

Directed Study - Matthew Chapters 1 - 7

Week by week, I'll be producing some questions designed to direct you in your own study of the week's reading. I will focus on highlighting major themes and key terms, not personal application. Please use this as a guide for deeper meditation, not an end in itself. May the Spirit teach you more of Christ from his most holy Word.

Thesis

The opening verse of the New Testament prepares us for Jesus's family tree (his genealogy). Don't panic. This is very useful for Matthew's purpose. Verse 1 is Matthew's thesis statement for his gospel. Yes, a genealogy really is central to understanding Matthew.

It will help to read 2 Samuel 7 and Genesis 12:1-3, chapter 15 and chapter 17 before moving on. In those chapters, God makes covenants with David and with Abraham. The Covenant with David promises David a descendant, **a king, who will rule over his kingdom forever**. The covenant with Abraham promises many things related to this kingdom: people, land, prosperity, peace from enemies, and more. Most importantly, though, it promises that Abraham's descendant (seed) will be a **blessing to the nations** (Gen 12:3).

1. Why is it significant that Jesus is David's son? Abraham's son?
2. Now look at the end of Matthew (28:18-20). What is the scope of Jesus's authority (reign)? Who is the gospel to go out to (who do we make disciples of)?

The beginning and the end of the gospel emphasize Jesus as the promised heir to the throne and the blessing to the nations.

King & kingdom

Matthew emphasizes Jesus as the King over his everlasting kingdom.

3. Be on the lookout for how people respond to Jesus the King. Chapter 2 would be a great place to see different responses to this King. Who responds to the King positively? Who responds negatively? How do the Jews respond vs. Gentiles?
4. The King is over a kingdom. Matthew's gospel consistently calls it "the kingdom of heaven." Is this kingdom here *now*? Is it *future*? Is it *both*? (Compare 3:2 and 4:17 with 6:10 and 7:21.)

Fulfilled

Another key feature of Matthew is his portrayal of Jesus fulfilling Old Testament prophecies and expectations. For this week, see 1:22; 2:15; 2:17; 2:23; 3:15; 4:14; 5:17.

5. What Bible books does Matthew quote in the verses listed above?

It would be helpful to have a Bible with good cross references to find out where. I would write the references down in the margin of your Bible. (2:23 does not quote a specific passage).