

members. The poor, the nobodies, the wealthy, the religious, everyone is invited and to turn follow Jesus, joining his new family. Jesus makes clear that he is not here to set aside the Torah or the Old Testament, rather he is here to fulfill all of that through his life, through his teaching. He is here to transform the hearts of his people so that they can truly love God and love their neighbor including their enemy.

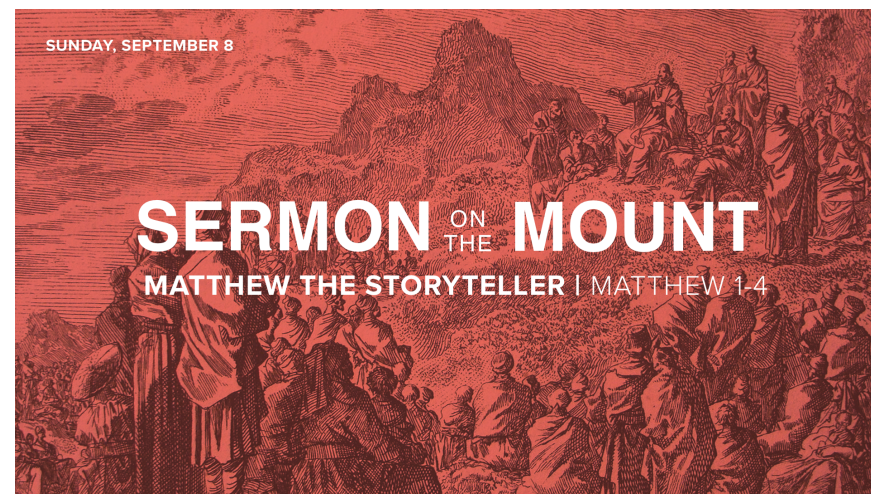
The above outline has been transcribed and only slightly modified from <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/matthew/>. All Scripture quotations added.

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FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

Go to <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/matthew/> and watch the Bible Project's Introduction to Matthew, Part 1. You can use the above outline as a guide. After watching the video consider the following questions.

1. According to the video, what are some of the key themes that Matthew has woven into his story?
2. Why is it important to see Jesus as the continuation and the fulfillment of the Old Testament Story?
3. Why is it important to see Jesus as a son of Abraham?
4. Why is it important to see Jesus as a son of David?
5. Bonus Question (You'll only get this one from Sunday's message, not mentioned in the video): What is the exile, and what role will Jesus play in the exile?
6. What are some of the parallels Matthew seeks to establish between Moses' life and Jesus' life?
7. Why is it important to recognize Jesus as the greater than Moses figure?
8. How does the video describe the kingdom of God?
9. How does one enter the kingdom of God?
10. How should one live and act as a part of Jesus' new community (the kingdom of God)?



The Gospel according to Matthew is one of the earliest official accounts of Jesus of Nazareth, his life, his death and his resurrection. While the book itself is anonymous, the earliest reliable tradition links it to Matthew the tax collector who was one of the twelve apostles that Jesus appointed and he actually appears within the book itself (Matthew 9:9 & 10:10).

THE DESIGN OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

For about thirty to forty years the apostles orally taught and passed on their eye witness accounts about Jesus, along with his teachings that they had all memorized. Matthew has collected and arranged all these into those into an amazing tapestry and designed the book to highlight certain themes about Jesus.

Specifically, Matthew wants to show how Jesus is the continuation and fulfillment of the whole biblical story about God and Israel, so he emphasizes that Jesus is the Messiah from the line of David, he is a new and authoritative teacher like Moses, and not only that, Jesus is God with us, or in Hebrew, "Immanuel."

Matthew has designed this book with an introduction and a conclusion and these act like a frame around five clear sections in the center. Each of those sections conclude with a long block of Jesus' teaching. Now this design is very intentional and it is amazing. Just watch how this works.

JESUS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT STORY

Chapters 1-3 set the stage by attaching Jesus' story right onto the story line of the Old Testament Scripture. So Matthew opens with a genealogy about Jesus that highlights him as the messianic son of David and the son of Abraham, who will bring God's blessing to all the nations.

MATTHEW 1:1, 17 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham...¹⁷ 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.

After that we get the famous story about Jesus' birth and how all the events fulfilled the Old Testament prophetic promises that the nations would come and honor the Messiah, that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, but more than that Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit, his name Immanuel, all these work together to show that Jesus is no mere human. He is God with us. God become human.

MATTHEW 1:22-23 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" ^w (which means "God with us").

MATTHEW 2:1-2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² 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..."

JESUS AS THE GREATER MOSES

So you can see two of Matthew's key themes right here in the introduction. He is from the line of David. He is Immanuel. But Matthew also wants to show how Jesus is a New Moses. So like Moses...

- Jesus came up out of Egypt (Ch. 2),

MATTHEW 2:13-15 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."¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ 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."

- he passed through the waters of baptism (Ch. 3),

MATTHEW 3:13, 16 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John...¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

- and he entered into the wilderness for forty days (Ch. 4),

MATTHEW 4:1-4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted ^v by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written:

'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

DEUTERONOMY 8:2-3 Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. ³ He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.^c

- and then Jesus goes up on to a mountain to deliver his new teaching, most of which focusses on the Torah (Ch. 5-7).

MATTHEW 5:1-2 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

So through all of this, Matthew is claiming that Jesus is the promised, greater than Moses figure, who is going to deliver Israel from slavery. He is going to give them new divine teaching, he is going to save them from their sins and bring about a new covenant relationship between God and his people.

This Moses and Jesus parallel also explains why Matthew has structured the center of the book the way that he did. These five main parts highlight Jesus as a teacher, and he has created a parallel. Jesus as a teacher parallels the five books of Moses. Jesus is the new authoritative covenant teacher who is going to fulfill the story line of the torah.

THE KING AND THE KINGDOM

In the first section, chapters 4-7, Jesus steps on the scene announcing the arrival of God's kingdom. And this is really key. The kingdom is in essence about God's rescue operation for his whole world and it is taking place through King Jesus. Jesus has come to confront evil, especially spiritual evil and its whole legacy of demon oppression, and disease and and death. Jesus has come to restore God's rule and reign over the whole world by creating a new family of people who will follow him, obey his teachings and live under his rule.

MATTHEW 4:17, 23 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near..." ²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

So after Jesus begins healing people and forming a movement, a community, he takes his followers out to a mountain or a hillside and delivers his first big block of teaching traditionally called the Sermon on the mount. And here Jesus explores what it looks like to follow him and live in God's kingdom—it is an upside down kingdom where there are no privileged