

Dr. David Turner, Matthew

Lecture – 1B – Introduction to Matthew II: Major Themes

NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Briefing Document, 3) Study Guide, 4) FAQs

1) Abstract

This lecture excerpt focuses on **major themes** present in the Gospel of Matthew, moving beyond questions of historical origin. A significant theme is the **Gospel's deep connection to the Old Testament**, with frequent allusions and around 50 formal quotations demonstrating how Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy and history. The lecture then explores **Matthew's portrayal of Jesus**, highlighting several key titles such as **Messiah (Christ), Son of David, Son of Abraham, Emmanuel (God with us), King, Son of God, Lord, Teacher**, and most notably, **Son of Man**, discussing the various implications of these titles. Finally, the lecture briefly touches upon the **kingdom of heaven and conflict with Jewish leaders**, emphasizing that Matthew's work, while having a Jewish audience, ultimately points towards the **inclusion of Gentiles** and the **universal mission of the church**.

2) Briefing Document

Here is a detailed briefing document reviewing the main themes and most important ideas or facts from the provided source, "Turner_Matthew_Lect01B_English.pdf":

Briefing Document: Major Themes in the Gospel of Matthew

Source: Excerpts from "Turner_Matthew_Lect01B_English.pdf" by Dr. David Turner

Date: October 26, 2023

Overview: This document summarizes key themes and concepts discussed in Dr. David Turner's lecture 1B, focusing on the major themes present in the Gospel of Matthew. The lecture moves from historical origins to the observed theological and narrative emphases of the Gospel.

Key Themes and Concepts:

1. Relationship of Jesus to the Old Testament: Matthew places a crucial emphasis on the connection between Jesus and the Hebrew Bible (referred to by Turner potentially as the "Hebrew Bible" rather than "Old Testament" to avoid connotations of being antique or outmoded). The Gospel demonstrates how Jesus' ministry and teaching fulfill the history, ethics, and prophecies of Israel's scriptures.

- **Pervasive Use of the Old Testament:** Matthew's "pervasive use of the Old Testament" is a primary reason for its noted "Jewish orientation."

- **Fulfillment:** Matthew views "both the historical patterns and the prophetic oracles of the Hebrew Bible as filled with ultimate significance through the ministry and teaching of Jesus." Jesus came "not to abolish but to fulfill the law and the prophets" (Matthew 5:17).
- **Allusions and Quotations:** While numerous informal allusions are difficult to count, there are approximately 50 formal quotations from the Old Testament in Matthew. These quotations are used by different speakers within the narrative (Jesus, Matthew as an editorial comment, etc.) and are introduced by formulas like "in order that it might be fulfilled" or "that it is written."
- **Understanding Jesus through the Old Testament:** Matthew derives his understanding of Jesus by viewing "the Old Testament in light of Jesus, and at Jesus in light of the Old Testament."

2. Matthew's Christology (Titles and Descriptions of Jesus): Matthew presents various titles and descriptions for Jesus, often rooted in Old Testament understanding, to demonstrate his identity and significance. These titles appear in a specific order in the Gospel, building the reader's understanding of Jesus.

- **The Messiah (Christ):** This is the first title used for Jesus in Matthew (1:1).
- It is central to Jesus' identity, linking him to "Israel's history and hopes."
- While the traditional Jewish understanding of Messiah was often royal, Matthew presents a "lowly, suffering, and eventually crucified Messiah," which was "evidently foreign to the Judaism of Jesus' day."
- Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah (16:16) is significant, although the disciples were initially told not to publicize this due to growing opposition (16:20).
- Jesus' claims to be the Messiah culminate in the Passion Week conflicts and his trial (22:41, 23:10, 24:23-26, 26:63).
- The crucified Messiah is ultimately "raised and given all authority" (28:19), echoing Daniel 7:13-14.
- **Son of David:** This title appears more frequently in Matthew than other Gospels and immediately follows "Messiah" in 1:1.
- Matthew emphasizes Jesus' Davidic lineage in the infancy narrative (1:6, 17, 20).
- The title is often used by those calling on Jesus for healing (9:27, 15:22, 20:30-31), indicating that "Jesus uses his royal authority to help, not to oppress the needy."
- The crowds acknowledge Jesus as the Son of David during the triumphal entry (21:9).
- Jesus' final disputation with the Jewish leaders is framed by the identity of the Messiah as the Son of David (22:41-45), where Jesus asserts that the Son of David is also the "Son of God."
- Matthew's use of this motif highlights Jesus' "Messianic credentials to heal and to rule," rooted in Old Testament promises to David.
- **Son of Abraham:** Appears in 1:1, emphasizing Jesus' Abrahamic lineage (1:2, 17).

- This title signifies Jesus as the one who "culminates God's plans, which originated in Abraham."
- Matthew stresses that "ethics, not ethnicity, is the issue," highlighting that blessing extends beyond ethnic Jews to include Gentiles through faith in Jesus (8:10-12). This connects to God's promise that "in Abraham all nations would be blessed" (Genesis 12).
- The concept of resurrection is linked to the promise made to Abraham (22:32).
- **Emmanuel:** Means "God with us," based on the citation of Isaiah 7:14 in Matthew 1:23.
- Forms a "literary inclusio" with Matthew's ending (28:20), stressing "the presence of God in the person of Jesus" throughout the narrative.
- Also appears in the context of church discipline (18:20).
- **The King:** Introduced with the wise men searching for the "newborn king of Israel" (Matthew 2).
- Jesus' triumphal entry is presented as the act of a king (citing Isaiah 62:11).
- He is portrayed as the "enthroned son of man" who judges and separates the blessed from the cursed (25:31, 34, 40, 41).
- Jesus accepts the title before Pilate (27:11) and endures mockery of it (27:29, 37, 42).
- After resurrection, he is given "all authority" as the exalted king (28:18).
- **Son of God:** Potentially the "preeminent title of Jesus in Matthew."
- Linked to Jesus' virginal conception (1:23) and fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 7:14).
- Jesus' sojourn in Egypt "recapitulates the history of Israel" (2:15, Hosea 11:1).
- Endorsed by the Father at his baptism (3:17, Isaiah 42:1).
- Challenged by Satan in the wilderness, where Jesus demonstrates submission to the Father's will rather than spectacular acts (4:3-5).
- Shown through authority over evil spirits and weather (8:29, 14:33).
- Unique relationship with the Father, making him the "sole agent through whom people may come to know the Father" (11:27).
- Acknowledged by Peter as the "Messiah, the Son of the living God" (16:16).
- Demonstrated at the Transfiguration, emphasizing that "as God's son, his word alone must be heeded."
- The parable of the vineyard portrays the rejection of "God's unique son" by the Jewish leaders (21:33ff).
- His divine sonship is asserted in his response to Caiaphas' question (26:63, echoing Peter's confession), citing Daniel 7:13.
- Mockery and confession regarding his claim to be the Son of God occur at the crucifixion (27:40, 43, 54).
- **Lord:** Used in Matthew with a range of meanings, from a polite address ("Sir") to signifying Jesus' divinity.
- Applies to Jesus a passage originally referring to Yahveh/Adonai in Isaiah 40:3 (Matthew 3:3).

- Used to address Jesus as the "eschatological judge" (7:21-22, 25:37, 44).
- Frequent address by those seeking healing and by the disciples.
- Jesus calls himself Lord, demonstrating authority (10:24-25, 12:8, 21:3, 24:42).
- Context is crucial for interpreting the meaning of "Lord" in each usage.
- **Teacher:** Primarily used by those who do not believe in Jesus (religious leaders, tax collectors, etc.).
- Jesus calls himself teacher on three occasions (10:24-25, 23:8, 26:18).
- While not inherently negative, for Matthew, Jesus is "so much more than merely a teacher," and using only this term can be seen as "damning Jesus with faint praise."
- **Son of Man:** The most frequently used term for Jesus in the Gospels, found only in sayings attributed to him (with one exception).
- Used 30 times in Matthew with three main nuances:
- **Suffering and Humility:** Describes Jesus' lack of a home (8:20), being called names (11:19), his death and burial (12:40), persecution (17:12), betrayal (17:22, 20:18, 26:2, 24, 45), serving others and giving his life as a ransom (20:28). Background includes the Old Testament use of the term for frail humanity and prophets.
- **Present Power and Authority:** Indicates Jesus' authority to forgive sins (9:6), his position as "lord of the Sabbath" (12:8), and his authoritative kingdom message (13:37).
- **Glorious Coming King:** Focuses on Jesus' future return to judge (16:27-28, 24:27, 30, 37, 39, 25:31, 26:64) and reward his followers (19:28). The background for these authoritative and glorious uses is Daniel 7:13, which portrays the Son of Man receiving dominion.
- The "duality of present and future nuances" is "crucial for one's understanding of Matthew's kingdom of heaven."

3. The Kingdom of Heaven: This is Matthew's distinct term for the reign of God, used 32 times compared to the less frequent "kingdom of God."

- **Equivalence with Kingdom of God:** The terms are generally interchangeable, as shown by comparing parallel passages in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- **Metonymy:** Matthew's use of "kingdom of heaven" is likely a figure of speech (metonymy) due to "reverence for the name of God in Matthew's Christian Jewish community," associating heaven (God's realm) with God himself. This practice is seen in Daniel.
- **Dynamic Nature (Inaugurated and Consummated):** The kingdom "refers to the nearness or even presence of the rule of God in the person works and teaching of Jesus" (present aspect, e.g., 3:2, 4:17, 10:7). It also "applies or clearly describes the future reign of Jesus upon the earth" (future aspect, e.g., 6:10, 13:38-43, 25:34, 26:29).
- **Characterizes Preaching:** The preaching of Jesus, John, and the apostles is centered on the kingdom.

4. Conflict: Conflict is a recurring theme in Matthew, evident from the beginning.

- **Early Conflict:** Begins with Herod's attempt to harm the infant Jesus (chapter 2).
- **Conflict with Jewish Leaders:** Continues through John the Baptist's ministry and intensifies throughout Jesus' ministry, culminating in the "awful denunciations of chapter 23."
- **Sectarian Dispute:** While this emphasis on conflict has been misused by anti-Semites, Turner argues it represents a "religious dispute between Jews, not a Gentile polemic against the Jewish race." Matthew was likely a Jew writing to Christian Jews in conflict with non-Christian Jews, a common "sectarian conflict" during that era.
- **Misuse by Anti-Semites:** Christians must "acknowledge with shame the fact that Matthew has been misused by anti-Semites," but interpreting Matthew itself as an anti-Semitic polemic is "anachronistic."

5. The Church and the Gentile World Mission: Despite being considered the "most Jewish of the Gospels," Matthew is the only one to use the term "church" (ekklesia) for the community of Jesus' disciples.

- **Inclusion of Outsiders:** From the start, Matthew shows the community includes individuals from "unexpected sources," such as Gentile women in the genealogy (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba), the wise men (Gentiles), the Roman officer, the Canaanite woman, and the Roman soldier. These examples broaden the understanding of God's people beyond ethnic Jews.
- **Expansion of Vision:** These episodes encourage Matthew's "original Jewish readers to expand their vision of the people of God."
- **Universal Scope of the Mission:** The message of the kingdom is intended for "all the nations."
- **The Great Commission (28:18-20):** Jesus' final commissioning is based on his exalted status and "universal authority" (linking back to the Son of Man in Daniel 7). He sends the disciples to "make disciples of all who will obey His commands" among the nations.
- **Jesus' Presence:** The commission is daunting but possible because Jesus promises to "be with them all the days to the end of the age," forming an inclusion with the "Emmanuel" theme at the beginning of the Gospel.

Conclusion: Matthew is characterized by its deep engagement with the Old Testament to demonstrate Jesus' identity and fulfillment of prophecy. His Christology is rich, employing various titles that highlight his roles as Messiah, Son of David, Son of Abraham, Emmanuel, King, Son of God, Lord, Teacher, and most importantly, Son of Man, encompassing his suffering, present authority, and glorious future reign. The Gospel presents the dynamic nature of the Kingdom of Heaven, inaugurated in Jesus' ministry and to be consummated at his return. While highlighting conflict with the Jewish establishment, Matthew ultimately emphasizes the formation of the Church and a universal mission to make disciples of all nations, empowered by Jesus' enduring presence and authority.

3) Study Guide:

Studying Matthew 1B: Major Themes

This guide will help you review the key themes and concepts discussed in the source material regarding the Gospel of Matthew.

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences based on the provided text.

1. According to the lecture, what is one of the major reasons why the Gospel of Matthew is considered to have a Jewish orientation?
2. How does the lecture distinguish between "allusions" and "quotations" to the Old Testament in Matthew?
3. What is the first major title for Jesus presented in the Gospel of Matthew, and how does it link him to Israel's history and hopes?
4. How is the title "Son of David" used in Matthew, and what does it stress about Jesus?
5. According to the lecture, what is the significance of Jesus' title "Son of Abraham" in Matthew, beyond simply showing his Jewish roots?
6. How does Matthew use the citation of Isaiah 7:14 to develop the significance of Jesus as Emmanuel?
7. What are the three primary nuances of the term "Son of Man" as used in Matthew, according to the lecture?
8. Why does Matthew primarily use the term "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God"?
9. How does the lecture address the potential accusation that Matthew's emphasis on the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders is anti-Semitic?
10. What evidence does the lecture provide that Matthew's gospel, despite its Jewish orientation, also has a focus on the church and the Gentile world mission?

Essay Questions

Consider these questions for a more in-depth understanding of the material. Do not provide answers in this section.

1. Discuss the pervasive use of the Old Testament in Matthew's Gospel. Analyze the different types of Old Testament references (allusions vs. quotations) and explain how Matthew uses these references to present his view of Jesus.
2. Compare and contrast the various titles and descriptions of Jesus discussed in the lecture (Messiah, Son of David, Son of Abraham, Emmanuel, King, Son of God, Lord, Teacher, Son of Man). Explain how Matthew uses each title to highlight different aspects of Jesus' identity and mission.
3. Analyze the significance of the "kingdom of heaven" in Matthew's Gospel. Explain its dynamic nature (inaugurated and consummated) and how it is central to the preaching of Jesus, John the Baptist, and the apostles.
4. Examine the theme of conflict in Matthew's Gospel, specifically focusing on the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. Discuss how the lecture addresses concerns about anti-Semitism in light of this theme.

5. Discuss Matthew's focus on the church and the Gentile world mission. How does Matthew incorporate unexpected sources and individuals into the community of Jesus' disciples, and how does the Great Commission at the end of the Gospel emphasize the universal scope of the message?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Allusions:** Informal references to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) within the text of Matthew, which are difficult to count precisely.
- **Christology:** The study of the nature and person of Jesus Christ. Matthew's Christology is heavily influenced by his understanding of the Old Testament.
- **Formal Quotations:** Direct citations of specific verses from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) within the text of Matthew, numbering around 50.
- **Hebrew Bible:** A term preferred by the lecturer over "Old Testament" as it avoids the connotation of being antique or outmoded. Matthew viewed these scriptures as filled with ultimate significance through Jesus.
- **Inclusio:** A literary device where a theme, phrase, or concept is used at both the beginning and the end of a text to form a framework or "bookends." Matthew's use of "Emmanuel" (God with us) is an example.
- **Intertextuality:** The relationship between texts, particularly how one text influences or refers to another. Matthew's Gospel demonstrates pervasive intertextuality with the Old Testament.
- **Kingdom of Heaven:** Matthew's distinctive term, occurring 32 times, referring to the nearness or presence of God's rule in Jesus, and also the future reign of Jesus upon the earth. It is largely synonymous with "kingdom of God."
- **Kurios:** The Greek term for "Lord," used by Matthew to refer to Jesus. It can range in meaning from a polite address to a term with overtones of divinity.
- **Messiah:** Anointed one, the first title used for Jesus in Matthew. It links Jesus to Israel's history and hopes and is considered key to his identity in Matthew.
- **Metonymy:** A figure of speech in which a thing or concept is referred to by the name of something closely associated with that thing or concept. Matthew's use of "kingdom of heaven" for "kingdom of God" is likely an example.
- **Son of Abraham:** A title for Jesus in Matthew that stresses his Abrahamic lineage and portrays him as the one who culminates God's plans, highlighting that ethics, not ethnicity, is key to God's blessings.
- **Son of David:** A title for Jesus occurring frequently in Matthew, stressing his Davidic lineage and demonstrating that he uses his royal authority to heal and rule.
- **Son of God:** A crucial title for Jesus in Matthew, often linked to "Messiah," signifying his unique relationship with the Father and his authority.
- **Son of Man:** A term used frequently by Jesus in the Gospels, including Matthew, with three primary nuances: stressing his suffering and humility, his present power and authority, and his glorious coming as king. The background includes passages in Ezekiel and Daniel 7.

- **Tetragrammaton:** The four Hebrew letters (YHWH) representing the name of God (Yahweh), often translated as "Lord" in the Septuagint and avoided by religious Jews who would say "Adonai" or "Hashem" instead.

Quiz Answer Key

1. One major reason for the Jewish orientation of Matthew is his pervasive use of the Old Testament, including numerous allusions and around 50 formal quotations. This demonstrates the author's emphasis on Jesus fulfilling the Jewish scriptures.
2. Allusions are informal and hard-to-count references permeating the text, like in the genealogy in chapter 1. Quotations are easier to count, numbering around 50, and are direct citations of specific Old Testament verses.
3. The first major title for Jesus in Matthew is the Messiah (or Christ), which strongly links Jesus to Israel's history and hopes and is considered the key to his identity in Matthew.
4. The title "Son of David" occurs more frequently in Matthew and stresses Jesus' Davidic lineage, demonstrating his Messianic credentials to heal and rule by connecting his royal authority with helping the needy.
5. Beyond showing Jesus' Jewish roots, the title "Son of Abraham" portrays Jesus as the one who culminates God's plans originating in Abraham. It also highlights that belief and repentance, rather than merely descent from Abraham, are required for God's blessings.
6. Matthew uses the citation of Isaiah 7:14 ("Emmanuel," meaning God with us) in chapter 1 to signify the presence of God in the person of Jesus. This theme is reinforced at the end of the Gospel with Jesus' promise to be with his disciples.
7. The three primary nuances of "Son of Man" in Matthew are passages stressing Jesus' suffering and humility, passages stressing his present power and authority (like forgiving sins and being Lord of the Sabbath), and passages focusing on him as the glorious coming king who will judge.
8. Matthew primarily uses "kingdom of heaven" likely due to the association of heaven as God's realm with God himself, possibly as a figure of speech (metonymy) occasioned by reverence for the name of God in his Christian Jewish community.
9. The lecture acknowledges that Matthew has been misused by Christian anti-Semites but argues this was not Matthew's intent. The conflict portrayed is most likely a religious dispute between Christian Jews and non-Christian Jews of the time, not a Gentile polemic against the Jewish race.
10. The lecture points to the inclusion of individuals from unexpected sources (like Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, the wise men, a Roman officer, a Canaanite woman, and a Roman soldier) in the narrative as evidence that Matthew's readers were encouraged to expand their vision of God's people to include Gentiles, culminating in the universal scope of the Great Commission.

FAQs

How does Matthew use the Old Testament and what is its significance?

Matthew makes extensive use of the Old Testament, viewing the Hebrew Bible not as "old" or outdated, but as filled with ultimate significance through Jesus' ministry and teaching. He uses around 50 formal quotations and numerous informal allusions to demonstrate that Jesus' person, ministry, and teaching are deeply rooted in the history, ethics, and prophecies of Israel's Scriptures. This pervasive use highlights the Jewish orientation of the Gospel and establishes Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises.

What are some of the key titles or descriptions of Jesus presented in Matthew's Gospel? Matthew presents several crucial titles for Jesus, including Messiah (Christ), Son of David, Son of Abraham, Emmanuel (God with us), King, Son of God, Lord, Teacher, and Son of Man. These titles appear in a specific order throughout the Gospel and highlight different aspects of Jesus' identity and mission. For example, Messiah/Christ is central to his identity and links him to Israel's hopes, while Son of God signifies his unique relationship with the Father and divine authority.

How does Matthew link the titles Messiah and Son of God?

Matthew significantly links the titles Messiah and Son of God in key passages (16:16 and 26:64). This connection is crucial to Matthew's Christology, emphasizing that Jesus' identity as the anointed one is intrinsically tied to his divine sonship. This linkage is likely rooted in Old Testament texts like Psalm 2:7 and 89:27, presenting Jesus as the uniquely conceived Son who signifies God's presence.

What is the significance of the title "Son of David" in Matthew?

The title "Son of David" appears more frequently in Matthew than in other Gospels and immediately follows the identification of Jesus as the Messiah. Matthew emphasizes Jesus' Davidic lineage early on and connects this title to his power to heal and rule. This highlights Jesus as the heir to God's promises to David and as the one who brings God's rule to Israel, often linking his royal authority with acts of compassion for the needy.

How does Matthew portray the "kingdom of heaven," and how does it relate to the "kingdom of God"?

Matthew predominantly uses the term "kingdom of heaven" (occurring 32 times), which is likely a metonymy for "kingdom of God" due to reverence for God's name within his Christian Jewish community. He does not distinguish between the two terms. The kingdom of heaven generally refers to the nearness or presence of God's rule in Jesus' person, works, and teaching, while also having a future dimension describing Jesus' reign upon the earth. This dynamic nature suggests the kingdom has been inaugurated with Jesus' first coming and will be consummated at his return.

What is the role of the "Son of Man" in Matthew's Gospel?

The term "Son of Man," used 30 times in Matthew and almost exclusively by Jesus himself, carries three primary nuances. It emphasizes Jesus' suffering and humility, highlighting his identification with frail humanity and his foretold mistreatment. It also signifies Jesus' present power and authority on earth, such as forgiving sins and being

Lord of the Sabbath. Finally, it refers to Jesus as the glorious coming king who will judge all people, drawing heavily on the imagery of Daniel 7:13.

How does Matthew address the theme of conflict, particularly between Jesus and the Jewish leaders?

Conflict is a significant theme in Matthew, appearing from the beginning with Herod's opposition to the infant Jesus and continuing through the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus. The conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders culminates in intense denunciations. While this has been misused by anti-Semites, Matthew's purpose was a religious dispute between Christian Jews (who believed in Jesus) and non-Christian Jews, not a polemic against the Jewish race.

How does Matthew incorporate the themes of the church and the Gentile world mission?

Matthew's Gospel, despite its strong Jewish orientation, is the only Gospel to use the term "church" for the community of Jesus' disciples. From the outset, Matthew shows that this community is formed from unexpected sources, including Gentiles. This inclusivity influences Matthew's original Jewish readers to broaden their understanding of God's people. The Gospel culminates with Jesus' Great Commission, where his now exalted status empowers his disciples to go to all nations, making disciples and assuring them of his constant presence until the end of the age.