

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW [TH 312]

Meeting 5. April 22th, 2021:

CHAP. II. THE CONTINUOUS READING OF MATTHEW

1. THE BIRTH AND PREPARATION OF JESUS (1:1-4:16)

- The study of the structure of Mt shows that 4:17 marks the beginning of the new great section concerning Jesus' public ministry. The first section (1:1-4:16) is about the identity of Jesus whose ministry is described in the second section: who he is and his origin.

- Mt 1–2: his origin:
- Mt 3:1-4:16: his preparation immediately before he appeared in public.

- Concern of Mt: “to show Jesus as the one in whom the hopes of the Old Testament find their fulfilment”:

- the formula ‘**This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet**’ or the like, introducing the ‘**formula-quotations**’ (six of ten times in Mt) which are a special feature of Matthew’s Gospel.
- The quotations so introduced do not relate to specific things which Jesus did, but to more general characteristics, his name and birth (1:22–23) and the geographical location of his birth, childhood and ministry (2:5–6, 15, 17–18, 23; 4:14–16).
- Every section of these chapters, whether it includes a formula-quotation or not, is heavily weighted to showing *the correspondence of Jesus’ preparation* for his ministry *to the Old Testament pattern*.
- And the aim of this (Jesus as the fulfilment of the OT) is to show that: **Jesus is the Son of God**. This higher note of fulfillment is implied by his stress on:
 - ✓ the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit (1:18, 20)
 - ✓ the name Immanuel, ‘God with us’ (1:23),
 - ✓ The explicit recognition of the Son by God (2:15; 3:17)
 - ✓ the testing of Jesus in 4:1–11

- The good reading and understanding of this first section is very recommended for the understanding of the person and the mission of Jesus. Thus, the reader will begin the second one (4:17) already “prepared to see this **Jesus not just as a preacher of God’s message, but as the Messiah** to whom the whole Old Testament revelation pointed forward, and even more than that, as **the Son of God**”.

A. The birth and childhood of Jesus (1:1-2:23)

- The aim (subject-matter):

- the beginning of Jesus’ life.
- better: ‘scriptural proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus’.

- The genealogy:

- linking Jesus to David, whose ‘son’ the Messiah was to be,
- fitting him into the whole development of God’s purpose of salvation in the Old Testament.

- Then the remaining 31 verses (Jesus’ birth and childhood), contain:

- no less than five of Matthew’s eleven formula-quotations,
- sustained parallel between the origins of Jesus and of Moses
- and other allusions to Old Testament passages.

- Comparison with the infancy narratives of Luke (1-2):

=>Mt: the deliberate scriptural orientation