

MATTHEW

(from *Written to be Heard*)

Message #1: God is in control of Israel's history and its witness to the nations (28.18-20).

“An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham....”

(1.1); 3 epochs, 14 generations each: the mathematical precise structure=*God in control!*

“from Abraham to David are fourteen generations;

- from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations;
- from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations” (1.17).
- “Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way...” (1.18).

--Confirming divine control, a follow-up with overlapping patterns (1.19-4.16): (1) heavenly dreams mapping earthly ways; (2) stars above directing traffic below; (3) Scripture fulfilled.

**

Message #2: The “gospel” in Matthew is “the good news of the kingdom” taught and demonstrated by Jesus (It's near, and here! 4.17; 4.23-24).

The main body of Matthew (chs 5-25) is structured around 5 teachings (“discourses”).

1	Kingdom: Law as Covenant Attitude and Action	<i>to Everyone</i>	(5-7)
2	Kingdom: Mission	<i>to Disciples</i>	(10.1-42)
3	Kingdom: Snapshots & Responses	<i>to Everyone</i>	(13:1-52)
2*	Kingdom: Mission	<i>to Disciples</i>	(18:1-35)
1*	Kingdom: Law as Covenant Attitude and Action	<i>to Everyone</i>	(23-25)

**

Message #3: To be saved—to enter this kingdom—one's righteousness must exceed that of the religious rulers (5.20). Salvation requires repentance, a daily changing of heart (D.B. Hart).

--“Change your heart,” says John, “for the kingdom of heaven has come near” (3.2).

--“Change your heart,” says Jesus, “for the kingdom of heaven has come near” (4.17).

**

Message #4: Righteousness means following the law as fulfilled—expanded upon—by Jesus.

--“I have come not to abolish but to fulfill [the law]” (5.17). How so? By extending its demand to deal with one's heart & fundamental orientations (repentance)—not just keeping the rules..

--The Law: “You shall not murder”; Spirit of Law: “If you are angry...liable to hell” (5.21-22).

--The Law: “Love your neighbor...”; Spirit of Law: “Love your enemies...” (5.43-44).

**

Message #5: Jesus's death provides “blood of the covenant...poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins,” for those faithful to the covenant, striving to obey its fulfilled law.

The covenant faithful are those who “strive for the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” a righteousness taught by Jesus (6.33).

**

Message #6: Being saved through a righteous that strives to follow the law updated by Jesus is impossible for mortals—but nothing is impossible for God. (19.26)

Salvation, entering the kingdom, is possible through divine empowerment: Matthew frames his entire story with indicators that with God being saved is possible:

(a) 1.23 “They shall name him *Emmanuel*, which means, ‘God with us.’”

(b) 28.20 “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”