What is the key difference between the wise and foolish listeners? (24-27)
9. Why were the people astonished at Jesus' teaching? (28-29)

## CHAPTER EIGHT OVERVIEW

As Jesus' ministry in Galilee continues, Matthew records a series of miracles and related events that demonstrate Jesus' authority over disease, nature, and demonic powers (Matt. 8). These accounts follow the Sermon on the Mount and illustrate the power that stands behind Jesus' teaching.

After coming down from the mountain, Jesus is approached by a man with leprosy. Moved with compassion, Jesus touches and cleanses him, then instructs him to present himself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded as a testimony (8:1–4). This miracle highlights both Jesus' willingness to touch the unclean and his respect for the Mosaic Law. Entering Capernaum, Jesus next encounters a Roman centurion whose servant is gravely ill.

Impressed by the centurion's extraordinary faith—expressed in his belief that Jesus can heal by word alone—Jesus heals the servant at a distance (8:5–13). Matthew uses this episode to emphasize faith and to foreshadow the inclusion of Gentiles in the kingdom.



Arriving at Peter's house, Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law of a fever. That evening many who were demon-possessed and sick are brought to him, and he heals them all (8:14–17). Matthew explicitly connects these healings to the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that the Servant would bear infirmities and carry diseases (Isa. 53:4). Before crossing the Sea of Galilee to withdraw from the growing crowds, Jesus challenges two would-be disciples, stressing the cost and urgency of true discipleship (8:18–22). These brief encounters underscore that following Jesus requires wholehearted commitment. While crossing the sea, a violent storm arises, and Jesus calms the winds and waves with a word, revealing his authority even over nature (8:23–27). Upon reaching the region of the Gadarenes (or Gerasenes in some manuscripts), he encounters two demon-possessed men living among the tombs. Jesus casts the demons into a herd of pigs, which rush into the sea and perish. The dramatic event leaves the local population fearful, and they urge Jesus to depart from their region (8:28–34). Together, these episodes portray Jesus as the authoritative Messiah whose power extends over sickness, demons, and the forces of nature, while also highlighting the varied responses of faith, fear, and hesitation among those who encounter him.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The nature and purpose of the miracles performed by Jesus
- The cost of discipleship

## READ CHAPTER EIGHT

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. List the five miracles recorded in this chapter (1-4,5-13,14-17,23-27,28-34)
3. Before healing the centurion's servant, what impressed Jesus? (10)
4. Before healing the servant, what did Jesus foretell? (11-12)
5. Who did Jesus heal in Peter's house? What prophecy was fulfilled? (14-17)
6. What two lessons did Jesus teach about discipleship? (19-22)
7. What can we learn about fear and faith, before Jesus calmed the sea? (25-26)
8. Who did the demons acknowledge Jesus to be as He confronted them? (29)

## CHAPTER NINE OVERVIEW



Returning to Capernaum, Jesus' ministry in Galilee continues with a series of healings and teaching episodes that further demonstrate his authority (Matt. 9). The chapter opens with Jesus both forgiving and healing a paralytic who is brought to him by others (9:1–8). When Jesus first pronounces the man's sins forgiven, some scribes accuse him of blasphemy. In response, Jesus heals the paralytic to demonstrate his authority on earth to forgive sins, and the crowd responds with awe.

Jesus then calls Matthew, the tax collector, to follow him as a disciple (9:9). Matthew hosts a meal in his house where many tax collectors and sinners gather with Jesus. This prompts criticism from the Pharisees, who question why Jesus associates with such

people. Jesus responds that he has come not to call the righteous but sinners, emphasizing mercy over ritual sacrifice. The disciples of John the Baptist also question Jesus about fasting, leading him to teach about the newness of his mission using the images of the bridegroom, new cloth, and new wine (9:10–17). While Jesus is speaking, a synagogue ruler (elsewhere named Jairus) asks him to come and restore his daughter to life. On the way, a woman suffering from chronic bleeding touches the fringe of Jesus' garment and is healed because of her faith (9:18–22). Jesus then continues to the ruler's house and raises the girl, demonstrating his authority even over death (9:23–26). After these events, Jesus heals two blind men who persistently call him "Son of David," a messianic title (9:27–31). He then restores speech to a man who is both mute and demon-possessed (9:32–34). While the crowds marvel, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the power of the prince of demons, revealing the growing opposition to his ministry.

Matthew concludes the section by summarizing Jesus' ongoing work throughout the region: teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and affliction (9:35). Moved with compassion for the crowds—whom he describes as harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd—Jesus tells his disciples that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few, urging them to pray for workers to be sent into the harvest (9:36–38).

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- Jesus' power to forgive sins
- His willingness to eat with sinners
- His compassion for the lost

## READ CHAPTER NINE

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. List the five miracles recorded in this chapter (1-8, 18-34)
3. How did Jesus demonstrate His power to forgive sins? (6)
4. Who was called to be a disciple and then gave a feast at his house? (9-10)
5. What two groups confronted Jesus regarding what two issues? (11-17)
6. What explanation did Pharisees give for Jesus' ability to exorcise demons? (34)
7. What moved Jesus to call for prayer for more laborers? (36-38)

# The Gospel of Matthew

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## CHAPTER TEN OVERVIEW

Following his call for prayer that the Lord of the harvest would send out more laborers (Matt. 9:37–38), Jesus formally appoints twelve disciples as his apostles and grants them authority over unclean spirits and the power to heal every disease and affliction (10:1–4). Matthew then lists the twelve by name, highlighting the formation of this foundational leadership group within Jesus’ ministry.

Jesus next sends the Twelve out on a preaching and healing mission throughout the towns of Israel. He instructs them to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand and to demonstrate that message through works of healing and deliverance (10:5–8). In this initial mission—often called the “Limited Commission”—their ministry is directed specifically to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” and they are told not to go among the Gentiles or Samaritans at this stage.

Jesus provides detailed guidance for their mission. They are to travel lightly, depend on the hospitality of those who receive them, and offer peace to worthy households (10:9–15). At the same time, he warns them that their work will bring opposition, persecution, and division, even within families (10:16–23). They are encouraged to remain faithful and fearless, trusting in the Father’s care and in the ultimate value of confessing Christ before others (10:24–33).

The discourse concludes with a strong emphasis on the cost of discipleship and the rewards of faithful service. Jesus teaches that loyalty to him must take precedence over all earthly ties and that those who receive his messengers receive him—and ultimately the One who sent him (10:34–42).

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The twelve men selected to be Jesus’ apostles
- Evangelistic principles utilized by Jesus

## READ CHAPTER TEN

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. List the names of the twelve apostles (2-4)
3. What was to be the range of their preaching and message? (5-7)
4. What miracles were they to perform as they preached? At what charge? (8)
5. How were they to be supported? (9-11)
6. What were they to do if they were not received by a house or city? (14-15)
7. What did Jesus prepare them to expect? (16-26)
8. What were they to fear more than persecution? (28, 33)
9. What did Jesus acknowledge His teachings might do? (34-36)



## CHAPTER ELEVEN OVERVIEW



While the apostles were carrying out their mission, Matthew records that Jesus continued teaching and preaching in the cities of Galilee (Matt. 11:1). During this time, emissaries from John the Baptist—who was then imprisoned—came to Jesus with John’s question: “Are you the Coming One, or shall we look for another?” (11:2–3). Jesus responds by pointing to his works—healings, restorations, and the preaching of good news to the poor—as evidence that the messianic promises are being fulfilled (11:4–6). Rather than giving a simple yes-or-no answer, he invites John’s disciples to interpret his ministry in light of Scripture.

Jesus then speaks to the crowds about John, affirming that John is more than a prophet and identifying him as the promised “messenger” who would prepare the way, echoing the prophecy of Malachi (Mal. 3:1) (11:7–15). He declares that among those born of women none is greater than John, while also noting the unique privileges of those who participate in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus goes on to criticize the inconsistency of the generation that rejected both John and himself (11:16–19). John’s ascetic lifestyle was dismissed as extreme, while Jesus’ more social ministry was condemned as indulgent. Through the illustration of children in the marketplace, Jesus exposes the unwillingness of many to respond rightly to God’s messengers.

He then pronounces woes upon several Galilean cities—especially Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum—for failing to repent despite witnessing his mighty works (11:20–24). Their accountability is portrayed as greater than that of notorious Gentile cities because of the greater light they had received.

The chapter concludes with one of Jesus’ most tender invitations (11:25–30). After thanking the Father for revealing truth to the humble rather than the self-assured, Jesus calls the weary and burdened to come to him for rest. He invites them to take his yoke upon them and learn from him, promising that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist
- Why the day of judgment will be more tolerable for some
- The Savior’s tender invitation to those with troubled souls

## READ CHAPTER ELEVEN

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Why did John send two disciples to Jesus? (2-3)
3. What evidence did Jesus offer to John’s disciples? (4-5)
4. What two Old Testament prophecies did Jesus say that John fulfilled? (10,14)
5. Who did Jesus say would be greater than John the Baptist? (11)
6. How did some people describe John and Jesus? (18-19)
7. Why did Jesus rebuke the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum? (20)
8. To whom did Jesus extend His invitation? What did He expect in return? (28-30)

# The Gospel of Matthew

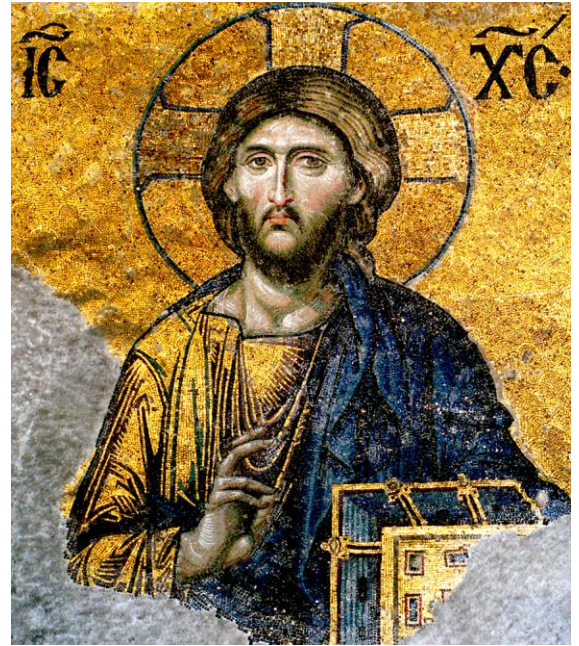
Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## CHAPTER TWELVE OVERVIEW

Opposition to Jesus and his ministry intensified, led especially by the Pharisees, who objected to his conduct on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1–14). The conflict begins when Jesus' disciples pluck grain on the Sabbath, prompting criticism from the Pharisees. Jesus responds by appealing to Scripture and by asserting that “the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” The tension escalates when he heals a man with a withered hand in the synagogue, after which the Pharisees begin plotting how they might destroy him.

In response to the growing hostility, Jesus withdraws from the area, continuing to heal many while urging discretion about his identity. Matthew interprets this quiet, compassionate ministry as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning God's chosen Servant who would minister gently and not quarrel or cry out (12:15–21; cf. Isa. 42:1–4).

Nevertheless, the Pharisees persist in their opposition. After Jesus heals a demon-possessed man who is blind and mute, they accuse him of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons (12:22–24). Jesus refutes their charge with the argument that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand and warns them about the seriousness of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (12:25–32). He then teaches about recognizing people by their fruit and warns of judgment for careless words (12:33–37).



## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- Jesus and the Sabbath day
- The true family of God

## READ CHAPTER TWELVE

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What were Jesus' disciples doing that angered the Pharisees? (1-2)
3. What was Jesus doing that angered the Pharisees? (9-14)
4. What prophecy did Jesus fulfill warning people not to make Him known? (17-21)
5. How did the Pharisees explain Jesus' ability to cast out demons? (24)
6. What was the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? (31-32)
7. For what will one give an account in the Day of Judgment? (36-37)
8. What sign did Jesus say He would give to the Pharisees? (38-40)
9. Who did Jesus identify as His true family? (49-50)

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN OVERVIEW



At this point in the Gospel, Jesus begins teaching extensively in parables about the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13). Matthew records seven kingdom parables in this chapter (13:1–9, 18–33, 36–52). These include the parables of the sower, the weeds, the mustard seed, the leaven, the hidden treasure, the pearl of great value, and the dragnet. Together they describe the present, often hidden, growth of the kingdom and its ultimate separation and judgment.

Jesus' use of parables serves both to reveal and to conceal. When his disciples ask why he teaches in parables, Jesus explains that the "secrets of the kingdom" have been given to them but not to everyone (13:10–17). Those who are spiritually receptive gain deeper understanding, while those who are hardened remain confused. Matthew also notes that Jesus' parabolic teaching fulfills prophetic expectation that he would speak in parables (13:34–35; cf. Ps. 78:2). After addressing the crowds publicly, Jesus often explains the meanings privately to his disciples, emphasizing their role as learners within the kingdom.

Later, returning to his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus teaches in the synagogue. Although the people are initially astonished at his wisdom and mighty works, their familiarity with his family leads them to take offense at him. Because of their unbelief, Matthew records that Jesus did not perform many miracles there (13:53–58). This episode highlights the growing pattern of mixed responses to Jesus' ministry—receptivity among some and rejection among others.)

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The purpose of the parables
- What the parables reveal about the Kingdom

## READ CHAPTER THIRTEEN

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. List the seven parables of Jesus found in this chapter (3, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47)
3. What was Jesus two-fold purpose in teaching in parables? (10-17, 34-35, 51-52)
4. What does the parable of the wheat and tares illustrate? (24-30, 36-43)
5. What do the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven illustrate? (31-34)
6. What about the parables of the hidden treasure and pearl of great price? (44-46)
7. What does the parable of the dragnet illustrate? (47-52)
8. Why was Jesus rejected by many at Nazareth? (53-58)

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN OVERVIEW

News of Jesus' growing ministry eventually reached Herod Antipas the tetrarch, who feared that Jesus might be John the Baptist raised from the dead (Matt. 14:1–2). Matthew then recounts the circumstances of John's execution. John had rebuked Herod for his unlawful marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife. During Herod's birthday celebration, Herodias's daughter pleased Herod with her dance and, prompted by her mother, requested John the Baptist's head. Though reluctant, Herod ordered John's execution, and John's disciples later buried his body and reported the event to Jesus (14:3–12).

Upon hearing of John's death, Jesus withdrew by boat to a solitary place seeking privacy. However, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. Moved with compassion, Jesus healed the sick and then miraculously fed more than five thousand men, besides women and children, using only five loaves and two fish (14:13–21). The abundance of leftovers further emphasized the miraculous nature of the provision.



After dismissing the crowds, Jesus compelled his disciples to cross the Sea of Galilee by boat while he went up on a mountain to pray alone (14:22–23). Later that night, he came to them walking on the sea. When the disciples were terrified, Jesus reassured them. Peter briefly walked toward Jesus on the water but began to sink when his faith faltered. Jesus rescued him and, upon entering the boat, the wind ceased. The disciples responded by worshipping him, confessing, “Truly you are the Son of God” (14:24–33).

Arriving in the region of Gennesaret, the people recognized Jesus and brought all who were sick to him. Matthew records that all who touched the fringe (hem) of his garment were healed (14:34–36), underscoring both the widespread faith of the people and the extraordinary power associated with Jesus' ministry.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The unlawful marriage of Herod that led to John's death
- Two miracles that demonstrate Jesus' power over nature
- The inverse relationship between fear and faith

## READ CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Who did Herod think Jesus was when he heard about Him? (1-2)
3. What led to Herod's arrest of John the Baptist? (3-4)
4. How was Herod tricked to have John beheaded? (6-10)
5. When Jesus heard of John's death, what did He try to do? What happened? (13)
6. What prompted Jesus to heal the sick and feed the hungry? (14-15)
7. How many were fed, and with what? (16-21)
8. As Jesus walked on the sea, what led to Peter sinking? (25-31)
9. How were the sick in the land of Gennesaret healed? (34-36)



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN OVERVIEW

Religious leaders from Jerusalem confronted Jesus about his disciples' failure to observe certain ceremonial traditions, such as handwashing before eating (Matt. 15:1–2). Jesus responded by challenging the Pharisees and scribes, warning against placing human traditions above God's commandments. He emphasized that true moral defilement does not come from what enters the mouth, but from the thoughts and actions of the heart (15:3–20). This teaching highlights the kingdom principle that internal righteousness is more important than external ritual observance.

Following this confrontation, Jesus traveled to the region of Tyre and Sidon, where a Canaanite woman approached him, pleading for her demon-possessed daughter to be healed (15:21–28). Despite initially testing her faith with the famous metaphor about children and dogs, Jesus commended her persistent faith and granted her request, illustrating that faith—not ethnicity—determines access to God's power.

Jesus then returned to the vicinity of Galilee and went up a mountain near the Sea of Galilee, where large crowds gathered. There, he healed many who were sick and afflicted (15:29–31). Later, he miraculously fed four thousand men, besides women and children, using seven loaves and a few small fish, leaving several baskets of leftovers (15:32–38). Afterward, he sent the crowds away and sailed across the Sea of Galilee to the region of Magdala, located on the west coast (15:39), continuing his ministry of teaching, healing, and demonstrating the compassion and authority of the kingdom.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The danger of traditions and vain worship
- That which causes true moral defilement

## READ CHAPTER FIFTEEN

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What tradition of the elders had the disciples of Jesus transgressed? (1-2)
3. According to Jesus, when do traditions of men become wrong? (3-9)
4. When does worship become vain? (9)
5. What constitutes true moral defilement? (11, 16-20)
6. What will happen to plants (religions, doctrines) not started by God? (13)
7. How did Jesus describe the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem? (14)
8. What moved Jesus to grant the Canaanite woman's request? (28)
9. With what did Jesus feed more than 4000 people? (34-38)

# The Gospel of Matthew

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN OVERVIEW

The Pharisees and Sadducees approached Jesus, demanding a miraculous sign to prove his authority (Matt. 16:1–4). In response, Jesus exposed their hypocrisy, declaring that no sign would be given to them except the sign of Jonah, which points forward to his death and resurrection after three days (16:4; cf. 12:38–40). He rebuked them for their spiritual blindness and inability to discern the times.

Jesus then warned his disciples to beware of the “leaven” of the Pharisees and Sadducees (16:5–12). Using the metaphor of leaven, he cautioned them against the corrupting influence of hypocrisy, legalism, and false teaching, emphasizing the need for discernment and spiritual vigilance.

At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus shifted the focus to his identity. He asked his disciples who people were saying he was, and then who they themselves believed him to be (16:13–15). Peter confessed that Jesus was “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus commended Peter for this revelation, attributing it to divine insight, and declared that Peter would play a foundational role in building the church (16:16–18). Immediately afterward, however, Jesus instructed the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ, as the timing of his messianic revelation had not yet come (16:19–20).

Continuing his teaching, Jesus began to prepare his disciples for the reality of his mission. He spoke plainly about his forthcoming suffering, death, and resurrection (16:21), and then explained the cost of discipleship: those who wish to follow him must deny themselves, take up their cross, and be willing to lose their life for his sake (16:24–26). He also pointed forward to his return in glory, teaching that the faithful will share in the reward of the kingdom of heaven (16:27–28). This section emphasizes both the identity of Jesus as Messiah and the serious demands of following him.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The confession of Peter and Jesus’ response
- The cost of discipleship

## READ CHAPTER SIXTEEN

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. When asked for a sign, what sign did Jesus say would be given? (1-4)
3. When Jesus warned of leaven, what did He mean? (5-12)
4. Who did Peter confess Jesus to be? (16)
5. What did Jesus say He would build? Upon what would it be built? (18)
6. What did Jesus promise Peter? Was it limited to him? (19; cf. Mt 18:18)
7. What did Jesus begin to predict at that time? (21)
8. What did Jesus demand of His disciples? How valuable is one’s soul? (24, 26)
9. What promise did Jesus make regarding His kingdom? (28)





## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN OVERVIEW

The events in this chapter (Matt. 17) begin with the remarkable Transfiguration of Jesus on a high mountain. In the presence of Peter, James, and John, Jesus' appearance is transformed: his face shines like the sun, and his clothes become dazzlingly white. Moses and Elijah appear and converse with him, symbolizing the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (17:1–13). A voice from heaven declares, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him!" Peter later references this event in his second epistle, highlighting its confirmatory role for the disciples (2 Peter 1:16–18). The Transfiguration emphasizes Jesus' divine glory and foreshadows his resurrection.

After descending the mountain, Jesus encounters a boy possessed by a demon. When the disciples are unable to heal him, Jesus rebukes the unclean spirit and restores the boy, attributing the disciples' failure to a lack of faith and the necessity of prayer (17:14–21). This miracle reinforces the importance of faith and reliance on God in ministry.

Returning to Galilee, Jesus once more predicts his suffering, death, and resurrection to his disciples, emphasizing the necessity of his forthcoming sacrifice for the redemption of humanity (17:22–23). These repeated predictions underscore the seriousness of his mission and prepare the disciples for the reality of the cross.

Finally, upon arriving in Capernaum, Jesus addresses a practical question regarding the temple tax. When questioned about whether he and Peter should pay it, Jesus instructs Peter to catch a fish, from whose mouth the necessary coin will be found to pay the tax for both of them (17:24–27). This incident demonstrates Jesus' divine provision while subtly affirming his identity as the Son of God, who is not obligated in the same way as ordinary men.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The significance of the transfiguration
- The reason for the failure of a miracle

## READ CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. When was Jesus transfigured on the mount? (1)
3. Who appeared when Jesus was transfigured? What might they represent? (3)
4. What did the voice from the cloud say about Jesus? What might it indicate? (5)
5. When were the disciples to tell others what they had seen? (9)
6. Who did Jesus say had come? Who had fulfilled that prophecy? (10-13)
7. Why were the disciples unable to heal the demon-possessed boy? (19-21)
8. What did Jesus predict for the second time to His disciples? (22-23)
9. Did Jesus teach His disciples to pay taxes? How did He pay the tax? (24-27)

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN OVERVIEW

In this chapter (Matt. 18), Jesus responds to a question from his disciples about greatness in the kingdom of heaven. He begins by teaching the necessity of childlike humility, explaining that those who humble themselves like little children are the greatest in the kingdom (18:1–4). Jesus also warns about the seriousness of causing others to stumble, emphasizing that it is better to remove anything that leads to sin than to endure eternal harm (18:5–9).

He then illustrates God’s concern for the lost with the parable of the lost sheep (18:10–14). In this story, a shepherd leaves the ninety-nine sheep to search for one that has gone astray, symbolizing the joy in heaven over a sinner who repents. The parable underscores God’s compassionate pursuit of those who have wandered from the truth.



Jesus continues with practical instructions for maintaining community within the church. He explains how to confront a brother who sins, first privately, then with witnesses, and finally before the church if necessary, always aiming for repentance and restoration (18:15–20). This teaching emphasizes accountability, reconciliation, and the authority of communal discernment.

Finally, Jesus stresses the necessity of forgiveness in relationships. He teaches that God’s forgiveness toward us should inspire reciprocal forgiveness, illustrating this principle with the parable of the unforgiving servant (18:21–35). In the parable, a servant forgiven a massive debt by his master refuses to forgive a fellow servant a small debt, resulting in severe punishment. The story reinforces that persistent, wholehearted forgiveness is a defining mark of kingdom living.

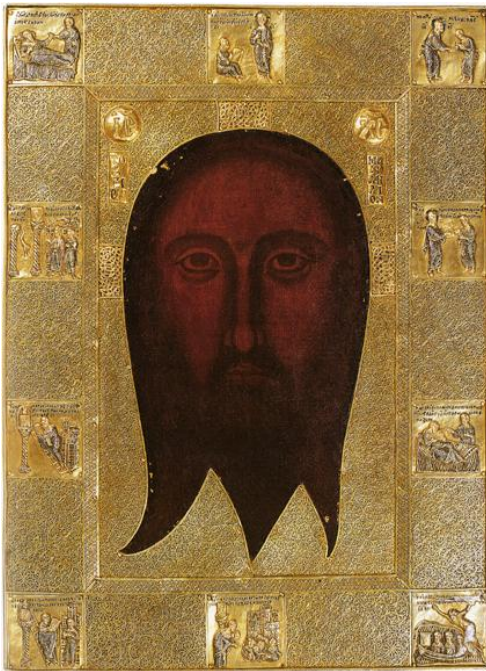
## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The need for humility, and the concern for others in the kingdom
- Dealing with a sinning brother, and the importance of forgiveness

## READ CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Who will be greatest in the kingdom of heaven? (1-5)
3. How old was the little child that Jesus used as an example? (6)
4. What types of offenses does Jesus warn against? (6-9)
5. What parable illustrates the Father’s concern for the lost? (12-14)
6. In dealing with a sinning brother, what steps should be taken? (15-18)
7. What increases the likelihood that God will answer prayer? (19-20)
8. How many times should we be willing to forgive a brother? (21-22)
9. What grave warning is in the parable of the unforgiving servant? (33)



## CHAPTER NINETEEN OVERVIEW

In this chapter (Matt. 19), Jesus responds to another testing question from the Pharisees, this time regarding marriage and divorce. He explains that marriage is a divine union, ordained from creation, and that divorce is only permitted in cases of marital unfaithfulness (19:1–12). Jesus also addresses the calling of celibacy for the sake of the kingdom, acknowledging that some may choose this path voluntarily to devote themselves fully to God. His teaching emphasizes the sanctity of marriage and the higher purpose of self-denial for kingdom service.

Following this, people brought little children to Jesus so that he might bless them. The disciples initially rebuked them, but Jesus welcomed the children, saying, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (19:13–15). This passage highlights the importance of humility, receptivity, and dependence on God as foundational traits for entering the kingdom.

Later, a rich young ruler approached Jesus, asking what he must do to obtain eternal life (19:16–22). After affirming the commandments, Jesus challenges him to sell his possessions, give to the poor, and follow him. The young man went away sorrowful, unwilling to part with his wealth, which provided an opportunity for Jesus to teach his disciples about the difficulty of the wealthy entering the kingdom. He explained that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God, emphasizing that reliance on God rather than material wealth is essential (19:23–30). This teaching underscores the radical reorientation of priorities required of those who would follow Christ.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- Jesus’ teachings related to marriage, divorce, and celibacy
- Possessions and rewards in reference to the kingdom of God

## READ CHAPTER NINETEEN

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Who is it that joins a man and woman in marriage? (6)
3. What exception does Jesus allow for divorce? Otherwise, what occurs? (9)
4. What price might be necessary for some to enter the kingdom of heaven? (12)
5. What did Jesus say about little children? (14)
6. What did Jesus counsel the rich young ruler? (17, 21)
7. What did Jesus say about being rich and the kingdom of heaven? (23-24)
8. What did Jesus promise to His apostles who left all to follow Him? (27-28)
9. What did Jesus promise to all willing to leave much to follow Him (29-30)

# The Gospel of Matthew

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## CHAPTER TWENTY OVERVIEW

Continuing his teaching in response to Peter's question about the rewards for following him (Matt. 20:1–16), Jesus told the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. In this story, a landowner hires workers at different times of the day but pays them all the same wage, illustrating God's generosity and the kingdom principle that the last will be first, and the first last. The parable emphasizes God's sovereign grace and challenges human notions of fairness in the kingdom of heaven.



As Jesus and his disciples journeyed toward Jerusalem, he predicted his suffering, death, and resurrection for a third time (20:17–19). This prediction underscores the inevitability of the cross and prepares the disciples for the coming events, emphasizing that true discipleship involves self-sacrifice and participation in his mission.

Along the way, the mother of James and John approached Jesus, requesting special positions of honor for her sons in his kingdom. Jesus responded that such authority is not his to grant, but belongs to the Father. He used the opportunity to teach all his disciples that greatness in the kingdom is measured not by status or privilege but by humble service and self-giving: “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first must be your slave” (20:20–28). This teaching reinforces the counter-cultural values of the kingdom of heaven.

After leaving Jericho, Jesus encountered two blind men sitting by the roadside. They persistently called out to him, refusing to be silenced by the crowd's rebukes. Moved with compassion, Jesus restored their sight, demonstrating both his power and the importance of persistent faith (20:29–34). This healing further highlights the accessibility of God's grace to those who earnestly seek him.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

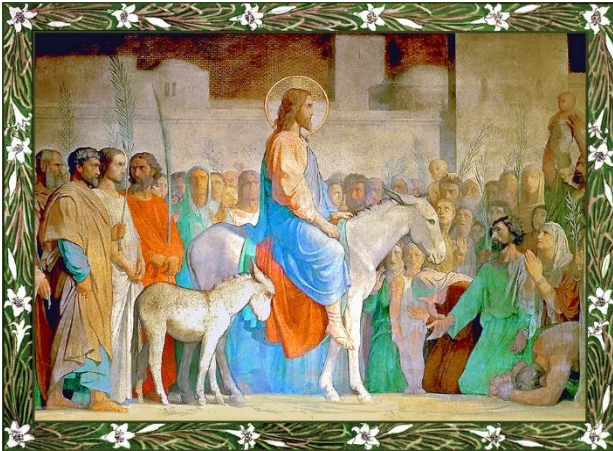
- Should one delay in their obedience to the gospel?
- The danger of a mercenary spirit
- The importance of humble service

## READ CHAPTER TWENTY

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Whose question had prompted the telling of the parable of the laborers? (1)
3. What should not be deduced from this parable? Why? (1-10)
4. What is the main point of the parable of the laborers? (11-16)
5. List the three passages in which Jesus foretold his death and resurrection?
6. Who asked Jesus for a privileged position in his kingdom? (20-21)
7. What quality is considered great in the kingdom? (25-28)
8. What commendable spirit did the two blind men manifest? (30-31)

## CHAPTER TWENTYONE OVERVIEW



Jesus began his final week before the crucifixion with a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, an event celebrated in the Gospel as fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy of the coming king riding on a donkey (Matt. 21:1–11). Crowds welcomed him with palm branches, shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David!" as they laid cloaks and branches on the road, recognizing him as the promised Messiah. This public declaration set the stage for the climactic events of his final week.

Following this, Jesus entered the temple and drove out the moneychangers and those selling animals for sacrifice (21:12–17). He overturned their tables and declared, "My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you make it a den of robbers." This dramatic act signaled his authority over the temple and his zeal for true

worship. He also healed the blind and the lame who came to the temple, fulfilling prophecy and further demonstrating his messianic power.

On the way back, Jesus cursed a barren fig tree, using it as a vivid object lesson to illustrate the consequences of spiritual barrenness and the need for fruitful faith (21:18–22). The fig tree symbolically represented Israel and the temple establishment, highlighting the urgency of repentance.

Soon, Jesus' authority was challenged by the religious leaders, who questioned by what power he acted (21:23–27). In response, Jesus told the parable of the two sons, emphasizing obedience over mere words (21:28–32), and the parable of the wicked vinedressers, which depicted the leaders' rejection of God's messengers and foretold judgment (21:33–46). The religious leaders understood these parables to be directed against them, revealing both their hardened hearts and the prophetic critique inherent in Jesus' teaching.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- Significance of the triumphal entry, cleansing the temple, cursing the fig tree
- The conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYONE

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem? (4-5)
3. Why was Jesus angry at the merchandising going on in the temple? (13)
4. Why were the religious leaders angry with Jesus? (15)
5. What might the cursing of the barren fig tree signify? (19)
6. Where does authority in religion come from? (25)
7. Who did the two sons in the parable represent? (28-32)
8. What prophecy foretold that religious leaders would reject Jesus? (42)

## CHAPTER TWENTYTWO OVERVIEW

Jesus continued to teach in parables directed toward the religious leaders, including the parable of the wedding feast (Matt. 22:1–14). In this story, a king invites guests to his son’s wedding, but many refuse to come, and some mistreat the king’s servants. Ultimately, others are invited in their place, but one man is cast out for not wearing proper wedding garments. The parable symbolizes God’s invitation to the kingdom, the judgment of those who reject it, and the necessity of proper preparation and obedience. The religious leaders understood that this message was directed against them, exposing their unwillingness to accept God’s invitation.



Following this, various groups attempted to entrap Jesus with questions. First, the Pharisees and Herodians asked whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar (22:15–22). Jesus, perceiving their hypocrisy, replied, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s,” confounding them and avoiding the trap. Next, the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, presented a question about a woman who had seven husbands in life. Jesus responded by teaching that in the resurrection people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven (22:23–33), demonstrating God’s power over life and death and correcting their misunderstanding of the Scriptures.

Finally, a lawyer tested Jesus with the question, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?” (22:36). Jesus answered by summarizing the Law in two foundational commandments: love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself (22:37–40). His response silenced all opposition. To further challenge the leaders, Jesus asked them about the Messiah, quoting Psalm 110:1, “How is it then that David calls him ‘Lord’ if he is his son?” (22:41–46). The religious leaders were unable to answer, leaving them confounded by his wisdom and authority.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- Many are called, but few are chosen
- Paying taxes, the resurrection, and the greatest commandment
- How Christ is both David’s son and David’s Lord

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What two groups are depicted in the parable of the wedding feast? (3, 11)
3. How did Pharisees and Herodians try to entangle Jesus in His talk? (15-17)
4. What did Jesus reply that prompted them to marvel? (21-22)
5. How did Sadducees try to trip Jesus? (23-28)
6. What two-fold answer did Jesus give the Sadducees? (29-32)
7. What were the two greatest commandments in the Law? (37-38)
8. How can Christ be both David’s son and David’s Lord? (45)



## CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE OVERVIEW

With the religious leaders silenced by their inability to trap him with questions, Jesus turned his attention to openly rebuking the scribes and Pharisees. In a series of pointed and severe criticisms often called the “Woes of the Pharisees” (Matt. 23:1–36), he denounced their hypocrisy, pride, and legalism. Jesus condemned them for performing religious duties to be seen by others while neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness, for burdening the people with rules they themselves did not keep, and for their outward display of piety that masked inner corruption. Each woe exposed the spiritual blindness and moral failings of these leaders, highlighting the contrast between true righteousness and empty religiosity.

Despite the intensity of his condemnation, Jesus’ care for the people of Jerusalem remained evident. He expressed deep sorrow over the city, lamenting that its inhabitants had resisted God’s messengers and would face the consequences of rejecting the kingdom: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you! How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing” (23:37–39). This lament demonstrates that Jesus’ rebuke was motivated not by hatred but by love and sorrow over the people’s spiritual lostness and the impending judgment that would come upon the city.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees
- Jesus’ grief over the apostasy and fall of Jerusalem

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What does Jesus tell people to do in regards to the scribes and Pharisees? (3)
3. List some things for which Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees (3-7)
4. What did Jesus tell His disciples not to do? Why? (8-11)
5. List the reasons for the eight woes expressed by Jesus (13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, and 29)
6. What did Jesus say was the condition of Jerusalem? (38)

# The Gospel of Matthew

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR OVERVIEW

This chapter (Matt. 24) records the beginning of the Olivet Discourse, delivered by Jesus on the Mount of Olives in response to his disciples' questions following his prediction of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (24:1–3). The disciples asked when the temple would be destroyed and what signs would indicate his coming and the end of the age. Jesus responds with a detailed prophetic teaching addressing both immediate and future events.

Much of the discourse focuses on the destruction of Jerusalem, which historically occurred in 70 A.D. when the Roman army besieged the city and destroyed the temple (24:4–35). Jesus warns of false messiahs, wars, famines, earthquakes, and persecution, providing signs that will precede these events. He emphasizes vigilance, endurance, and faithfulness, urging the disciples to remain alert and spiritually prepared.

At the same time, many scholars and interpreters see in this discourse references that extend beyond 70 A.D., pointing to the second coming of Christ and the final judgment (24:36–51). These passages address the ultimate fulfillment of God's kingdom, stressing that no one knows the exact day or hour of the Son of Man's return, only the Father. The discourse combines historical and eschatological elements, highlighting the need for discernment, readiness, and faithful living while awaiting God's ultimate plan.



## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The fulfillment of events foretold by Jesus in this chapter
- The importance of being prepared and productive

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What questions were prompted by Jesus' prediction? (3)
3. What did Jesus say would not be the sign? (4-13)
4. What would happen before the "end" would come? (14)
5. What would be the sign for those in Judea to flee? (15-16; cf. Lk 21:20-21)
6. What would happen immediately after the tribulation of those days? (29-31)
7. Where else is language like this used to describe judgment upon a nation?
8. What would not pass away before these things would be fulfilled? (34)
9. Why did Jesus stress the importance of preparation and productivity? (36-51)



## CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE OVERVIEW

Jesus continued his teaching on the Mount of Olives with two parables emphasizing vigilance, preparedness, and faithful stewardship in the kingdom of heaven.

The first parable is that of the wise and foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1–13). Ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom: five were wise and brought extra oil for their lamps, while five were foolish and did not. When the bridegroom arrived, the wise virgins were ready and entered the wedding banquet, but the foolish were shut out. Jesus concludes the parable by urging his disciples to “watch therefore, for you know neither

the day nor the hour,” highlighting the need for constant readiness for his coming.

The second parable is that of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30). A master entrusts his servants with varying amounts of money (talents) before going on a journey. Upon his return, he rewards the faithful servants who invested and multiplied their talents, while the servant who hid his talent out of fear is rebuked and cast out. This parable teaches the importance of faithful and productive stewardship, using one’s gifts, opportunities, and responsibilities for God’s kingdom.

Jesus concluded the discourse by describing the final judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:31–46). The Son of Man will come in glory, separating people as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. Those who showed compassion and served “the least of these” are welcomed into eternal life, while those who ignored their needs face punishment. This teaching underscores that kingdom living is measured by love, mercy, and active service to others, demonstrating faith in tangible ways.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The importance of being prepared and productive
- The basis upon which nations are to be judged

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What parable illustrates the importance of being prepared? (1-13)
3. Why is it imperative that one always be prepared? (13)
4. Which “coming” is Jesus talking about? (13)
5. What parable illustrates the importance of being productive? (14-30)
6. Based on this parable, what does Jesus expect of His disciples? (15, 21, 26-27)
7. In the judgment depicted, who is being judged? On what basis are they judged? (32, 40, 45)
8. Where is there a similar judgment portrayed in the Old Testament?
9. Even if such “judgments” are limited to the nations, what do they foreshadow?
10. How are punishment and reward described in this chapter? (34, 41, 46)

# The Gospel of Matthew

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

## CHAPTER TWENTYSIX OVERVIEW

This lengthy chapter (Matt. 26) records the critical events leading up to Jesus' arrest and trial. The chapter begins with the religious leaders' plot to kill Jesus, as they conspire to arrest him secretly (26:1–5, 14–16). Their fear of public uproar delays their plan, but Judas Iscariot agrees to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

Before these events unfold, Mary anoints Jesus at Bethany with expensive perfume, an act of devotion and foreshadowing of his burial (26:6–13). Jesus defends her, noting that her act will be remembered wherever the gospel is preached.

The narrative then turns to the Last Supper (26:17–35), during which Jesus celebrates the Passover with his disciples and institutes the Lord's Supper, giving bread and wine as symbols of his body and blood, establishing a lasting covenant. During this meal, he foretells his betrayal by Judas and Peter's denial, setting the stage for the trials to come.

After the supper, Jesus leads his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray (26:36–46). There he experiences deep anguish, praying for the Father's will to be done, and instructs the disciples to watch and pray, though they repeatedly fall asleep.

Judas arrives with a crowd, betrays Jesus with a kiss, and Jesus is arrested (26:47–56). He is taken before Caiaphas, the high priest, and the council, where he is accused and condemned based on false testimonies (26:57–68).

Finally, Peter denies knowing Jesus three times, as Jesus had predicted (26:69–75). The chapter closes with Peter's bitter remorse, highlighting both human weakness and the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecies.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The events leading to the arrest of Jesus
- The institution of the Lord's supper
- Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Who plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him? (3-4)
3. What did Jesus say would be done for Mary who anointed Him? (13)
4. For how much did Judas agree with the chief priests to betray Jesus? (14-15)
5. What did Jesus institute while eating the Passover? (26-28; cf. 1Co 11:17-34)
6. What did Jesus predict would happen that night? (31-35)
7. What did Jesus pray for three times in the garden of Gethsemane (39, 42, 44)
8. What claim was Jesus willing to accept at His trial? (63-64)
9. After Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, what did he do? (75)





## CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN OVERVIEW

In this chapter (Matt. 27), the narrative continues with the culmination of the plot against Jesus. Prevented by Jewish law from carrying out the death penalty, the religious leaders brought Jesus to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, seeking a sentence of crucifixion (27:1–2, 11–31). Pilate, despite finding no fault in Jesus, ultimately gave in to the crowd's pressure and condemned him to be crucified. Jesus was mocked, beaten, and led away to Golgotha to be executed alongside two criminals.

Meanwhile, Judas Iscariot, stricken with remorse over his betrayal, returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders. Unable to reconcile

his actions, he hanged himself (27:3–10).

At Golgotha, Jesus was crucified, and after approximately six hours on the cross, he gave up his spirit (27:32–56). During this time, Matthew records supernatural events, including darkness over the land, the temple veil tearing, and an earthquake, which testified to the cosmic significance of his death. The Roman centurion and those present recognized Jesus' unique identity, affirming, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy disciple, requested Jesus' body from Pilate, wrapped it in clean linen, and laid it in his own new tomb (27:57–61). The chief priests and Pharisees, concerned that Jesus' disciples might steal the body and claim resurrection, secured the tomb with Roman guards and a seal (27:62–66). This preparation sets the stage for the resurrection, emphasizing both the historical reality of the burial and the efforts to prevent any tampering.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The events leading to the crucifixion
- The abuse Jesus suffered prior to his actual death

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

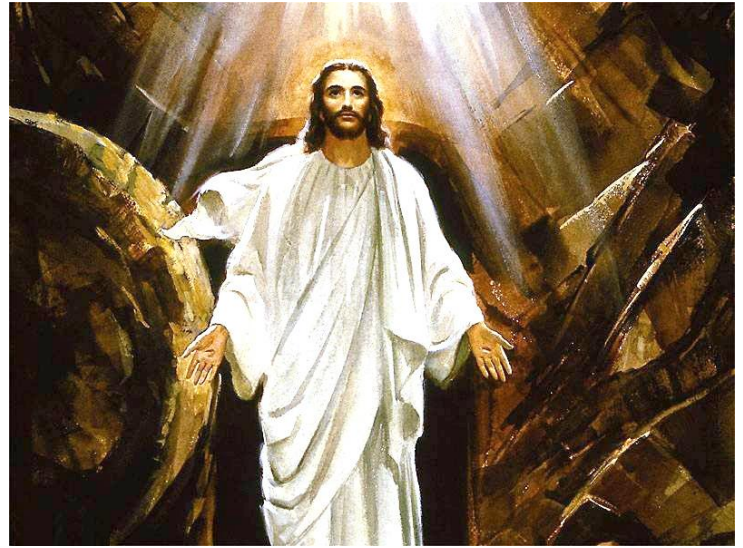
### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. What did Judas do when he realized Jesus was condemned? (3-5)
3. What did Jesus confess to Pilate? (11)
4. Who was released instead of Jesus? (15-26)
5. What abuse did the Roman soldiers inflict on Jesus? (26, 28-31)
6. Who helped bear Jesus' cross? Where was Jesus crucified? (32-33)
7. Who blasphemed and mocked Jesus as He hung on the cross? (39)
8. What did the guards confess after seeing the events following Jesus' death? (54)
9. Where was Jesus buried? Who saw where He was buried? (57-61)
10. Why was a Roman guard placed at the tomb of Jesus? (62-66)

## CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT OVERVIEW

On the first day of the week following his crucifixion, Jesus rose from the dead, fulfilling his prophecy and confirming his victory over sin and death (Matt. 28:1–10). The first witnesses were Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary,” who came to the tomb at dawn. They encountered an angel who rolled back the stone and announced that Jesus had risen. Overjoyed and afraid, they ran to tell the disciples, but on the way, they met the risen Jesus himself, who reaffirmed the angel’s message and instructed them to inform the disciples to go to Galilee, where they would see him.

Meanwhile, the chief priests and elders, concerned that the resurrection might inspire claims of Jesus’ continuing influence, bribed the Roman soldiers guarding the tomb to spread a false report: that the disciples had stolen the body while they slept (28:11–15). This attempt to suppress the truth only underscores the historic reality and significance of the resurrection.



When the disciples gathered in Galilee, as Jesus had instructed, he met with them on a mountain. There, he gave them the Great Commission, charging them to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything he had commanded (28:16–20). He concluded with the promise, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” This final instruction emphasizes the universal scope of the gospel and the enduring presence of Christ with his followers.

## POINTS TO PONDER WHILE READING

- The circumstances of Jesus’ resurrection
- The details of the Great Commission

## READ CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main points of this chapter?
2. Who came to the tomb at dawn on the first day of the week? (1)
3. What had happened by the time they got there? (2)
4. What were the two women instructed by the angel to do? (7)
5. Who appeared to the two women on their way to the disciples? (9-10)
6. What makes the soldiers’ lie about the body of Jesus fatally flawed? (13)
7. When the disciples saw Jesus in Galilee, what was their reaction? (16-17)
8. What did Jesus claim had been given to Him? (18)
9. What did Jesus charge His disciples to do? What did that involve? (19-20)
10. What did Jesus promise His disciples? (20)