

# THE FOUR GOSPELS

for Young Catholics



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# Dear Children,

*The book you have in your hands is very precious because it contains a message that makes our life—and the lives of billions of people for the last two thousand years—beautiful.*

*This book is called the “Gospel.” It is a word from the Greek language (the language in which it was probably written) and means “Good News.”*

*Really, it is better to speak of “Gospels” in the plural, because—as you will discover as you turn these pages—four similar but different “Good News” stories make up this book. They are the Gospel of Matthew (abbreviated Mt), the Gospel of Mark (Mk), the Gospel of Luke (Lk), and the Gospel of John (Jn).*

*These four men are commonly called **evangelists**. They each wrote their account or “book” with a different style for a specific group of people. They wrote about the life, acts, and words of Jesus of Nazareth.*

*Jesus was a man who lived in Palestine at the beginning of the first century. He was raised, or resurrected, from the dead after having been unjustly crucified. We, along with his friends, recognize Jesus as the Son of God.*

*These four books were written almost 2000 years ago. Because it was written so long ago, they often use symbolic language and words that may be hard to grasp. To help you understand what you are reading, we have placed explanations of difficult words beside the gospel text. We have also imagined what questions a child like you may have for each evangelist and answered them. Where words fail, the beautiful illustrations by Michela will explain what written language is not able to express.*

*Even though it's okay if you keep this book just for yourself, the Gospel—or the Good News—is really meant to be shared. One of the most beautiful things you can do is read the Gospel at home with your parents. Then, perhaps, you can share it with your friends and catechist. So that you and the adults in your life can enjoy this book together, there are introductions to the various sections and footnotes at the bottom of most pages. At the end of the book there are appendices and maps to help you discover some of the precious treasures hidden in these texts.*

*You need to know one more thing before you begin reading. Each book of the Bible is divided into chapters and verses. This allows a reader to quickly*

*find stories or phrases which are of interest. Each Gospel—like all the other books of the Bible—is divided into chapters, and each chapter into many verses. When, for example, you find a citation like Mk 8:28 that means it can be found in the Gospel of Mark (Mk) in chapter 8 and the verse that has a 29 before it. A—citation like Lk 15:11–32 indicates a group of verses—those contained in the Gospel of Luke (Lk) in chapter 15 from verse 11 through verse 32. Lastly, if you find a comma instead of the dash (for example Jn 9: 11, 17) means that you should look in the Gospel of John (Jn) for two verses which are found in chapter 9: verse 11 and verse 17.*

*We wish you “happy reading.” We hope this book helps you to discover how much Jesus loves you, and that you choose to become his friend.*

*Father Andrea, Father Giacomo,  
Matteo, and Father Paolo*







**GOSPEL ACCORDING TO**  
**Matthew**

**AUTHOR:** ANONYMOUS, LIKELY MATTHEW,  
THE TAX COLLECTOR WHO BECAME A  
DISCIPLE OF JESUS

**AUDIENCE:** CHRISTIANS MAINLY OF  
JEWISH ORIGIN

**TIME AND PLACE:** 80-90 AD, MAY HAVE  
BEEN WRITTEN IN SYRIA

**THEMES:** JESUS IS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE  
HEBREW SCRIPTURE, THE NEW MOSES, TRUE  
MASTER OF ALL HUMANITY; THE CHURCH IS THE  
IMAGE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.



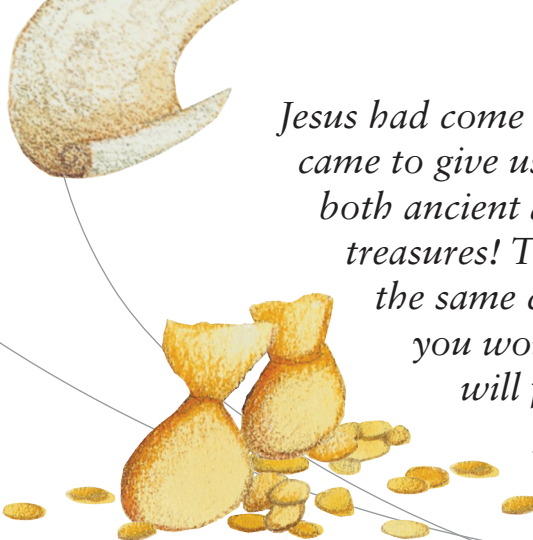
## THE SCRIBE'S TREASURE

*Before you dive into my story, I want to tell you a little secret that will help you to understand what you are about to read. Right at the center of my Gospel—around the end of chapter 13—I described a speech, or discourse, in which Jesus used a very beautiful image that blew me away. It was like he made a picture by just using his words that described my experience of Judaism. In moments of difficulty this image helped me find the right words and motivations to preach the Good News to all men, women, and children. The image Jesus used was of a treasure.*

*Jesus was on a boat that was anchored near the shore of the sea of Galilee. He spoke about the kingdom of God to the crowd that had gathered there to hear him. At the end of his discourse Jesus said, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old” (Mt 13:52).*

*That was exactly what I needed to hear!*

*At that moment, I knew that the things our religious leaders wanted us to believe about Jesus weren't true. It was not true that Jesus wanted to destroy Israel's ancient stories. Nor was it true that he had come to get rid of the Law that God had given us through Moses (the Ten Commandments). On the contrary, Jesus believed our past is a treasure. But he also did not want us to keep our treasure hidden in Jerusalem's Temple. A treasure hidden and sealed in a lockbox is useless.*



*Jesus had come to remove that lockbox from the Temple. He came to give us the keys so that we can open it and take out both ancient and new riches. Jesus wants us all to use those treasures! This is my advice to you: open my Gospel with the same curiosity and the same enthusiasm with which you would open a treasure chest. I promise that you will find great riches that will be useful every day of your life.*

*Evangelist Matthew*

## A Gospel . . . from a Jewish Perspective

The most important key to reading the Gospel of Matthew is Matthew's Jewish background. A community of Jews who had converted to Christianity wrote it. This community left many fingerprints in this piece of writing:

~ First, there are many citations of the Old Testament (forty-one direct quotes, but if we include all other mentions as well, there are about seventy). Matthew's Gospel is interested in showing the connection between the old covenant and the new one.

~ Second, the many similarities between Moses and Jesus are emphasized. When they are infants, both Moses and Jesus escape a mass killing of Jewish babies; Jesus' first sermon occurs on a mountain, which would remind most Jews of the mountain on which Moses received the tablets of the Law, or the Ten Commandments; Jesus gives five sermons, the same as the number of books of the Mosaic Law tradition—the Pentateuch. All of these details told the Jewish reader (and tell us today) to see Jesus as the new Moses, as the

bearer of the new Law, as the true Master and Teacher of Israel and all of humanity.

~ Third, this Gospel begins with Jesus' genealogy. His "family tree" shows the reader that Jesus is fully a part of human history. Having Jesus' story begin with Abraham is significant because Abraham is considered the father of the people of Israel. Matthew's gospel focuses on the humanity of Jesus, pointing to the importance of God becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ. For this reason, in art, Matthew is often depicted with an image of a winged man.

~ Lastly, there are several places in the text that show a deep knowledge of the Jewish world. For example, Matthew's Gospel mentions: paying tithes—making voluntary payments—for the Temple; wearing clothes with ritual tassels; ritual ablutions or washings; ways of offering one's sacrifice at the altar; and the practices of taking oaths. These are things the other three Gospels ignore, or if these actions are included the other three Gospels explain them in greater detail.

## Complete the Scriptures

Matthew's Gospel shows that the bridge between the old Law and the new one is the key to the complete fulfillment of the Law. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says at the very beginning of his first discourse: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (5:17).

The goal of fulfilling and of perfecting the old Law is necessary for understanding the first Gospel. Matthew's account emphasizes the continuity of the Old and New Testaments while pointing out ways the new Law breaks away from the traditions of Israel. For example, Jesus does not ignore Israel's past, but he must renew it. Jesus does not intend to abolish the old Law: but, instead he gives it a new, more profound meaning—one that the Jews of his day failed to see. In a certain sense, Matthew reads the Old Testament with Christian "reading glasses." He was among the first to take a path that is important to this very day: the awareness that only the New Testament reveals the *full* significance of the Old Testament, and that only by starting from the Old Testament can the New Testament be understood.

## Structure of the Writing

Matthew divided the central part of the Gospel into five sections. Each section contains one of Jesus' important discourses as well as narration of related events. These five sections are bookended with the stories of Christmas and Easter.

~ **The Christmas stories. A king is born in Bethlehem (1:1–2:23):** These chapters present the extraordinary events surrounding Jesus' birth.

~ **Book I. Big news (3:1–7:27):** John the Baptist paves the way and introduces Jesus, who chooses the first disciples and proclaims his first discourse which sets the tone for the rest of the Gospel.

~ **Book II. A whole world to heal (7:28–10:42):** Jesus sends his twelve Apostles out. Ten stories of Jesus healing people precede his second discourse, which has a missionary theme.

~ **Book III. The mystery of his kingdom (11:1–13:52):** We see the reactions of the people and the religious leaders to Jesus' words and works. In his third discourse Jesus uses parables to explain God's kingdom.

~ **Book IV. Disciples (13:53–18:35):** Jesus addresses his closest collaborators; his identity and his mission appear with always greater clarity.

~ **Book V. An already-present future (19:1–25:46):** Jesus heads decidedly toward Jerusalem. He speaks openly about the destiny reserved for himself and his followers.

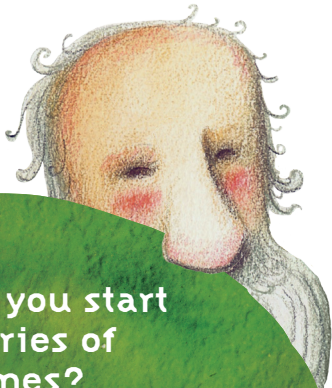
~ **The stories of Easter. Here at last is the now-present kingdom (26:1–28:20):** These chapters describe the events of the last hours of Jesus' earthly life, the apparitions of the resurrected Christ to his disciples, and the sending of the disciples to teach all the nations about Jesus.

# Matthew

## The Christmas Stories (Mt 1: 1–2:23)

Matthew begins his Gospel with a family tree. It is hard for readers today to understand the long list of names of Jesus' ancestors. Yet Matthew's choice to begin this way is extremely significant. The evangelist's intention is to give maximum importance to the incredible news that God himself became man and entered fully into the story of the people of Israel. The context in which Matthew writes the Christmas stories is extremely solemn. The repeated annunciations of the angel to

Joseph, the apparition of the star and the visit of the Magi, the interest of King Herod, the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the innocent, all show the greatness of baby Jesus. Jesus was born in circumstances that were similar to those of the birth of the most prominent person in the history of Israel, Moses. This emphasis on Jesus being the new Moses is intended to direct our attention to the divine dignity of Jesus, who is the undisputed protagonist of the Matthean work.



**1:1** Why did you start with this series of strange names?

*I wanted to reconstruct an ordered list of all Jesus' ancestors to show that he did not come from nothing. He is the fulfillment of a story willed by God that began with Abraham, the father of the people of Israel.*

## A King Is Born in Bethlehem

### The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

**1** An account of the genealogy<sup>a</sup> of Jesus the Messiah,<sup>b</sup> the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,<sup>3</sup> and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram,<sup>4</sup> and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon

a 1.1 Or *birth*

b 1.1 Or *Jesus Christ*

the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup>and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of King David.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, <sup>7</sup>and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, <sup>c</sup> <sup>8</sup>and Asaph<sup>d</sup> the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup>and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup>and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, <sup>e</sup> and Amos<sup>f</sup> the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup>and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

12 And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup>and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup>and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup>and Eliud the father of

## 1:1 Messiah, Son of David, Son of Abraham

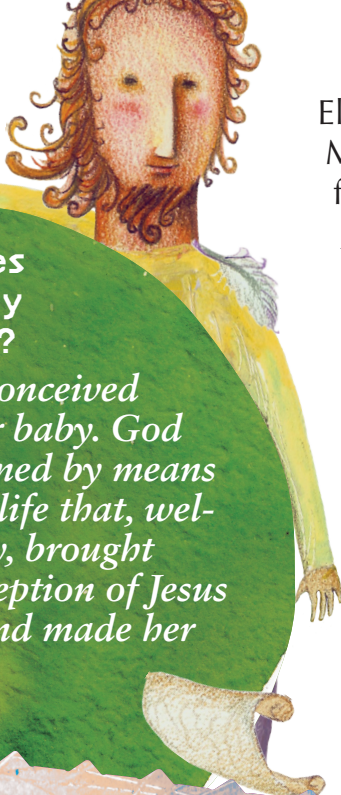
These are three titles of Jesus. “Christ” indicates that Jesus was the Messiah, the anointed one, waited for by Israel to fulfill God’s plan of salvation. “Son of David” tells us that he was the descendent of King David (from whom the Messiah was to come). “Son of Abraham” tells us the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham, father of all believers.

## 1:4–6 Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah? Why mention these four women?

*I have singled out these non-Hebrew women to remind my readers that the whole world is involved in the story of salvation. You can read their very adventurous stories in Genesis 38 (Tamar); Joshua 2:1–21 (Rahab); the Book of Ruth; and in 2 Samuel 11–12 (wife of Uriah).*

- c 1.7 Other ancient authorities read *Asa*
- d 1.8 Other ancient authorities read *Asa*
- e 1.10 Other ancient authorities read *Amon*
- f 1.10 Other ancient authorities read *Amon*





**1:18** What does “from the Holy Spirit” mean?

*Jesus was not conceived like every other baby. God himself intervened by means of his Spirit of life that, welcomed by Mary, brought about the conception of Jesus in her womb and made her his mother.*

**1:23** Emmanuel

This is one of Jesus’ other names and it indicates that he is God. In Hebrew “Emmanuel” means “God is with us.” This is confirmed in the last phrase of my Gospel (see 28:20).

Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.<sup>g</sup>

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah,<sup>h</sup> fourteen generations.

**The Birth of Jesus the Messiah**

**18** Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah<sup>i</sup> took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

g 1.16 Or the Christ  
 h 1.17 Or the Christ  
 i 1.18 Or Jesus Christ

23 “Look, the virgin shall conceive and

bear a son,  
and they shall name him  
**Emmanuel,**”

which means, “God is with us.”

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son;<sup>j</sup> and he named him Jesus.

### The Visit of the Wise Men

**2** In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, **wise men**<sup>k</sup> from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,<sup>l</sup> and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah<sup>m</sup> was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

**2:1** Why wasn't  
Jesus born in Nazareth  
where his parents lived?

*The prophecy that verse 6 cites (2 Sam 5:2 and Mi 5:1-2) foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the city of King David. Mary and Joseph went back to that city because it is where Joseph was from, and the Romans wanted to count the number of people from each city.*

### 2:1 Wise Men

Popular tradition says that there were three Magi and that they were kings. They were neither kings nor three in number. They were simply wise men who sought to understand the secret of life by watching the stars. The Magi were not Jewish but their presence in the Nativity story and arrival to the stable, which we celebrate on the day of Epiphany, highlights that Jesus came to save all people.

j 1.25 Other ancient authorities read *her firstborn son*

k 2.1 Or *astrologers*; Gk *magi*

l 2.2 Or *in the East*

m 2.4 Or *the Christ*



6 ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd<sup>n</sup> my people Israel.’”

7 Then Herod secretly called for the  
wise men<sup>o</sup> and learned from them the  
exact time when the star had appeared.  
8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying,  
“Go and search diligently for the child;  
and when you have found him, bring me  
word so that I may also go and pay him  
homage.” 9 When they had heard the king,  
they set out; and there, ahead of them, went  
the star that they had seen at its rising,<sup>p</sup> until  
it stopped over the place where the child  
was. 10 When they saw that the star had  
stopped,<sup>q</sup> they were overwhelmed with joy.  
11 On entering the house, they saw the child  
with Mary his mother; and they knelt down  
and paid him homage. Then, opening their  
treasure chests, they offered him gifts of  
gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And  
having been warned in a dream not to  
return to Herod, they left for their own  
country by another road.

### 2:7 Herod

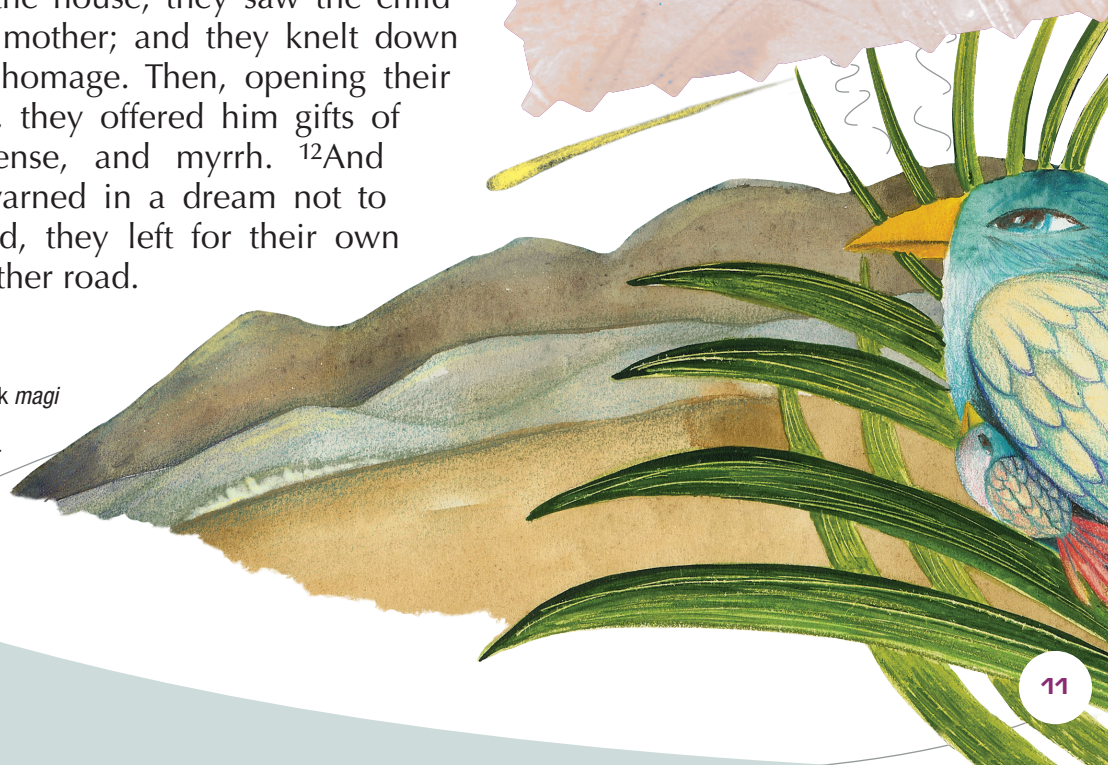
Called Herod “the Great,”  
he was the king of the re-  
gion at the time of Jesus’  
birth. His obsessive de-  
sire to be great, his cru-  
elty . . . and his fear that  
someone would take his  
throne was well-known.

n 2.6 Or rule

o 2.7 Or astrologers, Gk magi

p 2.9 Or in the East

q 2.10 Gk saw the star



**2:13** Why did Joseph have dreams with angels of the Lord in them?

*Joseph was a good and just man, who always sought to do the Lord's will. In my time it was thought that God did not speak directly to men, but that God used dreams and the angels to make his will known.*

**2:18** Why do you continually refer to the passages of the prophets?

*When I wrote this Gospel, I was thinking of my Jewish brothers and sisters who recognized Jesus as the Messiah. They knew well the texts of what you today call the Old Testament. With these passages, I have shown that Jesus fulfilled all the "old" promises, or covenants, of God to his people.*

## The Escape to Egypt

**13** Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup>Then Joseph<sup>r</sup> got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

## The Massacre of the Infants

**16** When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,<sup>s</sup> he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he

r 2.14 Gk *he*

s 2.16 Or *astrologers*; Gk *magi*

t 2.16 Or *astrologers*; Gk *magi*

u 2.21 Gk *he*

had learned from the wise men.<sup>t</sup> <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

**18** “A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled, because they are no  
more.”

### The Return from Egypt

<sup>19</sup>When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup>“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” <sup>21</sup>Then Joseph<sup>u</sup> got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”



# The Five Books of the New Law

## Book I: Big News (Mt 3:1–7:27)

John the Baptist is a “bridge” between the Jewish world and the Christian one, between the old covenant and the new, everlasting covenant. He preached conversion and prepared the men and women of his time to welcome the “big news” of the arrival of Jesus, who makes everything new. This first narrative section (3:1–4:25) is followed by the opening discourse—also known as the Sermon

on the Mount—Jesus’ most important preaching. This teaching, to which the Gospel dedicates three long chapters (from 5–7), opens with the proclamation of the beatitudes (which are a portrait of Christ himself). Jesus goes on to describe how he will interpret the Mosaic Law, how he will renew it without abolishing it, and reveals its true and profound significance.



**3:4** Did John the Baptist really dress like that and eat strange things?

*Yes. It was the custom of some of the prophets of Israel to wear clothing made from camel hair, while the wild honey and the locusts (rich in protein) were simple foods available in the desert.*

### The Proclamation of John the Baptist

**3** In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup>“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”<sup>v</sup> <sup>3</sup>This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

**4** Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him,

v 3.2 Or *is at hand*

and all the region along the Jordan,<sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruit worthy of repentance. <sup>9</sup>Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup>Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 “I baptize you with<sup>w</sup> water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with<sup>x</sup> the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

w 3.11 Or in

x 3.11 Or in

**3:6–11** So Jesus did not invent Baptism!

*You have a point! Washing yourself with water to ask forgiveness for your sins was a common practice even before Jesus was born. Christians have transformed this ritual to celebrate the new life given to us by Jesus at Easter in his resurrection.*

### 3:7 Pharisees and Sadducees

These were the two main groups of Jews at the time. The Pharisees followed the Jewish Law with great attention. The Sadducees, tied to the families of priests, emphasized Sacred Scripture over the Law, and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead or even angels.



**3:12 The  
Winnowing Fork**

It lifts the grain to sift out any impurities (the “chaff”).

**3:15 Did Jesus have sins that needed to be forgiven?**

*No, Jesus did not have Original Sin or any personal sins. In fact, for this reason, John did not want to baptize him. But Jesus wanted to share in the experiences of sinners and be a friend of all men and women. Jesus is a Messiah who was close to his people from the start.*

**3:17 Whose voice was it?**

*It was God the Father who spoke (he will speak one other time, during the Transfiguration in chapter 17) and confirmed to all that Jesus was his Son, and we must follow him.*



**The Baptism of Jesus**

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

15 But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved,<sup>y</sup> with whom I am well pleased.”

<sup>y</sup> 3.17 Or my beloved Son

## The Temptation of Jesus

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup>But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,'  
and 'On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"



**4:1–11**

**Even Jesus was tempted?**

*Certainly! The devil tried convincing him to be Messiah in a different way than what God wanted. The devil wanted Jesus to seek riches, power, and glory. Jesus chased the devil away, declaring his only wish was and is to trust in God and in his word.*



#### 4:13–15 Capernaum, Zebulun, Naphtali

Jesus began his preaching in Galilee, a region inhabited by descendants of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (two of the twelve sons of Jacob) but also inhabited by many foreigners, because his message was for all.

#### 4:17 Kingdom of Heaven

When God's perfect love, which is manifested in Jesus, is genuinely experienced and lived then the kingdom of heaven is present. It is called the kingdom "of heaven" not because it cannot exist on the earth but to distinguish it from human kingdoms.

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

#### Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee

<sup>12</sup> Now when Jesus<sup>z</sup> heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee.

<sup>13</sup> He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup> "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

<sup>16</sup> the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned."

<sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."<sup>a</sup>

z 4.12 Gk *he*

a 4.17 Or *is at hand*

## Jesus Calls the First Disciples

18 As he walked by the **Sea of Galilee**, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” <sup>20</sup>Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup>As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup>Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

## Jesus Ministers to Crowds of People

23 Jesus<sup>b</sup> went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the **good news<sup>c</sup>** of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup>So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. <sup>25</sup>And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

b 4.23 Gk He

c 4.23 Gk gospel

### 4:18 Sea of Galilee

A large fishing lake known as the Lake of Gennesaret, also called Tiberias

4:20–22 Why did they not think about it for a while before following Jesus?

*Of course they thought about it . . . but quickly Jesus became more important than anything else and any other person dear to them.*



### 4:23 Good News

My entire story, which contains the testimonies of many people who encountered Jesus, announces the Good News—the kingdom of heaven is present here on earth.

