

Matthew 4:12-25

Jesus' Ministry Begins

As we continue on thru chapter 4, Matthew has given us specific fulfilled prophecy of Jesus the Messiah from the OT prophets.

He has also given us an encouraging view of temptation.

Jesus being tempted in:

- The desires of His physical body; hunger.
- His protection and favor of God; cast yourself down.
- His relationship with the Father; worship.

Encouragement knowing that Jesus is able to help us in time of need.

Hebrews 2:18

For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Encouragement knowing that Jesus is victorious and we can be as well by the power of the Holy Spirit!

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, **but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.**

Galatians 5:16

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

And now we move into the beginnings of Jesus' ministry.

Matthew 4:12-17

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

***"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:
The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned."***

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Let's look at verse 12.

Matthew 4:12

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

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Since the time that Jesus was baptized, the 40 days in the wilderness and His testing by Satan, a lot has happened.

In the Book of John, chapters 1-4, John shares with us this period of time in the life of Jesus.

- Jesus choosing His disciples.
- The miracle of water turned to wine at the wedding in Cana. **John 2:1-12**
- Jesus cleansing the temple (1st time). **John 2:13-22**
- Jesus having an amazing discussion with Nicodemus. John **3:1-21**
- Jesus traveling north and meeting the Samaritan woman at the well. **John 4:1-42**

And throughout this time, Jesus' disciples are baptizing at the Jordan **with** John the Baptist.

- **John 3:22-26**
- **John 4:1-2** he clarifies that Jesus didn't baptize.

In the first 4 books of the NT, the Gospel authors give us their perspectives of the life and ministry of Jesus that builds the complete picture for us.

The 4 Gospels perspectives-

- **Matthew**-the apostle's eyewitness record written to the Jew
 - Clarity of proof that **Jesus is their Messiah**
 - Referred to as the Son of David
 - Preached the "Kingdom of Heaven"
- **Mark**-this book teaches us that Jesus is **God's perfect servant**
- **Luke**-proclaims **the Gospel** (the Good news)
 - From a Gentile perspective
 - Written by Luke the physician/historian (a Gentile)
 - researched written accounts and eyewitness records
- **John**-this apostle is writing about **the person of Jesus Christ**, the Son of God.
 - Refers to himself as ***the disciple who Jesus loved.***

So let's continue.

He departed to Galilee.

Galilee was a heavily populated area. Josephus the historian wrote there were around 3 million people in the region of Galilee at the time of Jesus.

The reason Jesus heads to Galilee? **Luke 4** tells us about Jesus in Nazareth, reading from Isaiah in the synagogue, proclaiming that He was their Messiah.

Luke 4:21

And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

They were quite amazed saying:

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"Is this not Joseph's son?" (vs 22)

Jesus confirms His proclamation:

Luke 4:24

Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country."

Jesus gives them examples of faith from scripture and confronts them for their lack of belief.

Luke 4:28-29

So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.

Jesus slips out and heads to Galilee.

Let's also answer another the question, why was John put in prison?

Mark 6:14-29 gives us the narrative; the synopsis is that John challenged Herod's morality.

Mark 6:17-18

For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

John preached repentance and John confronted people about their sin.

He specifically called Herod and his wife Herodias to repent, because Herodias had been the wife of Herod's brother Philip.

Herod didn't like it and imprisoned John for calling him out.

Yet Herod did not want to kill John out of fear of the people.

We get a sense from the text that something in Herod knew John was a just and holy man.

So now we get to verse 13.

Matthew 4:13 a

And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum,

We know that Capernaum is the home town of 3 of the disciples, Matthew (***Matthew 9***), Peter and Andrew (***Mark 1:29, Mark 2:1***). Maybe James and John as well.

Now, you would probably think that Jesus, being the Messiah and all, would have base camp in Jerusalem, but He didn't.

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The main area of Jesus ministry is done in and around Capernaum in Galilee.

Matthew 4:13-16

And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned."

Matthew is pointing out that the Messiah, Jesus is fulfilling the prophecy of **Isaiah 9:1-2**.

and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned.

The Messiah shining bright in a predominately Gentile area, yet there is a large number of Jewish cities and citizens. Josephus says that there were some 204 villages with none having less than 15,000 people.

Counting this one, we have seen 7 prophecies fulfilled by Jesus so far in the Book of Matthew. I counted, there are 16 total prophesies fulfilled in Matthew. Absolutely amazing!

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

And from here to chapter 7, we will see Jesus proclaiming the Kingdom of heaven!

Some have made elaborate distinctions between **the kingdom of heaven** and **the kingdom of God**.

Comparing the wording in the Gospel. To me, there seems to be no difference at all.

The Jews' taught that the name of God was holy and reverent. Interpreting the 3rd commandment in an interesting way, the Jewish custom was that they could not name God directly.

Even Jews today vaguely refer to Him as **the Almighty, the One Above**, or as **Hashem**, which I understand to be Hebrew for **the name**.

Some Jews are careful not to pronounce God's names except when reading the Torah or prayers.

So it would make sense that Matthew, a Jew writing to Jews, follows suit.

This gives us insight to why Matthew refers to **the kingdom of God** only 3 times and **the kingdom of heaven** 31 times.

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The book of Matthew can be split up into 6 sections:

1. 1-3 Connecting Jesus to the Old Testament
2. 4-7 Proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven
3. 8-10 Bringing the Kingdom of Heaven to our lives
4. 11-13 How people respond to Jesus
5. 14-20 Expectations of Jesus (the Messiah)
6. 21-28 Clash of the Kingdoms (the expected Kingdom, God's Kingdom)

And Jesus is now teaching, preaching repentance, healing, delivering.
Jump down to verse 23:

Matthew 4:23

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Could you imagine heading to church and some stranger from Nazareth gets up, opens the scriptures and starts to teach. How awesome would that have been?

Sorry, you got me today....

Matthew 4:18-22

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw 2 brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

***Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
They immediately left their nets and followed Him.***

Going on from there, He saw 2 other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets.

He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Jesus is hanging out down by the sea. Maybe Jesus likes the water?

- Calms the storm
- Walks on water
- Has breakfast on the beach

When I go to the beach, I am trying to be like Jesus.
(*except to calm the storm and walk on water part*)

Jesus finds 4 guys

Peter and Andrew brothers and ***James and John, the sons of Zebedee***

They have a fishing business together.

But this is not the first time Jesus met these guys.

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John 1:35-42

Andrew thinks Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus tells him to **come and see?**
So Andrew goes to get his brother Simon.
Jesus tells Simon that he is going to call him Cephas (Peter) a rock.

Luke 5:3

Jesus gets in one of the guy's boats and teaches.
After he's done teaching, Jesus wants to go fishing.
They haven't had any luck the night before, so they humor Jesus and throw out 1 net.
BOOM! We are having fish and chips tonight!

But now at this encounter in Matthew, Jesus calls them to leave their fishing gig and follow Him. And their response?

They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

*In that day, it was customary for a rabbi to have disciples; there was nothing cult-like about Jesus asking these men to be with Him constantly and to learn from Him.
In some aspects, Jesus offered them a traditional education at the feet of a rabbi; in other aspects, this was very different from a normal rabbinical education. David Guzik*

Jesus calls these men while they are working, to leave something behind, their jobs and follow Him.

Hopefully you see an interesting dynamic by looking a little deeper into the story line.
This wasn't a happen chance calling.
Jesus wasn't a stranger that just walked up and said, Hey, quit your job and come work for me.

Jesus has already had some interesting encounters with them and because of these encounters, the Holy Spirit was speaking to them.

*Who is this guy Jesus?
There is something about Him.
I have never heard anyone teach like Him before.
There is purpose and meaning of life in His words.*

So when Jesus said **follow Me**, they had no problem with the request.
They dropped everything and went with Jesus!

Maybe this is happening to you? You have had an encounter with a Christian, maybe a family member that has shared the love of God with you?
Something is stirring in your heart. Let me tell you, the Holy Spirit is speaking to you.

1 Timothy 2:3-4

***For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.***

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Would you give your heart to Jesus today?
It will be the best decision that you have ever made in your life!

(pray)

Matthew 4:23-25

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

teaching in their synagogues

Jesus had an open door. The synagogue in that day gave Jesus many opportunities to teach, because they would often give a visitor a chance to speak.

The apostle Paul used this same open door.
We need to pray for open doors to share the gospel.

I cannot tell you how many times I pray for this. We need to pray for this!
Sometimes, the Lord opens a door and I totally missed it.

We were at the park a few weeks ago after service and a couple came up and started talking to Jon and Philippa about their tent.
Missy and I joined the conversation and it was very pleasant.

When we were driving home, it hit me.

- Why didn't you ask them if they were Christians?
- Why didn't you invite them to church?

DUH? There was an open door and the pastor missed it.

preaching the gospel of the kingdom

Jesus is preaching the gospel.
The gospel—the good news of salvation through Christ.

Healing

Jesus is healing people of ***all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.***

Jesus healing people is absolute proof of His authority. Jesus is doing something that no one has ever been able to do in mass.

Can you imagine how the enemy wreaked havoc over people for all of these years.
Sickness and disease is being defeated in individual lives.

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But Jesus does more than just healing.

Matthew 4:24

Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

Something is going on in the northern land of Israel.

And look what Matthew tells us, ***they brought to Him all***

all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

To a degree, Satan has been having his way with mankind and the sin of this world has brought death and destruction to the physical body.

But when Jesus shows up, His authority and power puts this decay in its place.

The enemy has no power over Jesus!

Another prophecy fulfilled:

Hosea 13:14

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.

O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction!

When Paul is sharing his testimony to King Agrippa in the book of Acts, he shares:

Act 26:15-18

"So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

'But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.

I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

Jesus brings deliverance and Satan wants to destroy you!

When Jesus was telling Peter that he would deny Him,

Luke 22:31

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

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Peter made the choice to deny Jesus and go thru guilt, pain and sorrow. But that experience taught him something about the real battle.

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

There is an enemy, Satan is real and he will do anything to get you to fail.
But he cannot win!
So how do we win? Faith!

1 John 5:3-5

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Romans 10:17

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Spend time in God's word. Grow in wisdom and knowledge of God and who He is.

Matthew 4:25

Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

Jesus has entered into a culture that is in political uproar, that is oppressed by the government, that is so steeped in tradition that the religious leaders of the day are more concerned about legality of spirituality than the heart of God for His people.

And Jesus comes on the scene.
Jesus comes and meets the needs of the people.

Multitudes followed Him, but we will find out later, that few people committed to Him.

Would you come to Jesus today?
Allow Him to meet your needs?

Our need is this! We need a Savior! And His name is Jesus!