

## Beginning Week 3

### Controversy and the New Kingdom - Matthew 11:2- 13:58

#### Brothers and Sisters

**Mt 12:46.** <sup>46</sup> While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood outside, asking to speak to him. <sup>48</sup> But he replied to the man who told him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?” <sup>49</sup> And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brethren! <sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

This passage in no way undermines the importance of Mary, for she fits the criteria for what it means to be a faithful disciple. She is the first to obey the will of the Father and to believe his word (Luke 1:38, 45). Thus she is not only the natural mother of Jesus but also the preeminent member of his family of disciples. <sup>1</sup> On topic of Jesus’ **brothers**, see **Handout - Did Jesus Have Brothers?**

#### Parables

**Mt. 13:3; 10-13.** And he told them many things in parables. Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” <sup>11</sup> And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. <sup>12</sup> For to him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>13</sup> This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. <sup>14</sup> With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah

**Isaiah 6:8-11.** And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.” <sup>9</sup> And he said, “Go, and say to this people: You shall indeed hear but not understand, you shall indeed look but never see. <sup>10</sup> Gross is the heart of this people, they will

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<sup>1</sup> Mitch, C., & Sri, E. (2010). [\*The Gospel of Matthew\*](#) (p. 173). Baker Academic.

hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.” (Isaiah 6:8-11)

## Commentary

At this point Jesus begins to speak in “parables” (see Matthew 13:3). A parable is comparison that uses everyday images and stories to illustrate deeper truths.

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, *parabole* translates *mashal*, a Hebrew word used to describe proverbs (see 1 Samuel 10:12; 1 Kings 4:32), riddles (see Psalm 49:4; Sirach 47:15, and allegories (see Ezekiel 17:2; 24:3).

All these Old Testament types of *mashals* are important for studying and understanding the structure and style of the individual parables told by Jesus. But we’re interested here in why Jesus has begun to speak in parables. It’s a question that’s also on the Apostles’ minds (see Matthew 13:10). Again, the Old Testament provides the context for Jesus’ answer (see Matthew 13:13–15)

Jesus points to Isa 6:9–10, a text that tells how the prophet is sent by God to call the people to repentance but predicts that few will take the message to heart. Like Isaiah, Jesus calls God’s people to repent, but many in Israel will not respond. (Ibid. pp. 176–177) Isaiah wasn’t foretelling the future in the passage Jesus quotes (see Isaiah 6:9–10). He was talking about his own contemporaries—the people that God had called him to preach to in the 8th century BC, after the death of King Uzziah (see Isaiah 6:1; 2 Chronicles 26).

Jesus knows this. He doesn’t treat the passage from Isaiah as a prophecy that has gone unfulfilled for eight centuries. He is finding parallels between Isaiah’s contemporaries and his own. In the Pharisees’ rejection of Jesus’ preaching, history was repeating itself.

Jesus also wants to point out God’s consequences for Israel’s earlier hardness of heart. In the verses immediately following those that Jesus quotes, God tells Isaiah that his faithless generation will be sent into exile and captivity—their cities laid to waste and made desolate, their populations carried off to far distant lands (see Isaiah 6:11–12).

## Going Deeper – The Results of Hardheartedness

Jesus will later say directly that the kingdom is being “taken away” from Israel and given to the Gentiles and Jews who believe (see Matthew 21:43). Interestingly, this is the precise message in the other places where Isaiah 6:9–10 is quoted in the New Testament (see John 12:20; Acts 28:26–27).

Speaking in parables, Jesus is pronouncing judgment on those who refuse to hear Him, to recognize in His words and deeds, the Messiah promised by the prophets.

And we see in the Old Testament several occasions where prophets speak parables against rulers who have done wrong and remain blind to their need for repentance (see Judges 9:7–15; 2 Samuel 12:1–6).

However, if parables are used to cast judgment on unbelievers, they are also given for the benefit of the faithful. This is the message of Matthew’s second explanation of why Jesus speaks in parables (see Matthew 13:34–35):

All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He spoke to them only in parables, to fulfill what had been said through the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation (of the world).”

The “prophet” Matthew quotes is actually Psalm 78. Again, the Old Testament context offers rich ground for meditation and interpretation.

Psalm 78 is a long history of Israel that itself is something of a parable. It is quoted (see John 6:31) and alluded to throughout the New Testament (for a few of the examples, compare 1 Corinthians 10:4 and Psalm 78:15–16; Matthew 15:8 and Psalm 78:36–37; Revelation 2:17 and Psalm 78:24; Acts 7:21 and Psalm 78:37; Psalm 78:70 and Romans 1:1; John 21:16 and Psalm 78:71–72).

The line that Jesus quotes comes at the start of the Psalm. The Psalmist promises that he will be explaining “mysteries from of old”—that is, declaring “to the generations to come the glorious deeds of the Lord and His strength (see Psalm 78:1–4).

Isn't this what Jesus says He is doing in His parables—revealing “the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”—God's salvific plan (see Matthew 13:11)?

And is it a coincidence that Psalm 78 ends by describing the ascendancy of King David to “shepherd Jacob, His people, and Israel, His inheritance” (see Psalm 78:68–72)? As we've mentioned, one of the underlying themes—if not the predominant one—in Matthew's Gospel is the fulfillment of God's promises to David in the life and work of Jesus.

## **Life in the Church - Matthew 13:54–19:1**

### **People will be fed**

**Mt 13:54-58.** <sup>53</sup> And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, <sup>54</sup> and coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? <sup>55</sup> Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?” <sup>57</sup> And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.” <sup>58</sup> And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

**2 Kings 4:42-44.** <sup>42</sup> A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And Elisha said, “Give to the men, that they may eat.” <sup>43</sup> But his servant said, “How am I to set this before a hundred men?” So he repeated, “Give them to the men, that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, ‘They shall eat and have some left.’ ” <sup>44</sup> So he set it before them. And they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the Lord.

**Mt. 14:15-21.** When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”<sup>16</sup> Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.”<sup>17</sup> They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.”<sup>18</sup> And he said, “Bring them here to me.”<sup>19</sup> Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.<sup>20</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over.<sup>21</sup> And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

**Mt. 15:31-38.**<sup>32</sup> Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.”<sup>33</sup> And the disciples said to him, “Where are we to get bread enough in the desert to feed so great a crowd?”<sup>34</sup> And Jesus said to them, “How many loaves have you?” They said, “Seven, and a few small fish.”<sup>35</sup> And commanding the crowd to sit down on the ground,<sup>36</sup> he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.<sup>37</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied; and they took up seven baskets full of the broken pieces left over.<sup>38</sup> Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

## **Commentary**

Now Matthew returns to depicting Jesus’ mighty, god-like deeds. He miraculously feeds a crowd of 5,000 (see Matthew 14:13–21) and another crowd of 4,000 (see Matthew 15:32–39). He performs miraculous healings (see Matthew 14:34–36; 15:29–31; 17:14–21), walks on water (see Matthew 14:22–33), and is transfigured in glory (see Matthew 17:1–13).

Matthew’s account of Jesus feeding the five thousand is paralleled in the other three Gospels (see Mark 6:35–44; Luke 9:12–17; John 6:1–15). The story of Jesus feeding four thousand people appears in Matt 15:32–39 and Mark 8:1–10.

In Matthew's order of events the first feeding follows the flashback about the death of John the Baptist, which also took place in the context of a banquet. The mentioning of Herod's banquet and Jesus' banquet is powerful. At Herod's banquet there is pride and arrogance, scheming, and even murder. It takes place at a royal court. At Jesus' banquet there is healing, trust, and sharing. It takes place in a "deserted" place—an *erēmos* like the wilderness in which ancient Israel was fed with manna.

Spectacular though it was, the multiplication of the loaves was not an unprecedented event. Similar miracles involving food appear in the Old Testament. One thinks of the manna that rained down from heaven to feed the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16:4–21). So too Elijah, when he stayed with a poor widow of Zarephath, caused her nearly empty jar of meal and her depleted cruse of oil to supply the household with food throughout an extended famine (1 Kings 17:8–16). Most relevant here is the miracle of Elijah's successor, Elisha, who multiplied twenty loaves for one hundred men and still had some left over (2 Kings 4:42–44). Against this background, Christ's miracle shows that he wields a power even greater than that of the prophets of Israel, for he started with fewer loaves than Elisha and fed a vastly larger crowd!

### **Going Deeper – Eucharistic Overtones.**

But the significance of Jesus' action does not end here. The multiplication of loaves not only draws our minds back to the Old Testament; it also points us forward to the institution of the Eucharist. Readers familiar with the Last Supper account are not likely to miss the connection between these events, for Matthew recounts them in similar terms. Notice that both events take place at the same time (evening, 14:15; 26:20), and those in attendance assume the same posture (reclining, 14:19; 26:20). Likewise, Jesus performs the same actions with the bread in both instances, and in the same sequence (took, blessed, broke, gave, 14:19; 26:26). Lastly, Jesus hands the broken loaves to the same recipients (the disciples, 14:19; 26:26). No doubt Matthew considers the multiplication of the loaves an

anticipatory sign of the Eucharist to be distributed as communion to the multitudes of God's people. (*Ibid.* Mitch & Sri pp. 189-190)

### **See Handout—Deeper Implications of Matthew's Multiplication Accounts.**

Despite the many similarities between the two multiplications there are some obvious differences between the feeding of the five thousand (14:13–21) and the four thousand (15:32–39). In the latter the crowd has been with Jesus for three days; the disciples know what food is available; and seven baskets of fragments are left over. Many interpreters discern elements that pertain to Gentiles: the number of loaves (seven) and the baskets of leftovers (seven), the Greek word for “basket” (*spyris*), etc. Just as Jesus fed a Jewish crowd in 14:13–21, so here he feeds a Gentile crowd.

### **Jesus the Divine Sign**

In the midst of these miracles, the Pharisees and Sadducees still demand that He show them “a sign from heaven” (see Matthew 16:1–4). But only those with faith can recognize Him. And one of the subplots in Matthew's Gospel is the growing faith and awareness among the Apostles that Jesus is the Son of God. We will look at two illustrations of this—the story of His walking on the water and the story of Peter's confession of faith.

The story of Jesus walking on the water is a dramatic one (see Matthew 14:22–33). But the full meaning of the story depends on our understanding Matthew's use of the Old Testament background. Remember that Israel was “born” in a dramatic rescue at sea—the night crossing of the Red Sea and the drowning of Pharaoh's army (see Exodus 14:10–15:21).

God's powers over the waters are extolled throughout the Old Testament as a sign of His omnipotence over all creation and that He alone “can save from any danger” (see Wisdom 14:3–4; Psalm 77:14–20; Isaiah 43:16–17; 51:9–10). In the Old Testament, God alone has the power to walk on water. “He alone ... treads upon the crests of the sea,” we read in the Book of Job (see Job 9:8; Habakkuk 3:15).

Treading upon the sea, Jesus is being depicted as having all the powers and prerogatives of God. That He rescues the Apostles from the sea is a further reflection of His divine powers (see Psalm 77:19–20).

And He assures the Apostles with the words: “Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid.” The phrase “do not be afraid” appears often in Jewish and Christian stories of divine revelation (see Matthew 17:7; 28:5; Revelation 1:17). But we want to pay particular attention to the phrase, “it is I.” *Ego eimi*, the Greek words translated as “it is I,” literally mean “I am.” This is the same phrase that God used to reveal Himself to Moses (see Exodus 3:14) and in the Old Testament is a sign of divine identity and authority (see Isaiah 41:4, 10, 14; 43:1–13). With his careful use of Old Testament references, Matthew is showing us the divine identity of Jesus (compare John 4:26; 8:24, 28).

An interesting footnote: though others have called Him “Lord,” up until now the Apostles have not referred to Jesus as “Lord” except on one other occasion—in begging Him to save them from the raging seas (see Matthew 8:23–27). And the appeal, “Lord, save Me” appears in only one other place in the New Testament—in Matthew’s earlier sea-rescue narrative.

The story ends with the Apostles’ confession of faith: “Truly, You are the Son of God” (see Matthew 14:33). While others have called Him “Son of God” (see Matthew 2:15; 3:17; 4:3, 6; 8:29), this marks the Apostles’ first recognition of Jesus as the revealer of the Father.

## **Jesus Enters Jerusalem Mt. 19.2 – 26.1**

### **Healing Their “Blindness”**

**Mt 20:29-34.** <sup>29</sup> And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. <sup>30</sup> And behold, two blind men sitting by the roadside, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!” <sup>31</sup> The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent; but they cried out the more, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” <sup>32</sup> And Jesus stopped and called them, saying, “What do you want me to do for you?” <sup>33</sup> They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” <sup>34</sup> And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they received their sight and followed him.

**Isaiah 42:5-7.** <sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: <sup>6</sup> “I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, <sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

## **Commentary**

On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus stops to heal two blind men who have been following Him (see Matthew 20:29–34). The scene is very similar to one we saw earlier, at the beginning of Jesus’ public career—in which two blind men identify Jesus as “Son of David” and beg that He restore their sight (see Matthew 9:27–31). Here again, Matthew is drawing on the tradition that associated the Messiah, the anointed Son of David, with powers of exorcism and healing, especially related to the “blind and the lame.”

## **Aspects of the Savior**

**Isaiah 62: 4; 10-11.** <sup>4</sup> You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My delight is in her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. <sup>10</sup> Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. <sup>11</sup> Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, “Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.”

**Zechariah 9:9-12.** <sup>9</sup> Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass. <sup>10</sup> I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. <sup>11</sup> As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your

captives free from the waterless pit. <sup>12</sup> Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

## **Commentary**

Matthew brings together two distinct but related prophecies. The first is from Isaiah, who foresaw Israel's "savior" coming down a "highway" to make to take "daughter Zion" as His "bride" (see Isaiah 62:4, 10–11). The second is from Zechariah, who also saw the "savior" coming to "daughter Zion"—as a king riding atop a colt and an ass to fulfill "the blood of [God's] covenant" with Israel (see Zechariah 9:9–11; compare Exodus 24:8).

These prophetic expectations perhaps explain why Jesus, upon entering Jerusalem, delivers a parable about a king who calls a wedding feast for his son (see Matthew 22:1–14) and uses the words, "my blood of the covenant" at His last supper (see Matthew 26:28). The stage for this royal wedding covenant feast is being set by Matthew with his description of Jesus' entrance to Jerusalem. (Ibid St. Paul Center)

## **The Lord of His Lord – The Messiah Revealed**

**Mt 2:1-4.** <sup>1</sup> When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

**Mt. 26:63.** <sup>63</sup> But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

**Mt. 27:11-12.** <sup>11</sup> Now Jesus stood before the governor, and he questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so."<sup>12</sup> And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer.

**Mt. 22:41-46.** <sup>41</sup> While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them, <sup>42</sup> saying, "What is your opinion about the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They replied, "David's." <sup>43</sup> He said to them, "How, then, does David, inspired

by the Spirit, call him ‘lord,’ saying: <sup>44</sup> ‘The Lord said to my lord, “Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies under your feet”?’ <sup>45</sup> If David calls him ‘lord,’ how can he be his son?”<sup>46</sup> No one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

## **Commentary**

Matthew began his Gospel depicting three magi wanting to know the whereabouts of the newborn “king of the Jews” (see Matthew 2:2). Now, at the end of his Gospel, the subtext of the drama once again turns on whether Jesus is truly that “king of the Jews” (see Matthew 27:42). Note that the title “King of the Jews” is how non-Jews refer to Israel’s anticipated Messiah (see Matthew 2:4). In fact, in the New Testament, the phrase is only used by Gentiles (see also Mark 15:32; John 1:49; 12:13).

That is why the Jewish leadership arrests Jesus and demands to know whether He is “the Messiah” (see Matthew 26:63), while Pilate demands to know whether He is “the king of the Jews” (see Matthew 27:11).

Jesus’ kingship or “Davidic sonship”—the preoccupation of Matthew’s initial chapters—forms the climax of the controversy in his concluding chapters. We see this in the final question He puts to the Pharisees: “What is your opinion about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” (see Matthew 22:41–46).

They respond—accurately, according to their understanding of the prophetic tradition—that the Messiah is expected to be the son of David. Jesus takes the question to a deeper level, reminding them that in their own tradition, the Messiah, the Son of David, is also to be the Son of God. (**Ibid. Center**)

## **The Son of God – A confirmation of divinity**

**Mt. 3:16-17.** <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; <sup>17</sup> and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

**Mt. 4:3; 5-6.** <sup>3</sup> And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread...”<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took

him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup> and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down;”

**Mt. 15:15-16.** <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

**Mt. 17:5-6.** when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” <sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe.

**Commentary:** Notice how subtly Matthew has used the phrase “Son of God” in his Gospel. It is never heard on the lips of Jesus, although He does refer to himself as the Son of Man. “Son of God” is first used by the Devil and persons possessed by the devil (see Matthew 4:3, 6; 8:29). Only the Apostles recognize Him by this title (see Matthew 14:33; 16:16), although at both His baptism and Transfiguration, the voice of God is heard declaring Jesus to be “My beloved Son” (see Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

What Matthew has been subtly trying to show throughout his Gospel, Jesus finally reveals at the end. He does this through a skillful interpretation of Psalm 110.

### **Going Deeper – Seeing Jesus as Messiah in Psalm 110**

Jesus asks how Psalm 110 could describe David calling the Messiah “my Lord.” How could the Messiah be both David’s son and David’s lord?

To understand His question, we have to understand that Psalm 110 was believed to have been written by David and to be a Psalm about the Messiah. It describes the Messiah as begotten by God and seated at His right hand in heaven as both a princely ruler over the nations and as a priest.

Jesus’ question is how this Messiah, this royal high priest and son of God, can also be David’s son. The answer that the Pharisees cannot give is that David’s son, the Messiah, must also be a divine offspring, the Son of God.

Again, Jesus delivers this answer, not by simple proclamation, but by a patient interpretation of Psalm 110 that reveals the inadequacies of the Pharisees' interpretation.

This Psalm, many scholars believe, was composed to celebrate the crowning of a Davidic king. It is ascribed to David and could very well have originated with the crowning of Solomon, David's Son.

Recall that Solomon was anointed king shortly before David's death, causing David to cry with joy: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has this day seated one of my sons upon my throne, so that I see it with my own eyes" (see 1 Kings 1:48).

Thus, for a brief period, David could have referred to his own son, Solomon, as he is said to in Psalm 110:1, - as his Lord, that is, as his king and superior, his "Lord."

Psalm 110 is referred to more frequently in the New Testament than any other Old Testament passage. That's probably because here in Matthew Jesus essentially declares that the Psalm prophesied about Him—that He is the "Lord" who David refers to as "my Lord" in the opening verse (see Matthew 22:41–45).

And key images from the Psalm resound in the teaching and preaching of the New Testament:

1. Jesus enthroned at God's right hand (see Psalm 110:2; Matthew 26:64; Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33–34; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2).
2. The enemies of Jesus put under His foot, made His "footstool" (see Psalm 110:2; 1 Corinthians 15:25, 27; Ephesians 1:22; Hebrews 2:8; 10:13).
3. Jesus as the new Melchizedek, the mysterious high priest who offers bread and wine and bestows blessings on Abram (see Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 6:20–7:1–3, 15–17, 20–26; Genesis 14:17–20). (**Ibid.**)

## **Passion and Resurrection of Jesus - Matthew 26:3–28:20**

### **Death of Jesus**

**Mt 27:50-54.** <sup>50</sup>And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. <sup>51</sup>And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; <sup>52</sup>the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, <sup>53</sup>and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup>When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

### **Commentary**

Skepticism and cruelty are not the last words in Matthew’s narrative of the crucifixion. When the earth quakes upon His death, one of the soldiers concludes what Matthew wants all of his readers to conclude: “Truly this was the Son of God!” (See Matthew 27:54). Matthew carries the Son of God and Davidic King images through into the last scene of his Gospel (see Matthew 28:16–20). Jesus, at the end, is depicted as the son of a king, being “given” his inheritance. In this case, the kingly Father is God, and the inheritance is “all power in heaven and on earth.”

### **Inheritance – All and Forever**

**Mt. 28:16-20.** <sup>16</sup>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>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, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”

**Daniel 7:13-14.** And behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup> And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

**1 Chronicles 17:11-14.** <sup>11</sup>When your days are fulfilled to go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>12</sup> He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. <sup>13</sup> I will be his father, and he shall be my son; I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, <sup>14</sup> but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever and his throne shall be established forever.’ ”

## **Commentary**

Matthew here appears to be recalling the royal, heavenly scene in Daniel’s prophecy, where “one like a son of man” is presented before the “Ancient One.” The son figure is given “glory and kingship, nations and peoples of every language serve him, his dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away” (see Daniel 7:13–14).

The language in Daniel recalls God’s promises to David—that his “son” will be considered a son of God, that he will reign as king “forever,” and his throne shall never be “withdrawn” (see 1 Chronicles 17).

This promise is celebrated in Psalm 2, where God establishes the Messiah as king, declares him to be “my son,” and then promises: “Ask of me and I will give you the nations for an inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession” (see Psalm 2:6–8).

## Commissioning the Church

**Deuteronomy 18:15-18.** <sup>15</sup>“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—<sup>16</sup>just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ <sup>17</sup>And the Lord said to me, ‘They have rightly said all that they have spoken. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

**Joshua 1:1-4.** <sup>1</sup>After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, <sup>2</sup>“Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land which I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. <sup>3</sup> Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. <sup>4</sup> From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory.

## Commentary

Matthew’s final verses also show Jesus fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham (remember that in Matthew’s first line, Jesus is called “son of Abraham”). God had promised that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in the descendant of Abraham (see Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18)

We see at the end of this Gospel, a re-enforcement of Jesus as the “new Moses.” Throughout his Gospel Matthew has continued using Mosaic imagery and allusions to show that Jesus is the prophet-king promised by Moses (see Deuteronomy 18:15, 18).

Jesus's commissioning of the Apostles recalls Moses' commissioning of Joshua. As Joshua was ordered to cross the Jordan and make the land the "domain" of Israel (see Joshua 1:2–4), the Apostles are sent to claim all the world for the Trinity—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Mt. 28:19)

Joshua is commanded to "observe the entire law" given to Israel by Moses, as Jesus commands the Apostles to (compare Joshua 1:7, 8 and Matthew 28:20). Moses tells Joshua that God "will be with you and will never fail you or forsake you" (see Deuteronomy 31:8). The Lord himself tells Joshua: "I myself will be with you" (see Deuteronomy 31:23; Joshua 1:5, 9).

The New Testament parallel can be seen by the fact that the last words on Jesus' lips in Matthew's Gospel are, "I am with you always" (see Matthew 28:20). (**Ibid.**)