

THE BIBLE RECAP

KNOWING JESUS SERIES

KNOWING JESUS



AS KING

**A 10-SESSION STUDY ON THE
GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

TARA-LEIGH COBBLE

General Editor, Creator of D-Group International

“In true Tara-Leigh fashion, this study is easy to follow while also challenging you to dig deeper into what the Word is saying. It’s more than simply reading the Bible and answering some questions. It’s a test to gauge your spiritual walk, to ask the hard questions, and to be challenged with each turn of the page about what the Holy Spirit is revealing. Whether you are a new believer or well-versed in theological teachings, this study has something to offer everyone.”

Clare Thompson Sims, D-Group member

“This study delivers what D-Group has been doing for years. Instead of feeding the readers answers, it empowers them to do the work of arriving at answers through the careful study and close reading of God’s Word, allowing them to take ownership of their continued growth and faith in King Jesus. What a thrilling start of a memorable new series!”

Zuzana Johansen, D-Group member

“This study helps the reader connect the Old Testament with the New by giving the perspective of the Jewish culture and customs during Jesus’s day. This lens provides clarity as to why Jesus ministered and spoke as He did while interacting with both Jews and Gentiles. It also clearly communicates the relevance and life-changing power of Jesus’s teachings for Christians today. It’s a road map, pulling from the pages of the Old Testament and connecting it to the Gospels, pointing to our victory in Christ on the cross.”

Jeremy Hall, D-Group member

“*Knowing Jesus as King* combines a deep dive into the book of Matthew with the structure of D-Group. Having been in D-Group from the very start—fifteen years ago—I can confidently say the structure creates the consistency it demands and bears much fruit for any believer. Buckle up and have faith that God will reveal Himself to you as the promised and present King over the next ten weeks.”

Meghann Glenn, D-Group charter member

**KNOWING
JESUS
AS KING**

Also by Tara-Leigh Cobble

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A One-Year Guide to Reading and Understanding the Entire Bible*

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KNOWING JESUS AS KING

**A 10-SESSION STUDY ON THE
GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

**TARA-LEIGH COBBLE,
GENERAL EDITOR**

WRITTEN BY THE D-GROUP THEOLOGY & CURRICULUM TEAM



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This book is dedicated to the original members of D-Group, who signed up to pursue God and study His Word together, long before any of us knew what great joy He had in store: Meghann Glenn, Holly Shanahan, Meredith Tatum, Kate Gaffney, Heather Siders, Cory Cooper, Elizabeth Sullivan, Kara Villines, Laura Bouknight, Caroline McClure.

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INTRODUCTION

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) offer us a fourfold telling of Jesus's story. Some may wonder why this is necessary, but the fascinating truth is that each gospel speaks to a specific audience and emphasizes a unique aspect of who Jesus is. Additionally, the areas where they overlap verify the authenticity of the full narrative.

Matthew writes about King Jesus—His authority, His royalty, and His throne that will last forever. Mark writes about Jesus as the Suffering Servant, the One whose suffering would eternally serve all who call on His name. Luke, drawing on Jesus's humanity, emphasizes Jesus as Savior of mankind, which seems fitting since Luke was a doctor. And John, the self-proclaimed favorite of our Lord, repeatedly highlights that Jesus is God. These four narratives help us see Jesus from various angles, capturing different facets of His glory—King, Servant, Savior/Man, God. These characteristics may seem opposed to each other, but they actually present us with a fuller understanding of who He is. All four accounts are not only necessary but beautiful!

The text of Matthew doesn't identify its author, but the early church fathers seemed to agree that Matthew, the disciple of Jesus, wrote this book. Matthew, who also went by the name Levi, was a Jew who likely lived and worked near Capernaum along the Sea of Galilee. Until Jesus called him to be a disciple (Matthew 9:9–13), he was a tax collector. It's hard for us to grasp how audacious it was for Jesus to choose a tax collector as one of His disciples. This was scandalous! Matthew, a Jewish man, worked for the Roman army—the oppressive enemy of his people. He collected taxes for Rome's brutal empire, funding the very army that

would threaten, torture, and kill other Jews. As if that weren't enough, first-century tax collectors were notorious for being corrupt, taking above and beyond the required Roman tax to line their own pockets.

Matthew's transformation from his identity as a Jewish tax collector for Rome to a disciple of Jesus was a dramatic one, establishing him as the perfect person to record an eyewitness account of the life of Christ. And because he had to be meticulous with money, there's no doubt that he was meticulous with the details of his gospel.

Matthew seems to have written primarily to help Greek-speaking Jews see that Jesus was the King they'd been looking for. We get a few hints that his audience was Jewish: He quoted the Old Testament sixty-two times—more than any other gospel writer—he didn't explain the Jewish cultural norms like John and Mark did, he regularly used the phrase *kingdom of heaven* (a reverential Jewish expression), and he began his account with the genealogy of Jesus, something a non-Jew would have cared little about.

If you were a first-century Jewish person who believed God would eventually send a new King, would Matthew's account of Jesus's life cause you to see the truth that Jesus was and is that King? Let's find out together!

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

While Bible study is vital to the Christian walk, a well-rounded spiritual life comes from engaging with other spiritual disciplines as well. This study is designed not only to equip you with greater knowledge and theological depth, but to help you engage in other formative practices that will create a fuller, more fulfilling relationship with Jesus. We want to see you thrive in every area of your life with God!

Content and Questions

In each of the ten weeks of this study, the teaching and questions are divided into six days, but feel free to do it all at once if that's more manageable for your schedule. If you choose to complete each week's study in one sitting, keep in mind that there are still aspects you will want to be mindful of each day: the daily Bible reading, Scripture memorization, and the weekly challenge. These are best attended to throughout the week.

Daily Bible Reading

The daily Bible reading corresponds to our study. It will take an average of three minutes per day to simply read (not study) the text. If you're an auditory learner, you may prefer to listen to an audio version of these Bible chapters.

Even if you decide to go through the week's content and questions in one sitting, we still encourage you to make the daily Bible reading a part of your regular daily rhythm. Establishing a habit of reading the Word every day will help fortify your faith and create greater connections with God.

If you decide to break the study up into the six allotted days each week, your daily Bible reading will align with your study. Days 1–5 will follow

our study of Matthew, Day 6 features a psalm that corresponds to our reading, and Day 7 serves as a catch-up day in case you fall behind.

Scripture Memorization

Memorizing Scripture isn't busy work! It's an important part of hiding God's Word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11). Our passage—Matthew 6:25–34—is a powerful truth about valuing eternal things above all else. We encourage you to practice it cumulatively—that is, *add* to what you're practicing each week instead of *replacing* it. We quote the English Standard Version (and some of our resources are in that translation as well), but feel free to memorize it in whatever translation you prefer. We suggest working on each week's verse(s) throughout the week, not just at the last minute. We've provided some free tools to help you with this, including a weekly verse song: MyDGroup.org/Resources/Matthew.

Weekly Challenge

This is our practical response to what we've learned each week. We want to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). You'll find a variety of challenges, and we encourage you to lean into them all—especially the ones you find *most* challenging! This will help strengthen your spiritual muscles and encourage you in your faith. As with the memory verse, you'll want to begin this practice earlier in the week, especially because some weekly challenges include things to do each day of the week (e.g., prayers, journaling, etc.).

Resources

This is a Scripture-heavy study, and you'll find yourself looking up passages often. If you're new to studying Scripture, this will be a great way to dig in and sharpen your skills! You will feel more equipped and less intimidated as you move through each chapter. Some questions may ask you to refer to a Bible dictionary, commentary, or Greek or Hebrew lexicon, but you don't need to purchase those tools. There are lots of free options available online. We've linked to some of our favorite tools—plus additional resources like podcasts, articles, and apps—at MyDGroup.org/Resources/Matthew.

WEEK 1

Matthew 1–4: Origin of the King

Note: If you haven't yet read "How to Use This Study" on page 13, please do that before continuing. It will provide you with a proper framework and helpful tools.

DAILY BIBLE READING

Day 1: Matthew 1

Day 2: Matthew 2

Day 3: Matthew 3

Day 4: Matthew 4:1–11

Day 5: Matthew 4:12–25

Day 6: Psalm 2

Day 7: Catch-Up Day

Corresponds to Days 275–278 of *The Bible Recap*.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

See page 39 for more information.

Scripture to Memorize

Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

Matthew 6:25

DAY 1

Matthew 1

READ MATTHEW 1

The New Testament isn't where we first see the concept of a King who would redeem and reign over all nations. The need for a King to rule goes all the way back to Genesis 3—when the first humans, made in the image of God, willingly gave away their kingship and dominion to the enemy, who was disguised as a manipulative serpent.

From that moment on, humanity felt its need for a King to reverse the curse of death and separation from God. But God wasn't willing to leave them to their own devices—He provided covenants throughout the Old Testament that pointed to His eventual redemption of humanity. God chose for Himself the unlikely nation of Israel, fathered by Abraham, as the origin point of His redemption plan (Genesis 12:1–3) and the lineage of the King (Matthew 2:2).

The Old Testament follows this unlikely nation as it stumbles its way forward with a hope and longing for a new King. We'll look back at several of those moments in this chapter.

Read 2 Samuel 7:12–16. Why is it significant that Jesus is the son of David?

Read Genesis 12:3. Why is it significant that Jesus is the son of Abraham?

Matthew's genealogy has a few interesting things to note: First, this genealogy follows the bloodline of Joseph—who isn't biologically related to Jesus but is His legal father. Second, this genealogy includes women and Gentiles (non-Jews), which was highly unusual for the time. Third, it's likely that Matthew skipped some generations along the way in order to get his trio of fourteen generations.

This isn't deception on Matthew's part—it's how genealogies were often written to make them easier to memorize. This particular genealogy also uses the sum of seven plus seven—seven being the number of completion or perfection—making the total fourteen to signify *double* completion or perfection. Essentially, through the numbers given in this lineage, Matthew was saying that Jesus is the culmination of this complete and perfect setup for the redemption of humanity as its eternal King!

What might Matthew be trying to communicate by including women and Gentiles? What does it mean for you personally?

Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus focuses specifically on Joseph's point of view.

Read Matthew 1:18–25. What does this reveal about the type of man Joseph was? Which characteristics of Joseph are convicting or encouraging to you?

In the angel’s conversation with Joseph, another prophecy was fulfilled about the name of the coming King. Quoting Isaiah 7:14, the angel said the King would be born to a virgin, and His name would be Immanuel, which means “God with us.” The word *Immanuel* reveals both the deity and the humanity of the coming King:

GOD with us—deity

God *WITH US*—humanity

Do a web search to find the meaning of the name Jesus. How does it correspond to the name Immanuel? What does it tell us about why He was born and what He would accomplish?

Read Philippians 2:5–11. What particular aspects of this passage correspond to the theme of Jesus as King?

Knowing the end of the story, what is your response to the person of Jesus?

DAY 2

Matthew 2

READ MATTHEW 2

Hold loosely to your nativity sets, because today’s study is about to shake some things up! Matthew 2:11 tells us that the wise men found the *child* (not baby) in the *house* (not where animals were fed). And while there were three gifts, there may not have been three wise men. The gifts were likely brought by a large group of wise men—like pooling your money with friends to buy a crib, instead of everyone buying separate, smaller gifts for a baby shower. So add a few dozen Magi (wise men) to your nativity set and move them to a different room in your home, because it likely took them between six months and two years to arrive.

The wise men from the east—possibly Gentiles or exiled Jews who knew the prophecies about the coming King—traveled a great distance hoping to find and worship Him. Their first stop in Jerusalem made sense because it was the center of Jewish life. However, they were met by a deceitful Roman governor and religious leaders who knew about the prophecy but seemed disinterested in worshipping the King themselves.

Using a Bible dictionary, look up the terms below and write out a few notes on what you find. You can also use the information in Matthew 2 to fill in the table below.

Magi	
Herod the Great	
Chief Priests	
Scribes	

The Magi, Herod, and the religious leaders had three unique responses to the birth of the King. How did they each respond? **Fill in the table below.**

	Response to Jesus’s Birth
Magi	
Herod the Great	
Religious Leaders	

What does it reveal about God that He would draw the wise men from far away to come worship Jesus?

What gets in the way of your worshipping Him?

Matthew 2:10 says, “When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.” The star that pointed the way to the King brought those who were seeking Him great joy (because He’s where the joy is!). The same star that brought them joy and anticipation had a different impact on King Herod—it made the power-hungry ruler spiral into fear. And it did very little to penetrate the hardened hearts of the religious leaders; they may have followed the rules with precision, but they failed to demonstrate love for God and His people.

The second half of Matthew 2 chronicles three events that fulfill additional Old Testament prophecies. This reinforces the identity of King Jesus, even when He was just a child.

Review 2:13–15.

What was the situation and what action was taken?

Who did Joseph trust?

What was the significance of the prophecy (Hosea 11:1)?

Review 2:16–18.

What was the situation and what action was taken?

Who did Herod trust?

What was the significance of the prophecy (Jeremiah 31:15)?

Review 2:19–23.

What was the situation and what action was taken?

Who did Joseph trust?

What was the significance of the prophecy?

This section doesn't seem to refer to one specific Old Testament prophecy. Matthew used the phrase *spoken by the prophets*, which may indicate that it's not a direct quote but more of a summary of the prophetic expectation. The prophets said the King would be born into obscurity, humility, and rejection. Nazareth, a town with a seedy reputation, would've fit that definition perfectly.

What stood out to you in today's reading? Are there any action steps you need to take as a result?

READ MORE

