

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-10196-7 - The New English Bible, Second Edition
New Testament
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THE GOSPEL

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

The coming of Christ

A TABLE of the descent of Jesus Christ, son of David, son 1
 of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, Jacob of 2
 Judah and his brothers, Judah of Perez and Zarah (their mother was 3
 Tamar), Perez of Hezron, Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab, 4
 Amminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salma, Salma of Boaz (his 5
 mother was Rahab), Boaz of Obed (his mother was Ruth), Obed of 6
 Jesse; and Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon (his mother had been the wife of 7
 Uriah), Solomon of Rehoboam, Rehoboam of Abijah, Abijah of Asa, 8, 9
 Asa of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat of Joram, Joram of Azariah, Azariah 10
 of Jotham, Jotham of Ahaz, Ahaz of Hezekiah, Hezekiah of Manasseh, 11
 Manasseh of Amon, Amon of Josiah; and Josiah was the father of 12
 Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

After the deportation Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel 13
 of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel of Abiud, Abiud of Eliakim, Eliakim of 14, 15
 Azor, Azor of Zadok, Zadok of Achim, Achim of Eliud, Eliud of 16
 Eleazar, Eleazar of Matthan, Matthan of Jacob, Jacob of Joseph, the 17
 husband of Mary, who gave birth to^a Jesus called Messiah.

There were thus fourteen generations in all from Abraham to 18
 David, fourteen from David until the deportation to Babylon, and 19
 fourteen from the deportation until the Messiah.

THIS IS the story of the birth of the Messiah. Mary his mother was 20
 betrothed to Joseph; before their marriage she found that she was 21
 with child by the Holy Spirit. Being a man of principle, and at the 22
 same time wanting to save her from exposure, Joseph desired to have

[a] *Some witnesses read* Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary, a virgin, who gave birth to . . . ; *one witness has* Joseph, and Joseph, to whom Mary, a virgin, was betrothed, was the father of . . .

MATTHEW 1, 2

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20 the marriage contract set aside quietly. He had resolved on this, when an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. ‘Joseph son of David,’ said the angel, ‘do not be afraid to take Mary home with you as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this
 21 child. She will bear a son; and you shall give him the name Jesus
 22 (Saviour), for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this happened in order to fulfil what the Lord declared through the
 23 prophet: ‘The virgin will conceive and bear a son, and he shall be
 24 called Emmanuel’, a name which means ‘God is with us’. Rising from sleep Joseph did as the angel had directed him; he took Mary
 25 home to be his wife, but had no intercourse with her until her son was born. And he named the child Jesus.

2 JESUS WAS BORN at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of Herod.
 2 After his birth astrologers from the east arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the child who is born to be king of the Jews?’^a We observed
 3 the rising of his star, and we have come to pay him homage.’ King Herod was greatly perturbed when he heard this; and so was the
 4 whole of Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the chief priests and lawyers of the Jewish people, and put before them the question:
 5 ‘Where is it that the Messiah is to be born?’ ‘At Bethlehem in Judaea’, they replied; and they referred him to the prophecy which
 6 reads: ‘Bethlehem in the land of Judah, you are far from least in the eyes of^b the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a leader to be the shepherd of my people Israel.’

7 Herod next called the astrologers to meet him in private, and
 8 ascertained from them the time when the star had appeared. He then sent them on to Bethlehem, and said, ‘Go and make a careful inquiry for the child. When you have found him, report to me, so that I may go myself and pay him homage.’

9 They set out at the king’s bidding; and the star which they had seen at its rising went ahead of them until it stopped above the place
 10 where the child lay. At the sight of the star they were overjoyed.
 11 Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and bowed to the ground in homage to him; then they opened their
 12 treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned home another way.

[a] Or Where is the king of the Jews who has just been born? [b] Or least among.

The coming of Christ

MATTHEW 2, 3

After they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in ¹³
 a dream, and said to him, 'Rise up, take the child and his mother
 and escape with them to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you; for
 Herod is going to search for the child to do away with him.' So ¹⁴
 Joseph rose from sleep, and taking mother and child by night he
 went away with them to Egypt, and there he stayed till Herod's ¹⁵
 death. This was to fulfil what the Lord had declared through the
 prophet: 'I called my son out of Egypt.'

When Herod saw how the astrologers had tricked him he fell into a ¹⁶
 passion, and gave orders for the massacre of all children in Bethlehem
 and its neighbourhood, of the age of two years or less, corresponding
 with the time he had ascertained from the astrologers. So the words ¹⁷
 spoken through Jeremiah the prophet were fulfilled: 'A voice was heard ¹⁸
 in Rama, wailing and loud laments; it was Rachel weeping for her
 children, and refusing all consolation, because they were no more.'

The time came that Herod died; and an angel of the Lord ¹⁹
 appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said to him, 'Rise up, ²⁰
 take the child and his mother, and go with them to the land of Israel,
 for the men who threatened the child's life are dead.' So he rose, ²¹
 took mother and child with him, and came to the land of Israel.
 Hearing, however, that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod ²²
 as king of Judaea, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by
 a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee; there he settled in ²³
 a town called Nazareth. This was to fulfil the words spoken through
 the prophets: 'He shall be called a Nazarene.'

ABOUT THAT TIME John the Baptist appeared as a preacher in the **3**
 Judaeian wilderness; his theme was: 'Repent; for the kingdom of ²
 Heaven is upon you!' It is of him that the prophet Isaiah spoke ³
 when he said, 'A voice crying aloud in the wilderness, "Prepare a way
 for the Lord; clear a straight path for him."'

John's clothing was a rough coat of camel's hair, with a leather ⁴
 belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. They ⁵
 flocked to him from Jerusalem, from all Judaea, and the whole
 Jordan valley, and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, ⁶
 confessing their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for ⁷
 baptism he said to them: 'You vipers' brood! Who warned you to
 escape from the coming retribution? Then prove your repentance ⁸

MATTHEW 3, 4

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9 by the fruit it bears; and do not presume to say to yourselves, “We
 10 have Abraham for our father.” I tell you that God can make children
 11 for Abraham out of these stones here. Already the axe is laid to the
 12 roots of the trees; and every tree that fails to produce good fruit is
 13 cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptize you with water, for
 14 repentance; but the one who comes after me is mightier than I.
 15 I am not fit to take off his shoes. He will baptize you with the
 16 Holy Spirit and with fire. His shovel is ready in his hand and he will
 winnow his threshing-floor; the wheat he will gather into his granary,
 but he will burn the chaff on a fire that can never go out.’

13 Then Jesus arrived at the Jordan from Galilee, and came to John
 14 to be baptized by him. John tried to dissuade him. ‘Do you come
 15 to me?’ he said; ‘I need rather to be baptized by you.’ Jesus replied,
 16 ‘Let it be so for the present; we do well to conform in this way with
 17 all that God requires.’ John then allowed him to come. After baptism
 Jesus came up out of the water at once, and at that moment heaven
 opened; he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove to alight
 upon him; and a voice from heaven was heard saying, ‘This is my
 Son, my Beloved,^a on whom my favour rests.’

4 JESUS WAS THEN led away by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be
 tempted by the devil.

2 For forty days and nights he fasted, and at the end of them he was
 3 famished. The tempter approached him and said, ‘If you are the
 4 Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’ Jesus answered,
 ‘Scripture says, “Man cannot live on bread alone; he lives on every
 word that God utters.”’

5 The devil then took him to the Holy City and set him on the
 6 parapet of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw
 yourself down; for Scripture says, “He will put his angels in charge
 of you, and they will support you in their arms, for fear you should
 7 strike your foot against a stone.”’ Jesus answered him, ‘Scripture
 says again, “You are not to put the Lord your God to the test.”’

8 Once again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and
 9 showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory. ‘All these’,
 he said, ‘I will give you, if you will only fall down and do me
 10 homage.’ But Jesus said, ‘Begone, Satan! Scripture says, “You shall
 do homage to the Lord your God and worship him alone.”’

[^a] Or This is my only Son.

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MATTHEW 4, 5

Then the devil left him; and angels appeared and waited on him. 11

When he heard that John had been arrested, Jesus withdrew to 12
 Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and settled at Capernaum on 13
 the Sea of Galilee, in the district of Zebulun and Naphtali. This 14
 was to fulfil the passage in the prophet Isaiah which tells of 'the land 15
 of Zebulun, the land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, the land beyond
 Jordan, heathen Galilee', and says:

'The people that lived in darkness saw a great light; 16
 light dawned on the dwellers in the land of death's dark shadow.'

From that day Jesus began to proclaim the message: 'Repent; for^a 17
 the kingdom of Heaven is upon you.'

JESUS WAS WALKING by the Sea of Galilee when he saw two 18
 brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew, casting a net 19
 into the lake; for they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, 'Come 20
 with me, and I will make you fishers of men.' And at once they left
 their nets and followed him.

He went on, and saw another pair of brothers, James son of 21
 Zebedee and his brother John; they were in the boat with their 22
 father Zebedee, overhauling their nets. He called them, and at once
 they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

He went round the whole of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, 23
 preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and curing whatever illness or 24
 infirmity there was among the people. His fame reached the whole 25
 of Syria; and sufferers from every kind of illness, racked with pain,
 possessed by devils, epileptic, or paralysed, were all brought to
 him, and he cured them. Great crowds also followed him, from
 Galilee and the Ten Towns,^b from Jerusalem and Judaea, and from
 Transjordan.

The Sermon on the Mount

WHEN HE SAW the crowds he went up the hill. There he took 5
 his seat, and when his disciples had gathered round him he 2
 began to address them. And this is the teaching he gave:

[a] *Some witnesses omit* Repent; for. [b] *Greek Decapolis.*

MATTHEW 5

The Sermon on the Mount

- 3 'How blest are those who know their need of God;
 the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- 4 How blest are the sorrowful;
 they shall find consolation.
- 5 How blest are those of a gentle spirit;
 they shall have the earth for their possession.
- 6 How blest are those who hunger and thirst to see right prevail;^a
 they shall be satisfied.
- 7 How blest are those who show mercy;
 mercy shall be shown to them.
- 8 How blest are those whose hearts are pure;
 they shall see God.
- 9 How blest are the peacemakers;
 God shall call them his sons.
- 10 How blest are those who have suffered persecution for the cause
 of right;
 the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- 11 'How blest you are, when you suffer insults and persecution and
 12 every kind of calumny for my sake. Accept it with gladness and
 exultation, for you have a rich reward in heaven; in the same way
 they persecuted the prophets before you.
- 13 'You are salt to the world. And if salt becomes tasteless, how is its
 saltness to be restored? It is now good for nothing but to be thrown
 away and trodden underfoot.
- 14 'You are light for all the world. A town that stands on a hill
 15 cannot be hidden. When a lamp is lit, it is not put under the meal-
 tub, but on the lamp-stand, where it gives light to everyone in the
 16 house. And you, like the lamp, must shed light among your fellows,
 so that, when they see the good you do, they may give praise to your
 Father in heaven.
- 17 'DO NOT SUPPOSE that I have come to abolish the Law and the
 18 prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to complete. I tell you
 this: so long as heaven and earth endure, not a letter, not a stroke,
 will disappear from the Law until all that must happen has happened.^b
- 19 If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Law's demands,
 and teaches others to do the same, he will have the lowest place in

[a] Or to do what is right. [b] Or before all that it stands for is achieved.

The Sermon on the Mount

MATTHEW 5

the kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Law, and teaches others so, will stand high in the kingdom of Heaven. I tell you, unless you show yourselves far better men than the Pharisees and the doctors of the law, you can never enter the kingdom of Heaven.

‘You have learned that our forefathers were told, “Do not commit murder; anyone who commits murder must be brought to judgement.” But what I tell you is this: Anyone who nurses anger against his brother^a must be brought to judgement. If he abuses his brother he must answer for it to the court; if he sneers at him he will have to answer for it in the fires of hell.

‘If, when you are bringing your gift to the altar, you suddenly remember that your brother has a grievance against you, leave your gift where it is before the altar. First go and make your peace with your brother, and only then come back and offer your gift.

‘If someone sues you, come to terms with him promptly while you are both on your way to court; otherwise he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the constable, and you will be put in jail. I tell you, once you are there you will not be let out till you have paid the last farthing.

‘You have learned that they were told, “Do not commit adultery.” But what I tell you is this: If a man looks on a woman with a lustful eye, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

‘If your right eye is your undoing, tear it out and fling it away; it is better for you to lose one part of your body than for the whole of it to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand is your undoing, cut it off and fling it away; it is better for you to lose one part of your body than for the whole of it to go to hell.

‘They were told, “A man who divorces his wife must give her a note of dismissal.” But what I tell you is this: If a man divorces his wife for any cause other than unchastity he involves her in adultery; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

‘Again, you have learned that our forefathers were told, “Do not break your oath”, and, “Oaths sworn to the Lord must be kept.” But what I tell you is this: You are not to swear at all—not by heaven, for it is God’s throne, nor by earth, for it is his footstool, nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King, nor by your own head, because you cannot turn one hair of it white or black. Plain “Yes” or “No” is all you need to say; anything beyond that comes from the devil.

[a] *Some witnesses insert without good cause.*

MATTHEW 5, 6

The Sermon on the Mount

38 'You have learned that they were told, "Eye for eye, tooth for
 39 tooth." But what I tell you is this: Do not set yourself against the
 40 man who wrongs you. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn
 41 and offer him your left. If a man wants to sue you for your shirt, let
 42 him have your coat as well. If a man in authority makes you go one
 43 mile, go with him two. Give when you are asked to give; and do not
 44 turn your back on a man who wants to borrow.

43 'You have learned that they were told, "Love your neighbour, hate
 44 your enemy." But what I tell you is this: Love your enemies^a and
 45 pray for your persecutors;^b only so can you be children of your
 46 heavenly Father, who makes his sun rise on good and bad alike, and
 47 sends the rain on the honest and the dishonest. If you love only
 48 those who love you, what reward can you expect? Surely the tax-
 49 gatherers do as much as that. And if you greet only your brothers,
 50 what is there extraordinary about that? Even the heathen do as
 51 much. There must be no limit to your goodness, as your heavenly
 52 Father's goodness knows no bounds.

6 'BE CAREFUL not to make a show of your religion before men; if
 you do, no reward awaits you in your Father's house in heaven.

2 'Thus, when you do some act of charity, do not announce it with
 a flourish of trumpets, as the hypocrites do in synagogue and in the
 streets to win admiration from men. I tell you this: they have their
 3 reward already. No; when you do some act of charity, do not let
 4 your left hand know what your right is doing; your good deed must
 be secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will
 reward you.^c

5 'Again, when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; they love
 to say their prayers standing up in synagogue and at the street-
 corners, for everyone to see them. I tell you this: they have their
 6 reward already. But when you pray, go into a room by your-
 self, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is there in the
 secret place; and your Father who sees what is secret will reward
 you.^c

7 'In your prayers do not go babbling on like the heathen, who
 imagine that the more they say the more likely they are to be heard.

[a] *Some witnesses insert* bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you.

[b] *Some witnesses insert* and those who treat you spitefully. [c] *Some witnesses add*
 openly.

The Sermon on the Mount

MATTHEW 6

Do not imitate them. Your Father knows what your needs are before 8
 you ask him.

‘This is how you should pray: 9

“Our Father in heaven,
 thy name be hallowed;
 thy kingdom come, 10
 thy will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.^a 11
 Forgive us the wrong we have done, 12
 as we have forgiven those who have wronged us.
 And do not bring us to the test, 13
 but save us from the evil one.”^{b c}

For if you forgive others the wrongs they have done, your heavenly 14
 Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, then the 15
 wrongs you have done will not be forgiven by your Father.

‘So too when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites: 16
 they make their faces unsightly so that other people may see that
 they are fasting. I tell you this: they have their reward already.
 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that 17, 18
 men may not see that you are fasting, but only your Father who is
 in the secret place; and your Father who sees what is secret will give
 you your reward.

‘DO NOT STORE up for yourselves treasure on earth, where it 19
 grows rusty and moth-eaten, and thieves break in to steal it. Store 20
 up treasure in heaven, where there is no moth and no rust to spoil
 it, no thieves to break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there 21
 will your heart be also.

‘The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eyes are sound, you will 22
 have light for your whole body; if the eyes are bad, your whole body 23
 will be in darkness. If then the only light you have is darkness, the
 darkness is doubly dark.

‘No servant can be the slave of two masters; for either he will hate 24
 the first and love the second, or he will be devoted to the first and
 think nothing of the second. You cannot serve God and Money.

[a] Or our bread for the morrow. [b] Or from evil. [c] Some witnesses add For thine is
 the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.