

Bible Reading Notes
Matthew

Pastor Jeff Landis

Matthew 1

1:1 – The purpose of the genealogy is to show that Jesus is in the line of David and so qualifies as the promised King.

1:21 – **Jesus** = Yahweh is salvation. The New Testament version of Joshua.

1:22 – **to fulfill** – This is a key phrase in Matthew occurring throughout the book. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises about the Messiah.

1:23 – This verse is a quotation from Isaiah 7:14.

Matthew 2

Matthew is the only gospel to include the narrative of the wise men. This fits with his focus on the kingship of Jesus.

2:6 – This quotation is from Micah 5:2.

2:15 – This is a quotation from Hosea 11:1. In the original context it refers to Israel's exodus from Egypt. Jesus is the new Israel who also was called out of Egypt.

2:18 – This comes from Jeremiah 31:15.

Matthew 3

3:3 – Matthew quotes Isaiah 40:3. This passage was first spoken in the context of the good news of comfort that God was bringing to his people.

3:8 – **bear fruit** – Going through religious motions is inadequate if there is no true fruit of repentance evident in your life.

3:11 – **water for repentance** – John's baptism was not the baptism we observe today. His was a baptism calling for men to repent so they will be ready for the coming Messiah. It also was not baptism in the name of the triune God.

3:15 – Jesus' baptism was necessary for him to identify with the sinners he came to save.

Matthew 4

- 4:4, 7, 10** – Each time Jesus responds to the devil, he does so quoting from Deuteronomy. He was likely studying Deuteronomy during his forty days of fasting.
- 4:15-16** – Matthew quotes from Isaiah 9:1-2. Galilee was an area where Gentiles had been imported by the Assyrians when the Jews went into exile.
- 4:18-21** – Jesus first met Andrew and John on the bank of the Jordan River (John 1:35). This encounter is now later, in Galilee.

Matthew 5

- 5:1 – mountain** – Like Moses at Mt. Sinai, Jesus gives his people the law of God to direct how we are to live as members of his kingdom.
- 5:14-16** – Christ came as the light of the world (John 9:5). After his ascension his church is the light.
- 5:17 – fulfill** – Christ’s prophetic role was to “fill up” or “complete” the law. In the verses that follow, Christ will give the right and fuller understanding of the law of God.
- 5:18 – iota...dot** – Smallest letter in the Greek alphabet and a small mark in Hebrew. Scripture is inspired not merely in its thoughts but down to the words of the original text.
- 5:21 – You have heard** – These or similar words will be used in vv. 27, 31, 33, 38, and 43. Jesus first gives the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees and then gives the fuller and correct meaning of the command.
- 5:24** – Reconciliation is a higher priority than worship!
- 5:29-30** – Jesus words are not to be taken literally, but they do show the high priority Jesus places on righteousness.
- 5:34-37** – The Jews had a hierarchy of vows where if you swore by one thing it was more binding than if you swore by a lesser thing. Jesus says we are to simply give our word and then keep it.

Matthew 6

- 6:2** – They have received their reward – Alms giving, prayer, and fasting were ways to express righteousness. But if it is done merely to be noticed by others, you give up the spiritual benefit.
- 6:15** – do not forgive others - An ongoing pattern of refusing to forgive is evidence that you have not experienced the forgiveness of God.

Matthew 7

- 7:1** – Judge – To judge in this sense is to condemn someone with a self-righteousness that fails to recognize your own sin. It is not a blanket command against all discernment of others, as vv. 15ff indicates.
- 7:7** – The verb tense in this verse is best translated, “Keep asking...keep seeking...keep knocking.”
- 7:11** – Our motivation to keep praying is that we know we have a Father in heaven who loves us and gives us good things.

Matthew 8

The context is just after the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew has given a lengthy account of Jesus’ teaching and now follows up with two chapters showing Jesus’ miracles which confirm his teaching.

- 8:5** – centurion – A centurion was a Roman officer who had 100 men under his command.
- 8:10-12** – Later, Paul will teach this same truth in Romans 11 about the olive tree with Jewish branches cut off so that Gentile branches can be grafted in.
- 8:21** – It wasn’t that this man’s father had just died but that he wanted to wait to follow Jesus for an undetermined period of time until his father died.

8:26 – rebuked the winds and sea - This was a fulfillment of Psalm 107:29.

Matthew 9

9:13 – Jesus is quoting Hosea 6:6.

9:17 – old wineskins – Jesus is affirming that the old patterns the Jews practiced are no longer appropriate in the new covenant.

9:34 – The Pharisees could not deny the miracles that Christ did. The only alternative for them, since they would not believe, was to slander the source of Christ's power.

Matthew 10

10:5-6 – The early mission of the apostles was to Israel. After the ascension of Christ, the mission will include the Samaritans and Gentiles (Acts 1:8).

10:9-10 – This will not be a long mission for the apostles and so they should not spend time packing a lot of extra things they will not need.

10:16-39 – The gospel will produce division and persecution. All twelve apostles will be martyrs for the faith except John.

10:23 – before the Son of Man comes – There are many different interpretations of Jesus' statement. The coming that best fits the context is the coming of Christ in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. The urgency is that there are only a few years before that event.

10:35 – man against his father – This is an allusion to Micah 7:6.

Matthew 11

- 11:5 – All of these are mentioned in the Old Testament as acts the Messiah would do. Jesus' works reveal that he is the promised Messiah.
- 11:10 – Jesus quotes Malachi's prophecy concerning the one who would prepare the way for the Messiah (Malachi 3:1).
- 11:12 – **violent take it by force** - This is a difficult verse to interpret. Some understand the violent to be unbelievers who are opposed to the kingdom. Others understand Jesus to be referring to believers who in the face of violence are still pushing back for the expansion of the kingdom.
- 11:14 – Jesus is referring to Malachi's prophecy in Malachi 4:5.
- 11:18-19 – Unbelief shows itself in its contradictory evaluations.
- 11:20-24 – These cities are all around the Sea of Galilee, in the area that most of Jesus' miracles were done. Judgment is more severe the more revelation we are exposed to.

Matthew 12

- 12:3 – This account is found in 1 Samuel 21.
- 12:5 – **read in the Law** – This is found in Numbers 28:9-10 where the priests are commanded to labor on the Sabbath by offering the daily sacrifices.
- 12:7 – Jesus is quoting Hosea 6:6.
- 12:8 – Jesus never abrogates the Sabbath command, but he does constantly fight against the extra biblical interpretations of the Pharisees.
- 12:18-21 – Matthew is quoting from Isaiah 42:1-3, part of the first Servant Song in Isaiah.
- 12:24 – The charge that Jesus operates in the power of Satan is completely contrary to Isaiah's witness in v. 18 and Jesus in v. 28.

12:29 – binds the strong man – This is the same language as found in Revelation 20:2 where it refers to the binding of Satan by Christ until the final days.

12:38 – sign – Their request for a sign comes from their unbelief; they do not wish to believe as Jesus confirms in the next verse.

Matthew 13

Matthew 13 is a series of parables that Jesus told about the kingdom of heaven.

13:14-15 – Matthew quotes from Isaiah 6:9-10 to explain the purpose of his parables. Isaiah 6 records God's call to Isaiah to be a prophet.

13:24-30 – The world is pictured in this parable. The world is made up of believers and unbelievers. The distinction will be made on the day of judgment (vv. 36-43).

13:31-33 – The start of the kingdom appears to be very small and insignificant but will grow and expand until it covers the whole earth.

13:35 – Matthew quotes Psalm 78:2 as being fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus.

13:44-46 – Being part of the kingdom of heaven is so valuable that the believer is willing to give up everything else to obtain it.

Matthew 14

14:6-12 – oath – This is a good example why oaths should not be taken quickly or thoughtlessly.

14:29-33 – Only Matthew includes this section of Peter walking on the water.

14:30 – Peter lost his confidence when he focused on the circumstances around him rather than the Lord.

Matthew 15

- 15:9 – the commandments of men** – This was always the problem with the scribes and Pharisees. They were not content with God’s Word and felt the need to add to it.
- 15:19** – The root of our problem is not from outside of us but from our own sinful heart.
- 15:33** – The disciples apparently never learned the lesson from the feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14).

Matthew 16

- 16:13-20** – Matthew gives the fullest account of Peter’s confession.
- 16:15 – you** – This pronoun is plural, referring to all the disciples.
- 16:16 – the Son of the living God** – Peter confesses not only that Jesus is the Messiah, but he is also God.
- 16:18 – rock** – This is a reference either to Peter’s confession about Christ or Peter serving as a representative of the apostles. This is the required confession of all who desire to be part of the church.
- 16:19 – keys** – The key is the symbolic power to give access or deny access (Isaiah 22:22). The church has the authority to receive or exclude people based on their profession of faith.
- 16:19 – shall be bound** - A more faithful translation would be “shall have been bound.” When the church grants forgiveness or excommunication, she is reflecting, to the best of her ability, what God has already done.

Matthew 17

- 17:1-13** – The transfiguration account is meant to remind us of Moses going up Mt. Sinai. In both accounts the glory of God is revealed, the Father speaks, and immediately afterwards the people of God are faithless.

17:9 – Peter will later refer to this event in 2 Peter 1:16.

17:22-23 – This is the second time that Jesus has told them about his upcoming death and resurrection.

17:5-26 – Jesus is saying that because the temple is the Father's and Jesus is the Son, he is exempt from paying the tax.

Matthew 18

18:15-20 – Jesus is laying out the process for dealing with private sins. That is why there is a stress on keeping the matter as private as possible for as long as possible. The same process does not apply when the sins have been done publicly.

18:16 – This principle of multiple witnesses comes from Deuteronomy 19:15.

18:17 – **church** – This does not mean to stand up and announce something to the church as a whole. The church is a reference to the elders as representative of the congregation as is done in Deuteronomy 31:28ff.

18:24 – **ten thousand talents** – Approximately twenty years of wages for a normal laborer.

18:28 – **a hundred denarii** – About twenty weeks of wages for a normal laborer.

18:35 – Forgiveness is part of the essential fruit that shows we have experienced salvation. This is a warning to us to be quick to forgive others in light of the vast forgiveness we have already received.

Matthew 19

19:3 – **for any cause** – Divorce was a controversial issue with some Pharisees allowing for divorce for almost any reason and others allowing it only for sexual immorality.

19:7 – **command** – Moses never commanded such a thing; he allowed it because of their sin (v. 8).

19:13 – The disciples thought that Jesus was too busy for children. Jesus showed that children were of great value.

19:25 – Jews believed that a rich person's wealth was a sign of great blessing from God, so they would be among those, it was assumed, who would be saved.

Matthew 20

20:1-16 – This is an application of the last verse of chapter 19.

20:2 – **denarius** – This was the commonly understood pay for a day laborer.

20:20 – **mother** – Only Matthew tells us it was the mother of James and John who came with the request. She was Salome, a sister of Mary. This was a family request to exalt his cousins.

20:21 – **in your kingdom** – This was a request of faith based on the promise of Jesus in 19:28.

20:22 – **You** – You is plural. Jesus is not addressing Salome but James and John.

20:27 – This continues the application which began at the end of chapter 19.

Matthew 21

21:5 – This quote is a combination of Isaiah 62:11 and Zechariah 9:9.

21:9 – **Hosanna** – This means "Save!" The quotation is from Psalm 118:25-26.

21:13 – Jesus is quoting Isaiah 56:7 where the promise is given that Gentiles will come to worship the Lord and engage in prayer.

21:16 – Jesus quotes Psalm 8:2, a psalm that speaks of the glory of God.

21:33-46 – These two parables are directed to the Pharisees condemning them for their failure to believe in Jesus.

21:42 – Jesus refers to Psalm 118:22-23 which is quoted several times in the New Testament in reference to Christ's rejection by the Jews but his exaltation by the Father.

Matthew 22

- 22:3 – Like today, wedding feast invitations went out early. On the day of the feast a second invitation would be sent informing guests that everything was ready. All the guests, therefore, had advance notice of the event.
- 22:13 – Only those who are clothed in the righteousness of Christ will be allowed to the marriage supper of the Lamb. All others will be cast into hell.
- 22:23 – **Sadducees** – It is ironic that they would raise the issue of the resurrection since they denied any future resurrection.
- 22:24 – This teaching of levirate marriage is found in Deuteronomy 25:5 and was designed to prevent the eradication of a family line in Israel.
- 22:34 – There seems to have been a tag team approach to testing Jesus by the religious rulers even though the Pharisees and Sadducees had great opposition to each other.
- 22:41-46 – Jesus turns the tables on them and this brings an end to the testing of Jesus during his last week.

Matthew 23

Matthew has a much longer version of Jesus' woes on the scribes and Pharisees than both Mark and Luke.

- 23:5 – **phylacteries** – These were small boxes attached to the left arm and forehead containing short passages of Scripture in literal obedience to Deuteronomy 11:18.
- 23:11-12 – Any church leader who exalts himself has failed the basic qualification of office – humility.

23:13 – woe to you – Seven times Jesus declares woe on the religious leaders in this chapter (vv. 13, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29).

23:23 – neglected the weightier matters - It is dangerous to focus on the smaller aspects of obedience and pretend it frees you from obedience in weightier areas. Legalism always likes to focus on obedience that can easily be measured.

23:27-28 – They appear to be righteous, but they are not.

23:35 – Zechariah – This refers to the event spoken of in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22. Both Abel and Zechariah were killed for their righteousness.

Matthew 24

Matthew 24-25 gives us the largest amount of material on Jesus' eschatological teaching with most of chapter 25 being material that Luke and Mark does not include.

24:3 – The disciples understood that the destruction of the temple and the end of the age would occur at the same time. Jesus is clear that they are two separate events.

24:29 – Proceeding both the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of Christ there will be a time of tribulation. The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD served as a foreshadowing of the judgment at the end.

24:36 – nor the Son – Jesus, in terms of his human nature, did not know when the end would occur. In his divine nature he did.

24:36ff – We cannot know when Christ will return. When he comes the world will be going about its business. Our calling, while we wait, is to live in obedience and for the glory of Christ.

Matthew 25

- 25:1-13** – This parable is given to remind us to live with watchfulness and preparation for Christ's return, since we do not know when it might occur.
- 25:15 – talent** – A talent was worth 19-20 years of a daily laborer's wages, assuming one day off per week.
- 25:31-46** – At the time of Christ's return the great final judgment will take place. Jesus is referring to that event in this text.
- 25:35-36** – Jesus, like James, refers to the faith of the believer as being a living and active faith that bears the fruit of good works. Biblical faith is not merely an intellectual faith.
- 25:41-46** – The unbelievers are cast into hell because they did not have a genuine faith that revealed itself by bearing fruit of obedience.

Matthew 26

- 26:14** – Judas' decision to betray Jesus was motivated by the episode in Bethany.
- 26:36 – Gethsemane** – The name means "Oil Press."
- 26:41** – Peter's arrogance in v. 35 is matched by his self-sufficiency here. Otherwise he too would have used the time to pray.
- 26:64 – Son of Man** – This was Jesus' favorite designation for himself and was from Daniel 7:13-14.

Matthew 27

- 27:3-5** – Judas is an example of worldly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10). His sorrow did not lead to repentance because it was sorrow over consequences rather than over his sin.
- 27:9** – This is a summary of Zechariah 11:12-13, but Jeremiah 19 has an account of buying a potter's field that also fits the context.

27:25 – They had no idea what they were saying. They will suffer the consequences of rejecting Christ about thirty five years later when the city of Jerusalem is destroyed.

27:35-46 – There are multiple allusions and quotations back to Psalm 22 in Jesus' crucifixion.

27:62 – **the next day** – This would be Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath.

Matthew 28

28:7 – **Galilee** – Jesus had told his disciples this in Mark 14:28.

28:16 – There is a gap of forty days that Matthew does not cover between vv. 15 and 16.