

# The Gospel of Matthew

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## THE TWO KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

### KEY #1

Everything about Jesus in Matthew's Gospel is connected to and fulfills the Old Testament story.

The beginning of the Gospel of Matthew:

*The book of genesis of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. [1:1]*

Jesus is the **son of David**—the promised king from the line of David;  
Jesus is the **son of Abraham**—the culmination of Israel's story.

The entire Old Testament has been leading up to Jesus. He is the embodiment of Israel.

In every passage, ask, "How does this information about Jesus relate to the Old Testament story?"

### KEY #2

Matthew is an instruction manual for discipleship. It is meant to give readers what they need to know to become disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

The ending of the Gospel of Matthew:

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." [28:19-20]*

### The Question to Keep in Mind as You Read

If you were an apprentice to Jesus ("disciple" is a word that means "apprentice") what would this passage teach you about following him? Of all the things Matthew *could* have told us, why did he think that we needed to know this to be apprentices of Jesus?

## **PART 1 IS ABOUT THE PREPARATION FOR JESUS THE MESSIAH [1:1-4:16]**

*The origins of Jesus—his genealogy and his infancy—and the events that lead up to the launch of his public ministry—the ministry of John the Baptist and the baptism and temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.*

### **1:1-17 – GENEALOGY OF JESUS**

**Israel Connection** – Since Abraham, every turn of Israel’s history has been leading up to this moment.

**Discipleship Connection** – If God can work through the major failures of Jesus’s ancestors, God can be at work today, too! Disciples of Jesus should be hopeful.

### **1:18-25 – JOSEPH AND MARY**

**Israel Connection** – Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land; Jesus will do the same.

**Discipleship Connection** – Joseph’s quiet obedience is used by God for something great.

### **2:1-12 – THE MAGI**

**Israel Connection** – Representatives from the nations come to bring gifts to Israel’s king (see Isaiah 60).

**Discipleship Connection** – “They departed by another way.” When you meet Jesus, you ought to live differently.

### **2:13-23 – THE HOLY FAMILY FLEES TO EGYPT**

**Israel Connection** – Just like Pharaoh, King Herod is an evil king who tries to murder a baby who will grow up to be God’s man.

**Discipleship Connection** – Disciples ought to expect murderous opposition, but God will provide.

### **3:1-17 – JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE BAPTISM OF JESUS**

**Israel Connection** – Israel has been in spiritual exile, and John the Baptist prepares them to repent so that they will be ready when Jesus comes to bring them into the Promised Land.

**Discipleship Connection** – Obedience to God’s commands is what matters, not ethnic status. Disciples of Jesus live in the reality of the life of the Spirit, which is poured out on them.

### **4:1-11 – THE TESTING IN THE WILDERNESS**

**Israel Connection** – Israel was tested in the wilderness and failed; Jesus is the true Israel who passes the tests and is now ready to bring blessing to the nations.

**Discipleship Connection** – Knowing God’s word is key for disciples of Jesus, so they won’t be tricked or confused about the way that leads to life and the way that leads to death.

### **4:12-16 – JESUS IS THE LIGHT**

**Israel Connection** – Israel was meant to be a light to the nations; Jesus is now that light.

**Discipleship Connection** – Disciples (see 5:14) are meant to reflect the light of Christ into the world.