# Matthew 1-9

Study Notes

## Overview

The New Testament starts with a bold statement in Matthew 1:1 that is captured only in the Greek:

βιβλος γενεσεως ιησου χριστου  
Biblos geneseous Jesou Christou

Matthew, the apostle of Jesus, is proclaiming a new Genesis. The start of not only the new covenant, but a new creation heralded by His new kingdom. This new creation will be brought about by the one king: Jesus Christ

## Key Themes

### Proof Jesus is the Christ

Matthew starts his account of Jesus by proving to the reader that Jesus is who he is. He does this by showing how the Old Testament’s prophecies of Jesus Christ are fulfilled through:

| Proof | Explanation |
| --- | --- |
| Genealogies | Jesus is of the line of Judah, the line that shall rule forever |
| Virgin birth | The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled [Isa 7:14] |
| Born in Bethlehem | The prophecy of Micah is fulfilled [Mic 5:2] |
| The star rose | The prophecy of Balaam is fulfilled [Num 24:17] |
| Homage of the magi | The magi worship Jesus Christ as King |
| Flight to Egypt | The prophecy of Hosea is fulfilled [Hos 11:1] |
| Slaughter of the innocents | The prophecy of Jeremiah is fulfilled [Jer 31:15] |
| Jesus’ Nazarene origins | An allusion to the birth of Samson (i.e. set aside by God) [Jud 13:5] |
| John the Baptist | The prophecy of Malachi fulfilled [Mal 3:1, 4:5] |
| Jesus’ rejection of sin | Jesus, the new Adam, rejects sin, and will defeat Satan [Gen 3:15] |
| Jesus ministers in Galilee | The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled [Isa 9:1-2] |

### Life in the New Kingdom

Now that we have established that Jesus is the Messiah, Matthew recounts a sermon by Jesus, commonly called The Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus explains the nature of His new kingdom and covenant. He does this by correcting the Old Kingdom’s interpretation and values in regard to:

* Who are God’s chosen people
  + The character of God’s people [5:1-16]
  + The requirements to be one of God’s people [7:15-29]
* God’s Law [5:17-48]
* Personal religion [6:1-18]
* Being in the world but not of it [6:19-7:14]

### Jesus’ Ministry on Earth

Jesus’ miracles were not random events. The miracles that we have recorded in Matthew have a purpose – to demonstrate who Jesus is and what he came to achieve. These miracles include:

| Miracle | Verses | Reason |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Healing of the leper | 8:1-4 | Jesus’ ministry fulfils the law[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| The Centurion’s servant | 8:5-13 | Jesus’ ministry is also for the Gentiles |
| Peter’s Mother-in-law | 8:14-17 | Jesus’ ministry fulfils the prophets |
| Jesus calms the storm | 8:23-27 | Jesus has control over the natural |
| Healing the two demoniacs | 8:28-34 | Jesus has control over the supernatural |
| Healing the paralytic | 9:1-8 | Jesus has the authority (from God) to forgive sins |
| Heals the ruler’s daughter | 9:18-26 | Jesus has power over life and death |
| Heals the two blind men | 9:27-30 | Jesus’ ministry confirms his kingship as the Son of David |
| Heals the mute demoniac | 9:32-34 | Jesus ministry & kingship is rejected by the old kingdom |

Remember that the miracles of Jesus recorded in the Bible are not exhaustive. In the words of the Apostle John in the last verse of his gospel:

Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

I would suggest reading Mark’s account of the miracles recorded in Matthew. Mark looks at the same miracles, and not only adds more details, but brings out more directly other points Jesus was making about Himself through these miracles.

### What it means to be a disciple of Jesus

Matthew also records for us, interspersed amongst the miracles in chronological order teachings by Jesus to his disciples and would-be disciples:

| Passage | Verses | Explanation |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The young scribe | 8:18-20 | To follow Jesus requires abandoning earthly security |
| The son whose father died | 8:21-22 | Discipleship may require neglecting domestic obligations |
| Jesus calls Matthew | 9:9-13 | Jesus came to call sinners/outcasts not the self-righteous |
| The question on fasting | 9:14-17 | The new kingdom is different to the old |
| The harvest is plentiful | 9:35-38 | Jesus’ disciples are to minister to the world for Him |

## Passage Overview

| Verses | Description |
| --- | --- |
| 1:1-2:23 | Where the Messiah came from: prophecy, birth, fulfilment, proof |
| 3:1-17 | John the Baptist announces then baptises Jesus as Christ. God confirms supernaturally |
| 4:1-11 | Jesus is tempted by Satan, but rejects him, confirming he is born of God, not of Adam |
| 4:12-25 | Jesus begins his ministry: prophesy, preaching, teaching, healing, gathering elect |
| 5:1-16 | The character of citizens of the new kingdom |
| 5:17-48 | Interpretation of the Law in the new kingdom; correction of misinterpretations |
| 6:1-18 | Inward religion in the new kingdom; how we are to honour God in our devotion to Him |
| 6:19-7:14 | How citizens of the new kingdom are to live, work, and behave in the world |
| 7:15-29 | Who will be in the new kingdom |
| 7:28-9:38 | Jesus’ ministry of teaching and healing, and His call for discipleship |

1. It is interesting to note that although the Temple complex included a chamber for inspecting healed lepers in accordance with the Law, healing leprosy was regarded as being as difficult as raising someone from the dead. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)