

# Matthew Survey, Section 1

## Overview & Introduction

Lessons 1–2 • Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

### About This Section

These two introductory lessons lay the entire framework for Matthew’s gospel and, indeed, for God’s program with Israel as a whole. Before opening Matthew chapter 1, Keith establishes where we are in Israel’s history, why there are four gospel accounts, and what each one is specifically designed to present. The goal is to enter the survey already thinking like a member of the remnant of Israel — understanding the kingdom purpose God set in motion with Abraham, the long and painful road Israel traveled under their law contract, the climactic stage that the gospel accounts record, and the prophetically prescribed reason Matthew presents the Messiah as Israel’s King.



[www.enjoythebible.org](http://www.enjoythebible.org)

### Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	Matthew’s four-fold sectional breakdown; the Abrahamic Covenant and the kingdom purpose; Israel’s positional vs. functional readiness at Sinai; the law contract and its consequences
Lesson 2	Leviticus 26’s five courses of punishment and the five installments of the final course; Daniel’s time schedule; the four gospel accounts and the four “beholds” from Zechariah

### Lesson Summaries

**L1**

#### The Framework & the Kingdom Purpose

*Israel’s History, the Abrahamic Covenant, and the Law Contract*

##### Matthew’s Four-Fold Sectional Breakdown

- Section 1 (1:1–7:29) — focus: the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7), foundational doctrine for Israel’s remnant
- Section 2 (8:1–16:20) — focus: Matt. 13, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven
- Section 3 (16:21–23:39) — focus: Matt. 22–23, the final denouncement of

Israel's vain religious system

- Section 4 (24:1–28:20) — focus: Matt. 24–25, the Day of the Lord's wrath and Daniel's time schedule
  - Survey approach: understand the material as the edification of a member of the remnant of Israel, not merely as a dispensational exercise

### The Abrahamic Covenant & the Kingdom Purpose

- Gen. 12:1–3 — God separates Abram to create a nation through whom his kingdom would be established on earth
- The “greatness” of the nation is not size or wealth but God's nearness and righteous rule through them (Deut. 4:5–8)
- Isaiah's vision (Isa. 2:1–5): nations flowing to Zion because “out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem”
- Daniel 2:44–45: “the God of heaven [shall] set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed” — this is the gospel of the kingdom
- Jacob at Bethel (Gen. 28:10–19): “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” — the land as God's chosen holy habitation
- Moses' song (Exod. 15:13–18): Israel going to God's “holy habitation”; they understood the kingdom issue at this moment

### Positional vs. Functional Readiness — The Law Contract

- Coming out of Egypt, Israel had positional readiness to enter the land but not functional readiness to carry out God's kingdom purpose
- Between the Red Sea and Sinai (Exod. 15–18), God educated Israel in their need for his Jehovahness and grace — they failed to learn
- At Sinai, Israel rejected God's grace and opted for the law contract — locking themselves into proving their natural fitness through performance
- The consequence: a long history of learning through punishment and chastisement that they are absolutely unfit apart from God's Jehovahness and grace

## Five Courses of Punishment & the Four Gospel Accounts

*Israel's Road to the Climactic Stage and the Prophetic Reason for Four Gospels*

### Leviticus 26 — Israel's History Outlined in Advance

- Lev. 26:14ff. outlines five successive courses of punishment for covenant failure, each more severe than the last
  - Course 1: The period of the Judges — bondage and deliverance cycles
  - Course 2: Solomon's day — Elijah turns the heavens to iron and earth to brass
  - Course 3: Elisha's time
  - Course 4: “Till there was no remedy” (2 Chron. 36:14–16) — exile to Babylon becomes inevitable
  - Course 5 (final): Five installments — Israel scattered among the nations and the kingdom not yet established

### The Five Installments of the Fifth Course

- 1st installment: 70 years of Babylonian captivity — the land enjoys its sabbaths (Lev. 26:34–35; Jer. 25, 29)
- 2nd installment: 49-year Persian period — Daniel's 490-year time schedule begins (Dan. 9:21ff.); total 560 years for the fifth course

L2

- 3rd installment: The 400-year silence of God — no prophet in Israel from Malachi to John the Baptist (Amos 8:11); the Apocrypha is not Scripture
- 4th installment: The Messiah's earthly ministry — this is the climactic stage recorded in Matthew through John
- 5th installment: The Day of the Lord's wrath — purging, avenging, and establishing the kingdom (yet future)
  - Hosea 13:9; 14:1–3: The living remnant of the fifth installment will make the confession Israel should have made at Sinai — "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help"

#### **John the Baptist — Leviticus 26:40–42 Put into Effect**

- Luke 3:1–4: "The word of God came unto John" — breaking the 400-year silence; Lev. 26:40–42 is being fulfilled
- John's preaching of "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" is the national/historical confession God called for
- Lev. 26:42: When that confession takes place, God says, "then will I remember my covenant with Jacob... with Abraham" — the kingdom moves forward

#### **The Four Gospel Accounts — Four "Beholds" from Zechariah**

- The common notion (Matthew for Jews, Mark for Romans, Luke for Greeks, John for the world) completely misses right division
- Zechariah consolidates four prophetic presentations of the Messiah that Israel was told to behold:
  - Zech. 3:8 — "Behold, my SERVANT the Branch" → Mark: presents the Messiah as God's perfect Servant
  - Zech. 6:12 — "Behold THE MAN whose name is the Branch" → Luke: presents the Messiah as the perfect Son of Man
  - Zech. 9:9 — "Behold thy KING" → Matthew: presents the Messiah as Israel's rightful King
  - Zech. 13:7 — "My SHEPHERD, the man that is my fellow" → John: presents the Messiah as God himself, Jehovah in human flesh
- Each gospel opens with a declaration fulfilling its respective behold: Matt. 1:1 (royal genealogy), Mark 1:1–4 (Servant ministry), Luke (birth/Adam genealogy), John 1:1–2, 14 (divine pedigree)

## **Key Doctrinal Distinctions**

### **Israel's Program vs. the Dispensation of Grace**

Matthew's gospel is not written to or about believers today in the dispensation of grace. When reading Matthew, we are in "times past" — God's program with the nation Israel. The portion of God's word that describes what is going on today is Romans through Philemon (Paul's epistles). Hebrews through Revelation pertains to "things to come" — the resumption and fulfillment of God's program with Israel after this present dispensation concludes. Right division (2 Tim. 2:15) requires recognizing these boundaries before drawing any application from Matthew's gospel.

## Positional Readiness vs. Functional Readiness

At the time of the Exodus, Israel had positional readiness — they were God’s nation, chosen and redeemed, with every right to possess the land. What they lacked was functional readiness — the capacity to actually carry out God’s kingdom purpose as his nation. God’s design was to make them functionally ready on the basis of his Jehovahhness and grace alone. By choosing the law contract at Sinai, Israel rejected that provision and committed to demonstrating their natural fitness through performance — a course that was doomed to fail and required centuries of painful education to correct.

## The Purpose of the Four Gospel Accounts

The four gospel accounts are not written for four different human audiences (Jews, Romans, Greeks, and the world). Each account was prophetically prescribed to present the Messiah in one of four specific ways that God told Israel to behold him: as God’s perfect Servant (Mark; Zech. 3:8), as the perfect Man (Luke; Zech. 6:12), as Israel’s rightful King (Matthew; Zech. 9:9), and as God’s own Shepherd — Jehovah in human flesh (John; Zech. 13:7). This explains why each gospel emphasizes different details and opens with a different kind of declaration about the Lord Jesus Christ.

## The Fifth Course of Punishment and Its Installments

Leviticus 26 outlines five courses of punishment that Israel would experience for covenant failure. The fifth and final course — exile and dispersion — has five installments: (1) 70 years of Babylonian captivity, (2) the Persian period per Daniel’s 490-year time schedule, (3) the 400-year silence of God, (4) the Messiah’s earthly ministry (the climactic stage recorded in the gospels), and (5) the Day of the Lord’s wrath yet to come. Understanding which installment the reader is in when they open Matthew 1:1 is essential to appreciating the urgency and significance of everything that transpires in the gospel accounts.

---

## Key Scripture References

<b>Gen. 12:1–3</b>	The Abrahamic Covenant: God purposes to make Israel a great nation and establish his kingdom through them
<b>Deut. 4:5–8</b>	The “greatness” of Israel defined — not size or wealth, but God’s nearness and righteous statutes going out to the nations
<b>Isa. 2:1–5</b>	Isaiah’s vision of the kingdom established: nations flowing to Zion because of God’s law going forth from Jerusalem
<b>Dan. 2:44–45</b>	The God of heaven sets up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed — the foundation of the gospel of the kingdom
<b>Gen. 28:10–19</b>	Jacob at Bethel: the land recognized as “the house of God” and “the gate of heaven” — God’s intended holy habitation
<b>Exod. 15:13–18</b>	Moses’ song: Israel going to God’s “holy habitation”; the LORD shall reign for ever and ever
<b>Lev. 26:14–42</b>	The five courses of punishment for covenant failure; Israel’s history outlined

	in advance, including the five installments of the fifth course
<b>2 Chron. 36:14–21</b>	The fourth course culminates: “till there was no remedy”; exile to Babylon fulfills Lev. 26:32–35
<b>Dan. 9:1–2, 21ff.</b>	Daniel’s prayer and Gabriel’s 490-year time schedule — the remaining installments of the fifth course of punishment
<b>Amos 8:11</b>	The famine of hearing the word of the LORD — the 400-year silence of God (third installment)
<b>Hosea 13:9; 14:1–3</b>	The confession the remnant will make in the fifth installment: “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help”
<b>Luke 3:1–4</b>	John the Baptist breaks the 400-year silence; Lev. 26:40–42 put into effect — the climactic stage commences
<b>Zech. 3:8; 6:12; 9:9; 13:7</b>	The four prophetic “beholds” for the Messiah — the foundation for the four gospel accounts
<b>Matt. 1:1</b>	The royal genealogy opening: “the son of David, the son of Abraham” — Matthew fulfills the behold of the King
<b>2 Tim. 2:15</b>	“Rightly dividing the word of truth” — the dispensational principle essential to reading Matthew’s gospel correctly

---

For further study visit [www.enjoythebible.org](http://www.enjoythebible.org)