

## Explanatory Outline of Matthew John Hepp, Jr.

**“The written account of Jesus Christ,  
the son of David, the son of Abraham”**

*The two-word Greek phrase with which Matthew begins (Biblos geneleos) has been translated various ways. NIV says, “a record of the genealogy.” The most likely meaning of the phrase is “the written account,” as it is used in the Greek version of Genesis 2:4 and 5:1. There it marks some of the divisions in that book. Thus, Matthew continues the history of redemption begun in Genesis. In this history God fulfills divine covenants made with King David and Abraham the patriarch.*

*In this outline, quotations are from the NIV. However, the King’s title Christ is changed to its equivalent Messiah. The outline is based on two refrains indicating structure:*

- **“From that time on Jesus began”** (4:17 and 16:21)—a refrain that introduces the two major phases in the Lord’s ministry.
- **“When Jesus had finished”** (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1)—a refrain that always follows a major discourse and concludes that section.

### **Introduction (1:1 to 4:16) Preparation for the King’s Ministry**

In this section are recorded the historical events which, in accordance with prophecy, set the stage for the King’s public appearance. By chapters:

- Chapter 1. Jesus is the divine gift to the house of David.
- Chapter 2. The King is worshipped and protected as a child.
- Chapter 3. The forerunner prepares the people for the King and the kingdom.
- Chapter 4. The King is proved in the desert, then goes to Galilee.

***“From that time on Jesus began to preach,  
‘Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is near.’”***  
(4:17; this message underlies all of Part I.)

### **I. The King’s Ministry until the Great Confession (4:17 to 16:20)**

#### **A. The King’s Message (4:17 to 7:29)** “Repent because the kingdom of heaven has drawn near” (Greek)

“Kingdom of heaven” was a common Jewish designation for the expected kingdom of God. Since Jesus nowhere defined this term, He intended for the Jews to understand it according to their common usage, which came from the Scriptures. They expected a kingdom of God which, though originating in heaven, would be established on earth (Dan. 2, 7). This kingdom would perpetuate eternally the house and throne of David (2 Sam. 7, Psa. 89). Therefore, it would be a new form of “the former dominion” in which God had ruled through David over Israel (Micah 4:1–8). This kingdom had “drawn near”; therefore, it

was not God's universal rule or His rule in men's hearts, which are always present.

In this section the King goes up on a mountain to announce a "law" (Heb. 7:12; James 1:25) that will become the basis of an eternal covenant. The standard of righteousness in His law shows the requisite for entering the kingdom that is being announced as near. That standard is perfection, impossible to attain except through Him. Perfection will be granted to those who are repentant, as they are described in the Beatitudes.

**First Discourse** (chs. 5–7): *The Righteousness Required to Enter the Kingdom*

"When Jesus had finished. . . ." (7:28)

**B. The King's Works** (chs. 8–10) Proof that He is the Messiah

Here are nine scenes of miracles showing His great power and the different responses to it. In this way He proves that He can bring the kind of kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament (as seen, for example, in Isa. 11, 35). In fact, Hebrews 6:5 calls His miracles "the powers [the word for miracles] of the coming age." Also He can and does transmit the same power to His disciples—but He warns them of opposition.

**Second Discourse** (ch. 10): *The King's Servants Sent Forth*

"After Jesus had finished. . . ." (11:1)

**C. The King Rejected** (chs. 11–13) "His own did not receive him" (John 1:11).

Jesus encourages His forerunner John, who languishes in prison, with His mighty works of the kingdom. But the Jewish cities and religious leaders have accepted neither John nor Jesus. They have heard the good news but not repented. The Pharisees, in fact, decide that Jesus must die; they publicly state that His authority is from the prince of the demons.

The King pronounces woes upon the unrepentant cities and warns the leaders of unforgivable sin. Then He changes to a new method of teaching, that of parables. His main purpose is to hide from the majority, while revealing to the faithful, the "secrets of the kingdom" (13:11). The secrets are previously unrevealed information about the kingdom; they in no way redefine or change it. They reveal that the kingdom will be postponed, that there will be a time of seed-sowing and growth, and that the King will come a second time—to inaugurate the kingdom. Why had these secrets not been revealed to the Old Testament prophets (1 Peter 1:10–12)? Perhaps so that Israel could not use them as an excuse. Israel was fully responsible to accept or reject the King in His first coming.

**Third Discourse** (ch. 13): *The Secrets about the Kingdom*

“When Jesus had finished. . . .” (13:53)

**D. The King Confessed** (13:53 to 16:20) Faith amid unbelief

This section moves from unbelief in Nazareth to the Great Confession near Caesarea Philippi. Death comes to the King’s forerunner, and danger comes to the King through traps set by the religious leaders. He continues to do mighty works, but now often in places of retirement and mainly for the disciples’ sake. To the disciples, Jesus’ retreat from His foes must seem most unkingly. Nevertheless, they make the great confession through Simon, their spokesman: Jesus is the promised Messiah. Jesus blesses the first confessor with a new name, Peter. On him as bedrock (a figure similar to the one in Eph. 2:20), He promises to build His own new assembly (*ekklesia*, “church”). This church will have authority (the keys) in the coming kingdom.

**THE GREAT CONFESSION & THE GREAT PROMISE**

(16:13–20)

**“You are the Messiah.” “You are Peter...I will build my church.”**

*“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer...be killed and...be raised to life.”*

(16:21; this message underlies all of Part II.)

**II. The King’s Ministry until the Great Commission** (16:21 to 28:20)

**A. The King’s Disciples Challenged and Encouraged** (16:21 to 18:35) “take up his cross and follow me” (16:24)

Both for Master and disciple, the way to the crown will be through a cross. Yet, the crown is sure. When Jesus is transfigured on the mountain, three disciples see there a foreview in miniature of “the Son of Man coming in his kingdom” (16:28). During this period they are learning their great need of faith and an inoffensive and humble spirit.

**Fourth Discourse** (ch. 18): *Christian Humility and Meekness*

“When Jesus had finished. . . .” (19:1)

**B. The King Formally Presented and Rejected** (chs. 19–25) “See, your king comes to you” (21:5). This section is doubly long and closed by two discourses.

1. The Trip to Jerusalem (chs. 19–20) The disciples are taught lessons regarding the kingdom: its importance, its entrance, its rewards.
2. The Royal Entry and Resultant Opposition (chs. 21–22) For the first time Jesus presents Himself publicly to Israel as the Messiah. This is met by a demand to know His authority. In response, His parables reveal God’s judgments on Israel’s leaders for rejecting the Son (and therefore the

kingdom). He answers their captious questions; they do not answer His question (based on Ps. 110).

The fifth and sixth discourses follow. The fifth one (ch. 23) lays bare the wicked hypocrisy of the leaders, whose attitude had prevented the kingdom's coming at that time. The sixth—and last—discourse (chs. 24–25) traces the events that will lead to the King's Second Coming to establish His kingdom.

**Fifth Discourse** (ch. 23): *Woes upon the Religious Leaders*

**Sixth Discourse** (chs. 24–25): *Events Leading to the Future Kingdom*

“When Jesus had finished. . . .” (26:1)

**C. The King Crucified and Triumphant** (chs. 26–28) “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Messiah? (27:22)

Both parts of this section revolve around Jesus' kingship. The first part, the crucifixion or the passion, is in chapters 26–27. It has four focal points: Jesus' being anointed for death, the last supper, the betrayal and trial, then the crucifixion itself. In the supper Jesus affirms that He will not drink with them again until the kingdom comes (26:29). In both the religious trial before the Jews and the civil trial before Pilate, the question is whether or not Jesus is the King of the Jews (26:63; 27:11). He clearly affirms that He is. This charge is placed above His head when He is crucified (27:37); all the scorn and abuse center on this very theme of His kingship. Even the tomb is sealed to prove that He is a “deceiver” (27:63–64).

The second part is the triumph, recorded in chapter 28. In spite of every effort by Jewish and Roman authorities, the Lord has risen. He reveals Himself to some women and to the eleven closest disciples. The book quickly reaches its culmination as the risen Messiah gives His Great Commission. Claiming all authority, he sends forth His servants to make disciples who will keep His commandments. This time He sends them to all the world, not just to Israel. He promises to be spiritually present with them until the end of the age. At that time, as He had said before, in His renewed physical presence He will usher in the “coming age,” the kingdom.

## **THE GREAT COMMISSION & THE GREAT PRESENCE**

(28:18–20)

**“Go and make disciples...I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.”**