

# The Gospel of Matthew

## Booklet 01 - Three Lessons: Birth and Infancy

**Lesson 1 - Matthew 1: 17-25**

**Lesson 2 - Matthew 2: 1-12**

**Lesson 3 - Matthew 2: 13-23**



**Flight to Egypt**

## International ESL/Bible Lessons Intermediate to Advanced Level

**Glenda Reece**  
**Glenda@eslts.com**

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Much of the material in these lessons come from *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I*, by William Barclay. Daily Study Bible Series. Other content comes from Bible Commentaries, Dictionaries and on-line sources. All pictures are from Google Images.

# The Gospel Of Matthew

## Section One

### Description of sections

Material for these sections is from William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew: The Daily Study Bible Series*. The Westminster Press. Philadelphia. 1975

**Section One** from Chapters 1-4 — The Genealogy of Jesus, The Birth Story, The John the Baptist Sequences, Baptism and Temptation of Jesus.

**Section Two** from Chapters 5-7 — The Sermon on the Mount, or the Teachings of Jesus. These are gathered into a group from all the time of Jesus's ministry. These are the *words* of Jesus.

**Section Three** from Chapters 8-28 — The actions or *doings* of Jesus.

## Matthew – Introduction and Geneology

- First book in the New Testament. It is the first of the Four Gospels, *Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*.
- *Matthew, Mark and Luke* are known as the *Synoptic Gospels*. *Synoptic* is a Greek word that means *see together* or *able to be seen together*. Each of these three books of the NT (New Testament) gives an account of the same events in Jesus' life.
- Many of the stories in the three accounts are so similar or exactly alike that scholars conclude that either all three are drawing their material from a common source, or that two of them must be based on the third.
- *Mark* is believed to be the earliest of the Gospels. *Matthew* and *Luke* are using *Mark* as a basis.
- *Mark* can be divided into 105 sections. Of these sections, 93 occur in *Matthew* and 81 in *Luke*. Of *mark's* 105 sections only four do not occur either in *Matthew* or *Luke*.
- *Matthew* has 1068 verses and *Luke* has 1149 verses, and between them, they have taken 582 of *Mark's* 678 verses. Material that *Matthew* takes from *Mark* deal almost entirely with the events of Jesus did in his life. The remainder of what *Matthew* writes tells us what Jesus said in his life. These extra verses and teachings in *Matthew and Luke* come from a

common source of the sayings of Jesus that we no longer have. Scholars call this book Q, from the German word *Quelle* which means source. Scholars and teachers think this must have been the first handbook of the teachings of Jesus.

- *Matthew the Apostle* did not write the book of *Matthew*. We don't know a lot about *Matthew*, but we do know he was a tax gatherer or collector. He must have been a bitterly hated man, for the Jews hated those who entered the civil service of the Roman conquerors. However, *Matthew the Apostle* was educated and could read and write well.
- *Matthew* was written by a Jew to convince the Jews that Christ was the Messiah. He wanted to demonstrate that all the prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in Jesus, and that, therefore, he must be the Messiah. He used the phrase, "This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet." This phrase occurs 16 times in *Matthew*.
- *Matthew* was written to show that the Jewish Law was to be fulfilled, not destroyed. The Jesus followers were not to break the law but to keep it. However, *Matthew* condemns the Pharisees and Scribes very sternly.
- *Matthew* was very interested in the church. It is the only gospel that uses that word. By the time *Matthew* came to be written, the church had become a great organization and institution. It

was the dominant factor in the life of the Christian.

- *Matthew* talks a lot about the Second Coming of Christ, the end of the world, and the judgment. *Matthew 24* gives a full account of that.
- *Matthew* is the teaching Gospel. He systematically teaches
  1. The Sermon on the Mount (5-7)
  2. The Duties of the Leaders of the Kingdom (10)
  3. The Parables of the Kingdom (13)
  4. Greatness and Forgiveness of the Kingdom (18)
  5. The Coming of the King (24-25)
- *Matthew* dominating idea is that of Jesus as King. He begins with the genealogy, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and even the mockery of the crown on Jesus' head during the Crucifixion.
- *Begin the Genealogy Matthew 1-17.*

All material in this introduction is taken from: *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 1, The Daily Study Bible Series* by William Barclay.

# **The Gospel Of Matthew**

## **Lesson 1 - Matthew 1:17-25 Joseph's Decision**

*Quickly look at this in the NIV Bible.*

<sup>17</sup> Thus there were fourteen generations in all / from Abraham to David, / fourteen from David / to the exile to Babylon, / and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

### **Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son**

<sup>18</sup> This is how the birth of Jesus / the Messiah came about: / His mother / Mary / was pledged to be married to Joseph, / but before they came together, / she was found to be pregnant / through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> / Because Joseph / her husband / was faithful to the law, / and yet / did not want to expose her to public disgrace, / he had in mind / to divorce her quietly.

<sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, / an angel of the Lord appeared to him / in a dream / and said, / "Joseph / son of David, / do not be afraid to take Mary home / as your wife, / because what is conceived in her / is from the Holy Spirit. / <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, / and you are to give him the name Jesus, / because he will save his people / from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place / to fulfill what the Lord had said / through the prophet: / <sup>23</sup> "The virgin will conceive /

and give birth to a son, / and they will call him Immanuel” / which means “God with us”. (Isaiah 7:14)

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, / he did / what the angel of the Lord had commanded him / and took Mary home as his wife. / <sup>25</sup> But he did not consummate their marriage / until she gave birth to a son. / And he gave him the name Jesus

### ***Vocabulary***

1. Exile: Refugee. To banish someone from home or country.  
Expatriate. Deportee. Outcast.
2. Messiah: Liberator. Defender. Savior. Jesus Christ.
3. Pledged: Promised. Guaranteed. Covenanted.
4. Pregnant: Expectant. Carrying a child in the body. Prenatal.
5. To Expose: Put someone in an unprotected situation. To reveal someone's wrongdoings.
6. Disgrace: Shame. Dishonor.
7. To conceive: Imagine. Create. (*I can't conceive of that happening.*)  
Become pregnant.
8. Consummate: 1. Fulfill relationship through sex. 2. Perfect.  
Achieve something. *He is the consummate violinist.*



## **Questions**

1. Matthew very carefully sets up the genealogies. What is he trying to show the readers?
2. Joseph had the power of life and death over Mary. Why do you think he first made the decision to quietly divorce her?
3. How do you think you would react if an angel came with a message to you?
4. Who is Joseph? What do we know of him?

## **Notes:**

1. Marriage was very serious and binding in the eyes of the Jews. There were three steps to the process. The first was an engagement. That contract of engagement was decided upon by the parents, often when the two were just children. Then the betrothal came and it was often the ratification of the engagement. If, at that time, one or the other decided to stop the process, it would be ended. However, if the betrothal continued, it was binding, and they would be called man and wife. The only way to break the betrothal was a divorce. However, during the year, they did not live as man and wife. That happened at the actual marriage ceremony.
2. Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Joshua* which meant *Jehovah is salvation*. (Jehovah is one of the names of God.)

3. Barclay says: *This passage tells us how Jesus was born by the action of the Holy Spirit. It tells us of what we call the Virgin Birth. This is a doctrine which presents us with many difficulties; and our Church does not compel us to accept it in the literal and the physical sense. This is one of the doctrines on which the Church says we have the full liberty to come to our own conclusion. At the moment we are concerned only to find out what this means to us.*
4. The stress in this passage is no so much on the woman as on the Holy Spirit. *According to the Jewish idea, the Holy Spirit was the person who brought God's truth to men. It was the Holy Spirit that taught the prophets what to say; it was the Holy Spirit who taught men of God what to do; it was the Holy Spirit who throughout the ages and the generations, brought God's truth to men. So, then, Jesus is the one person who brings God's truth to men.*

(Generally taken from William Barclay's *The Gospel of Matthew*)

# The Gospel Of Matthew

## Lesson 2 - Matthew 2: 1-12 The Magi

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, / during the time of King Herod, / Magi / from the east came to Jerusalem / <sup>2</sup> and asked, / “Where is the one / who has been born / king of the Jews? / We saw his star / when it rose / and have come to worship him.”



<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this / he was disturbed, / and all Jerusalem with him. / <sup>4</sup> When he had called together / all the people's chief priests / and teachers of the law, / he asked them / where the Messiah was to be born. / <sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” / they replied, / “for this is what the prophet has written:

<sup>6</sup> ““But you, / Bethlehem, / in the land of Judah, / are by no means least / among the rulers of Judah; / for out of you / will come a ruler / who will shepherd my people Israel.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly / and found out from them / the exact time / the star had appeared. / <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem / and said, / “Go and search carefully for the child. / As

soon as you find him, / report to me, / so that I too / may go and worship him.”

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, / they went on their way, / and the star / they had seen / when it rose / went ahead of them / until it stopped over the place / where the child was. / <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, / they were overjoyed. / <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, / they saw the child / with his mother Mary, / and they bowed down and worshiped him. / Then they opened their treasures / and presented him / with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. / <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream / not to go back to Herod, / they returned to their country by another route.

### ***Vocabulary***

1. Magi: Three wise men in the Bible.
2. To shepherd: To lead. Guide. Take care of others. (Noun: One who takes care of sheep.)
3. Frankincense: Aromatic resin used in making perfume.
4. Myrrh: Aromatic spice. Often used in healing, medicine, and perfume. Found in anointing oil for a king.

### ***Questions***

1. How do people feel about astrology today?
2. Do we have anyone like a “ wise man” that we listen to today?

3. Why do you think we give gifts at Christmas?
4. How old do you think Jesus might be at this time?

**Notes:**

1. To understand Bethlehem, one would have to know the stories of the OT. It is a little town, about 6 miles south of Jerusalem. It has a long history. It was here that Jacob buried Rachel, (Genesis 48:7, 35-40). There Ruth lived when she married Boaz, (Ruth 1:22). But above all Bethlehem was the city of David. Other stories are told, but above all, it is the city of David the King.
2. Bethlehem was the city that expected a descendant of David to be born who was to be the long awaited Messiah.
3. We almost always see the picture of Jesus in a manger in a stable. That is probably historically incorrect. Justin Martyr, who lived about AD 150 lived in and came from the area, writes that the birth probably took place in one of the many caves in the area.
4. The houses in Bethlehem are built on the slope of a limestone ridge; and it is very common for them to have a cave-like stable hollowed out in the limestone rock below the house itself.
5. If one goes to Bethlehem today, the cave and church are there for all to visit.
6. Herod the Great was the King of Judea. He had been raised in the palace of Rome and knew Augustus Caesar. Since Herod was

protected by Caesar, he was firmly in the throne of Judea. Herod is called 'Herod the Great' because he was a great builder. He built the great seaport of Caesarea, the Temple in Jerusalem, the great fort of Masada and many other projects. He was very jealous of his throne, and had the absolute power of life and death over the Jews and all of Judea.

7. Herod was a famous murderer. If he suspected anyone as a rival to his power, that person was eliminated. He murdered his wife Mariamne, her mother Alexandra, his sons Antipater, Alexander and Aristobulus. Augustus said it was better to be Herod's *hus* (*pig*) than it was to be his *huios* (*son*).
8. The *magi* were from the Persian Empire and were probably equal in status to the Levite Priest of Judea. They were the prophets and were well respected. All knew about Astrology and followed the predictions of the stars. Through out the world this was true. They had followed the star, and we are not sure exactly which star it was. Many speculations are available, but also the belief that a great star would herald the birth of a king was widespread.
9. Don't think that the coming of the wise men to pay homage to a king was a legend. It was a natural part of the culture and accepted wisdom of the time.

10. Tradition says Jesus was probably between one and two years of age when the Wise Men came. It is often celebrated on January 6., and called *Epiphany*. Epiphany also has a second meaning, the sudden understanding of something.

11. Tradition over the years has changed the concept of the three wise men. First it was said that there were 12 men, but because of the three gifts, it is generally said there were three. Now they also began to have names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. So, tradition adds and sometimes subtracts information.



# The Gospel Of Matthew

## Lesson 3 - Matthew 2:13-23

<sup>13</sup> When they had gone, / an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph / in a dream. / “Get up,” / he said, / “take the child and his mother / and escape to Egypt. / Stay there until I tell you, / for Herod is going to search for the child / to kill him.”



<sup>14</sup> So he got up, / took the child and his mother / during the night / and left for Egypt, / <sup>15</sup> where he stayed until the death of Herod. / And so was fulfilled / what the Lord had said / through the prophet: / “Out of Egypt I called my son.” (Hosea 11:1)

<sup>16</sup> When Herod realized / that he had been outwitted by the Magi, / he was furious, / and he gave orders / to kill all the boys in Bethlehem / and its vicinity / who were two years old and under, / in accordance with the time / he had learned from the Magi. / <sup>17</sup> Then / what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

<sup>18</sup> “A voice is heard in Ramah,  
weeping and great mourning,



Rachel weeping for her children  
and refusing to be comforted, / because they are no more.”

<sup>19</sup> After Herod died, / an angel of the Lord / appeared in a dream to Joseph / in Egypt / <sup>20</sup> and said, / “Get up, / take the child and his mother / and go to the land of Israel, / for those / who were trying to take the child’s life / are dead.” <sup>21</sup> So he got up, / took the child and his mother / and went to the land of Israel. / <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus / was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, / he was afraid to go there. / Having been warned in a dream, / he withdrew to the district of Galilee, / <sup>23</sup> and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. / So was fulfilled / what was said through the prophets, / that he would be called a Nazarene. (Isaiah 11:1)

### ***Vocabulary***

1. Outwitted: Beaten. To outsmart someone. To get the better of someone.
2. Weep, weeping: Silent crying. To mourn someone.
3. Mourn, mourning: Express sadness at the death of someone.

### ***Questions***

1. Who woke Joseph up? How would you react?
2. How do we know Joseph believed the angel?

3. Do you think the Egyptian government granted political asylum to Joseph and his family?
4. How long were they expatriates?

**Notes:**

1. God appeared to the wise men and they went back to Persia by another way. Then, an angel appeared to Joseph in the night. God seems to all-active in this situation.
2. Often, during troubled times in Judea, the frightened Jews fled to Egypt where they were apparently received well. There were many colonies of Jews all over Egypt, and Alexandria was said to have over a million Jews in its midst.
3. Mary and Joseph fled at night into Egypt. There, among other Jewish refugees, they could find help and live.
4. The passage from the OT book of Hosea says: *When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.*” Matthew frequently goes back to prophecies found in the OT to help the Jews recognize that this was surely the Messiah.
5. Bethlehem was a small town. It is possible that Herod killed from 20-30 babies in that area. He was known for his capacity to murder anyone who stood in his way.

6. Herod reigned, as Governor beginning in 47BC, then became King in 40BC, and died in 4AD or BC. The calendar was changed and some of the dates are difficult.
7. Upon the death of Herod, the Roman Caesar split up the vast kingdom for not one of Herod's sons was trusted by the Roman Caesar like Herod, so they would not be given his power. Judea went to Archelaus; Galilee went to Herod Antipas; and the region away to the northeast and beyond Jordan went to Philip. Other cities were Roman and called the Decapolis. Archelaus was a terrible king and began his reign with the slaughter of 3000 prominent Jewish citizens. Even though Herod the Great was dead, his son still proved a threat. Therefore, Joseph was guided to Nazareth where Jesus was raised.
8. It is said that Jesus had only to climb a hill in Galilee to see the Mediterranean, and to watch the great Damascus to Egypt caravan route. He lived at one of the crossroads of the world.

