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MATTHEW

FULFILLMENT

Matthew is the doorway
of the New Testament.

A disciple of Jesus scripts the story of Jesus in the shape of the Old Testament. He teaches readers how the new fulfills the old. Jesus completes, fills up, and satisfies the story that began in Genesis. Matthew sets his eyes on Jesus, training future generations to walk in the footsteps of their Rabbi. Jesus is the Messiah, the new Abraham (who has many children from the East and West), the new David (who is the true king), the new Solomon (who is wise), the new Moses (who delivers the Torah), and the new Jeremiah (who laments the fate of Jerusalem).

The early church associated Matthew with a human face because of the theme of revelation. His outline closely tracks with the Old Testament story. He begins with a genealogy (1:1-17), echoing Genesis, and ends with a commission from Jesus (28:18-20) that mirrors Cyrus's at the end of 2 Chronicles. In the center are Jesus' parables about the mystery of the kingdom (13), causing readers to recall the wisdom tradition. The rest of the narrative fills out Israel's history. Jesus is supernaturally born, saved from a tyrant king, comes out of Egypt, goes through the water, into the wilderness, up the mountain, heals, sends out His disciples, and prophetically pronounces both judgment and hope upon those who listen. Ultimately, Jesus undergoes exile in His death. However, He is raised to life because of His innocent blood. He is the Mosaic-Davidic King.

MATTHEW / FULFILLMENT



WHO IS JESUS? 1

He is the son of David, the son of Abraham, and the Son of God.



WHERE IS HE FROM? 2

Jesus is from Bethlehem, Egypt, and Nazareth.



Preparation 3-4

Jesus is baptized by John and tempted.



Healings 8-9

The kingdom spreads; Jesus calls followers.



Rejection 11-12

Jesus is rejected, and reveals His true family.



Revelation 14-17

Jesus is transfigured before the disciples.



Reproof 21-22

Jesus enters Jerusalem and condemns it.



Wholeness 5-7

Flourishing comes by listening to Christ.



Witness 10

Jesus sends the disciples to proclaim the kingdom.



Mystery 13

Teaching on the mystery of the kingdom of God.



Household 18-20

Jesus' instructions and ethics for the church.



Judgment 23-25

Jesus gives the verdict on Israel's leaders.



CRUCIFIXION 26-27

Jesus submits to a kingly trial and death.



RESURRECTION 28

The victory of life, Jesus' commission and promise.



WHO IS JESUS? (1)

A list of names. It's an odd way to begin. But the genealogy shows readers this isn't a fairy tale, but a true story. Matthew opens with his convictions fully exposed. Jesus is the Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (1:1). The genealogy gives a Davidic family tree that proves Jesus is the new King of Israel. Not only that, but genealogies function prominently in the Old Testament with the promise of a seed (Gen. 3:15). Surprisingly, some in Jesus' family are Gentile women with checkered sexual pasts. They are all characterized by tenacious fidelity to Yahweh. However, Matthew's genealogy isn't primarily about people, but about a child and God Himself. God carries along this family line despite their failures (1:1-17). If the genealogy shows Jesus is the son of David and Abraham, then the birth narrative displays Jesus as the Son of God and son of Joseph (1:18-25). Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit. Joseph names Him according to the angel's command, thereby adopting Him. Joseph and Mary's situation resembles and fulfills Abraham's and Sarah's: both have supernatural births. Matthew 1 fulfills Genesis: a new creation, a new humanity, has arrived.



WHERE IS HE FROM? (2)

Some may have had questions about Jesus' origins. Matthew proves that all the places Jesus hails from fulfill Old Testament texts. He is their predicted Messiah. First, Jesus is from Bethlehem, the city of David (2:1-12). But another king already resides in Bethlehem, so Jesus and His family must flee. Herod is a tyrant (like Pharaoh) who acts violently against his people. Mary's child will be a Shepherd-King leading His people to quiet waters. Second, Jesus is from Egypt (2:13-15). Like Israel, Jesus must flee into Egypt for safety, but He and His people will come out of exile. This point is further reinforced by a reference to Ramah (2:16-18). Ramah was the place Israel departed for exile (Jer. 40:1), and now Rachel weeps for her children who are killed by Herod, but the hope of Jeremiah 31 is that the children shall come back to their own country. Finally, Jesus is from Nazareth. Nazareth derives from the word branch in Hebrew, and therefore fulfills the promise of a Davidic Branch (Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8). All of these places prove Jesus is their long-awaited Shepherd-King.



Preparation (3-4) / The Old Testament shadow stories continue. Jesus goes through water (3), into the wilderness (4), and then up the mountain (5-7). The first narrative puts John the Baptist in the shadow of Jesus with new exodus themes. John is the voice preparing the way for Jesus to bring His people out of exile (3:3). Jesus is baptized by John and anointed as the Messiah (3:13-17). Then Jesus is led into the wilderness to be tempted

FULFILLMENT

like Israel and Adam by Satan (4:1-11). But unlike Israel and Adam, He does not fail. He fully trusts God's Word, even when He is brought up to a high mountain and told He can be King without suffering. Jesus withdraws into Galilee because of John's death and begins His ministry centered on the announcement of the kingdom of heaven (4:12-22). He will not return to Jerusalem until His death.



Wholeness (5-7) / The Sermon on the Mount is one of the most famous passages in the Scriptures. In it, Jesus acts as the new Moses, mediating the new Torah. The sermon concerns what it means to flourish, to be whole, to be blessed in God's creation. Jesus argues this comes by having an all-encompassing righteousness: both inward and outward. The Torah was always meant to regulate human hearts, but it could not because of their sin and the lack of the Spirit. Jesus begins with words of comfort for those in exile (5:1-12). He offers them the upside-down kingdom. Then He gives them His thesis: He came to fulfill the Torah, teaching them about greater righteousness (5:17-20). This means they need to follow the true intention of the Torah (5:17-48), continue in giving to the poor, praying, and fasting (6:1-18), and finally, perform justice (6:19-7:12). Ultimately, they must love God and others (see 7:12). Jesus closes with a warning: they can take two paths, follow two prophets, and build on two different foundations (7:13-29). One path means life, the other death. One foundation means destruction, the other wholeness.



Healings (8-9) / Jesus has spoken of the kingdom; now He enacts the kingdom through His deeds. Ultimately, this paints Him as the Suffering Servant who gives His life for others. He welcomes the least likely into the kingdom. He brings the new creation by the touch of His hand. Nine miracles occur, many of them matching and reversing failures of the wilderness generation. First, Jesus comes to the marginalized: a man with leprosy, a centurion's servant, and Peter's mother-in-law (8:1-17). Then He calls others to follow Him, but many of them view it as too costly (8:18-22). Three more miracles occur: Jesus stills the storm, casts out demons, and heals a paralytic, forgiving his sins (8:23-9:8). Again, the narrative pauses as Jesus calls Matthew to come and follow Him, contrasting Matthew's response with those who refused earlier (9:9-17). Three final healings occur: Jesus heals the ruler's daughter and the sick woman, two blind men, and another demon-possessed man (9:18-34). The harvest is ripe, but more workers are needed (9:37).

MATTHEW



Witness (10) / Matthew 1–9 has the shape of the Pentateuch. Chapter 10 begins with the conquest and entry into the land as Jesus sends out His disciples. The picture presented is one of taking territory for the kingdom of heaven, similar to the conquest of Canaan. After Jesus identifies the messengers (10:1–4), He tells them of their message, mission, and tools (10:5–10). They are to go into the land, let their peace fall on houses that welcome them, but judgment upon those that don't (10:11–15). When they enter the land, they will face persecution (10:16–42). They will be delivered over to courts, but they should not be anxious. There will be family division, but they are to endure to the end. They will be maligned, but they are to have no fear. Ultimately, if they acknowledge Jesus, He will acknowledge them. If they lose their life, they will find it.



Rejection (11–12) / If chapter 10 mirrored Israel's conquest, then Matthew 11–12 is about the monarchy and the various response to the new King. Jesus is questioned and rejected, but He defines His true family. Jesus continues to be presented as the new David. He is also the new Solomon. Three panels make up these chapters. First, Jesus is questioned on various issues: Is He the one they should be expecting (11:3), why do His disciples do what is not lawful on the Sabbath (12:2), and can this be the Son of David (12:23)? Jesus responds saying He is their redemption (11:5–6), He is like David but greater, and a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (12:25–37). Then He condemns this generation for their unresponsiveness (11:16–24; 12:38–45). Ultimately, He says the kingdom is for little children (11:25), Gentiles (12:15–21), and those who do His will (12:46–50). His true family is being formed. Some are stumbling on the rock; others are built upon it.



Mystery (13) / The third discourse contains parables on the mystery of the kingdom. It parallels the wisdom tradition. Jesus describes the mystery of the kingdom and speaks in poetic form like David (Psalms) and his son Solomon (Proverbs). Matthew explicitly quotes from the Wisdom Literature, saying that these words fulfill the saying, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world" (Matt. 13:35; see Ps. 78:2). Jesus speaks about the *responses* to the kingdom message (13:1–23), the *growth* of the kingdom (13:24–43), and finally the *value* of the kingdom (13:44–52). He compares the kingdom to soil, a tree, a treasure, a pearl, and a net. Though His hearers might think they understand the kingdom plan, Jesus says it will grow slowly, be a mixed community, but is worth a greater price than anything this world has to offer. The mystery of the kingdom is that it is like a seed planted in the ground that looks unimpressive today. One day it will be a towering tree. The nations will find shade under it.

FULFILLMENT



Revelation (14-17) / In chapters 14-17, Jesus reveals who He is through both Peter's confession and the transfiguration. But responses to Jesus also take center stage as Matthew moves out of the monarchy and wisdom tradition to the divided kingdom. Echoes of Elijah and Elisha fill out the narrative as Jesus continues to fulfill the Old Testament. Though Jesus is rejected in His hometown of Nazareth, He feeds the Jews as a greater prophet than Moses (13:53-14:36). Jesus clarifies defilement comes from the inside, not the outside (15:1-20). A more positive response is given by Gentiles, particularly a Canaanite woman, and Jesus feeds the Gentiles as well (15:21-39). The varying responses to Jesus come to a head when they ask Him for a sign, but He rebukes them for the question (16:1-12). This leads to Jesus revealing who He truly is to Peter, but even the disciples misunderstand His mission (16:13-27). Jesus shows them His glory on the mountain in the transfiguration as Moses and Elijah appear next to Him, but as they come off the mountain, the disciples still don't understand the only way to glory is through suffering (17:9-23).



Household (18-20) / The fourth discourse continues the prophetic theme and centers on the remnant, the new people of God. Through Jesus' visionary words, He establishes, teaches, and instructs His church. The new community even has its own structures of authority and the presence of God to enforce standards. The text is a household code for Jesus' new community, where He teaches them to be peaceable, forgive, and care for one another. In chapter 18, He tells them to reflect on their identity. They are to become like children in humility (18:1-6) and care for little ones (18:10-14). Likewise, they are instructed to be peacemakers (18:15-35) and care for one another, seeking out reconciliation. In chapter 19 they are instructed on domestic ethics: divorce (19:3-12), children (19:13-15), and wealth (19:16-30). Finally, chapter 20 sums up their vocation as His body. They are to be the last rather than first (20:1-16) and become servants to all (20:17-34). The remnant will be God's new community, His new household.



Reproof (21-22) / Matthew 21 marks a definite shift. Though Jesus has given hope to His remnant, from here onward Jesus is the "judging prophet." He enters the city of Jerusalem on a colt. Rather than coming into the city as the conquering and victorious Messiah, Jesus acts as the condemning prophet. Three related symbolic temple acts exemplify this (21). First, He confronts the temple system. Second, He castigates the leaders of Israel. Third, He foretells the temple's destruction. For Israel, the destruction of the temple and exile went hand in hand. Jesus is the new prophet denouncing the nation for their sins. The chapter ends with questions about where Jesus gets His authority (21:23-27), but He won't answer them. Then Jesus tells three parables about people not being obedient or ready for His return (21:28-22:14). The religious leaders question Him on three hot

topics, trying to trap Him: politics, eschatology, and the interpretation of the Old Testament (22:15–40). Jesus halts the conversation by asking them a question they cannot answer (22:41–46). His wisdom and inspiration are unmatched. He is God’s prophet.



Judgment (23–25) / In the final discourse, Jesus condemns the religious leaders as the rebuking prophet. This matches the censure by Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah. He looks at Israel’s leaders and pronounces judgment upon them using seven woes to condemn them, providing a contrast to the Beatitudes (23:1–36). Then Jesus laments the fate of Jerusalem (23:37–39). Matthew 24–25 describes both the end of the temple period and the end of the world in apocalyptic terms—exile is coming. The discourse begins with Jesus looking at the temple and predicting its destruction (24:1–2). The glory of the Lord is leaving the temple, as Ezekiel prophesied. For Jesus, the glory of the Lord is not only leaving the temple; the temple must also be destroyed. The last day is coming and no one knows the hour, but they all must be ready for the return of the King (24:36–25:30). When He returns, He will be a judging Shepherd, separating the sheep from the goats (25:31–46). Jesus has condemned the current generation. Now He will go and die for them.



CRUCIFIXION (26–27)

If Matthew is following the history of the Old Testament, the next thing that should happen is the destruction of the temple and the exile. Blood should fill this section as the people of Israel are attacked and destroyed by their enemies. The blood of Israel *is* spilled, but it is innocent blood. Jesus’ blood. Blood turns out to be not only the cue to the exile and destruction of the temple but also the prompt for the rebuilding of the temple and the return from exile. Blood is both the curse and the cure. It lies at the center of Israel’s future. First, Jesus prepares for His death under the banner of the Passover (26:1–46), then He is arrested and goes through trials (26:47–27:26), and finally He is crucified (27:27–66). His crucifixion is painted in royal hues as He is enthroned upon the hill of the skull. The King has been crowned. Hope comes in the most unexpected way.



RESURRECTION (28)

Death cannot stop innocent blood. Jesus conquers death by life. Jesus ends the exile through abundant life. Women come to visit the tomb of Jesus, but He is not there. Jesus meets them and tells them they have no reason to fear, while at the same time the chief priests craft a false tale about the disciples stealing Jesus' body (28:1-15). Then Jesus goes to a mountain in Galilee with the disciples. He gives them the command to make disciples of all nations because He has been given all authority as the Son of Man (28:16-20). He is not only the King of the Jews but the one presented before the Ancient of Days. Jesus promises His presence will be with them forever. Chronicles, the last book of the Hebrew Old Testament, also ends with a note about the restoration to come (2 Chron. 36:22-23). Cyrus gives a commission for Israel to go up to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Now the disciples are the temple-builders. They go out with the message and healing of King Jesus. His birth, life, death, and resurrection has fulfilled all that was predicted in the Old Testament.

MARK

THE SERVANT-KING

Mark's account is gritty
and unrelenting.

He takes readers on a discipleship journey as they witness the roar of the King, who unexpectedly conquers by donning the crown of thorns. As Jesus reveals His identity, misunderstanding and conflict arise. The kingdom of God has arrived in this Servant, but many are not ready. A new gospel has erupted in the den of another kingdom. There will be a battle. Jesus defeats the empire's gospel and Satan's power with the strength of a lion, but the sacrifice of a lamb.

The early church associated Mark with a lion—one with all authority and power, who bounds about establishing the kingdom. Mark is structured around two questions: Who is Jesus (1-8:21), and how will He become king (11-16)? Between these two panels Jesus reveals along the way He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah who becomes King by suffering (8:22-10:52). Jesus' power is on full display as He exorcises, heals, forms a new community, and teaches. But this also causes conflict. Jesus discloses His true nature to His disciples: He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the son of David, the Son of Man. But they still misunderstand that His power and suffering are paired. To become King, He must bear the cross.

MARK / THE SERVANT-KING



JESUS' POWER 1-8

The rule of God causes conflict with Satan, nature, and Israel's leaders.



JESUS' SUFFERING 11-16

Jesus becomes the royal king by suffering and death.



Preparation 1:1-13

Jesus, the new exodus way, goes through water and conquers.



THE WAY 8-10

Jesus reveals who He is and how He will suffer to become king.



The Royal Entry 11-13

He enters the city as king and condemns the Jerusalem leaders.



Kingdom Arrival 1:14-8:21

Jesus' authority in providing food, healing, exorcising, and teaching.



Revelation 8:22-10:52

Peter confesses Jesus as Messiah and Jesus is transfigured.



Last Supper & Trial 14

His death is a new Passover meal; Jesus goes to trial.



Kingdom Community 1:14-8:21

Jesus calls, appoints, and sends His disciples out with His own authority.



Discipleship 8:22-10:52

The disciples misunderstand. Jesus' cross means their cross.



Jesus' Death 15

Jesus dies alone. A centurion recognizes He is the Son of God.



Kingdom Responses 1:14-8:21

The crowd, leaders, and even the disciples question Jesus' authority.



Jesus' Life 16

Jesus' tomb is empty. The women run in fear and confusion.



JESUS' POWER (1-8)

The lion roars as Jesus displays His power bounding from place to place. But He also silences people telling them to not publicize who He is yet. People are not ready for revolution. Jesus' power confronts cosmic and social orders as He exorcises, heals, and subdues nature. He also challenges Jewish practices, reframing their true intention. He forgives sins, works on the Sabbath, and redefines purity. He teaches, not as their scribes, but as one with authority. The responses to Jesus are largely negative. People question Him: Who can forgive sins but God? Why does He eat with sinners? Why is He doing what is not lawful? The religious leaders plot about how they can tame Him. But in the midst of opposition, He forms His own pride. He calls His disciples and sends them to proclaim and enact the kingdom.



Preparation (1:1-13) / Like Genesis, Mark opens with “beginning.” However, unlike the gospels of Matthew and Luke, there is no birth narrative, no genealogy, no wise men, no shepherds. Though Mark will take his readers on a journey through the eyes of the disciples, his introduction is uncompromising and direct: Jesus is the new creation, the Messiah, the Son of God. Mark immediately conveys to readers into three important events that reveal Jesus' mission and identity: John the Baptist is identified as Jesus' forerunner (1:2-8), Jesus is baptized (1:9-11), and cosmic conflict with Satan occurs in the wilderness (1:12-13). Jesus' ministry is put in the shadow of return from exile themes. This theme of “the way” will return in 8:22-10:45. When Jesus is baptized by John, He is declared to be God's beloved Son. Two other Sonship revelation stories are located strategically at the transfiguration and cross (9:1-13; 15:21-41). Jesus' combat with Satan sets up the entire narrative as cosmic conflict. It gives hope to Roman martyrs who also encounter wild beasts.



Kingdom Arrival (1:14-8:21) / Who is Jesus? Mark has already let readers know through his introduction, but now he will press this point home by Jesus' words and actions. The kingdom arrives in King Jesus. As His ministry begins, Jesus gives a press conference of His gospel: the kingdom of God is at hand—repent and believe (1:14-15). This challenges the rule of Rome and the kingdom of Satan. The first display of authority comes in driving out a demon: the kingdom of God wars against the kingdom of darkness (1:21-28). The presence of the kingdom is further demonstrated in healings (1:29-34; 5:21-42; 6:53-56; 7:31-37), cleansing (1:39-45), forgiving sins (2:1-12), declaring Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-3:6), binding Satan (3:22-30), feeding (6:30-44; 8:1-10), subduing nature (4:35-41; 6:45-52), and driving out demons (5:1-18). And yet, it is not only His actions, but actions paired with preaching. Jesus states that He came to proclaim a message. His deeds fall under the banner of proclamation of a new kingdom

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(1:35–38). The preaching and teaching receive the most attention in chapter 4 when He tells parables of the kingdom. These parables both reveal and conceal. The mystery of the kingdom’s arrival is on full display.



Kingdom Community (1:14–8:21) / In the midst of the kingdom arrival, Jesus also forms a new kingdom community. A king calls subjects to follow him both in conquest and in the proliferation of peace. After Jesus has given His message in summary form (1:14–15), the first thing He does is call His first disciples and appoints them as fishers of men (1:16–20). They will join Him in the task of gathering others to this new society. Peppered throughout Jesus’ teaching and healing are further calls: He commands Levi to follow Him (2:13–17), and then appoints the twelve apostles to preach and cast out demons with all authority (3:13–19; 6:7–13). A new army of goodness and harmony forms around the King. He also redefines His family as those who do His will (3:31–35). Neither blood nor ethnic ties give one a VIP pass into His family. Loyalty to the King is all that is required.



Kingdom Responses (1:14–8:21) / Though Jesus has demonstrated His power and authority, people respond with perplexity and negativity. Those who oppose Jesus question Him, the demons shudder at His presence, and even the disciples wonder at Him. When Jesus teaches, the crowd asks, “What is this? A new teaching with authority!” (1:27). The scribes query, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” and “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (2:7, 16). The Pharisees question why the disciples don’t follow the Jewish traditions (2:24; 7:5), and His hometown questions where Jesus got this wisdom (6:2). Even the disciples ask, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (4:41). There is general confusion concerning His authority and the arrival of the kingdom. After all that Jesus has done, this section appropriately ends with Jesus asking the question: “Do you not yet understand?” (8:21).



THE WAY (8-10)

So who is Jesus, and how will He become king? The central section of Mark (8:22–10:52) reveals who Jesus is and reframes how the kingdom will come. Jesus then calls His disciples to also take up the cross. Jesus’ messianic vocation means glory, but only through suffering and death. He is the Servant-King. This is “the way,” and Jesus explains it to them along the way (8:27; 9:33–34; 10:17, 32, 46, 52). The section is therefore about revelation, and appropriately begins with a two-stage healing involving a blind man (8:22–26) and ends with a blind man seeing fully (10:46–52). Likewise, the disciples will progressively see Jesus with more clarity. Peter confesses

Jesus is the Messiah and Jesus is transfigured before them. The Father again declares, “This is my beloved Son” (9:7), but the disciples again misunderstand.



Revelation (8:22-10:52) / On the way, Jesus reveals Himself. Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah (8:27-30). Jesus is also transfigured before His disciples, and Elijah and Moses appear with Him (9:2-13). The veil has been removed for the disciples to see. Readers have already witnessed a similar scene in the baptism. The disciples now hear the Father affirm, “This is my beloved Son” (9:7). This claim is supported by His authority over demons (9:14-29) and authoritative teachings on the Torah (10:1-29). Ultimately, Jesus reveals that His kingship comes by servanthood. “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (10:45). After each revelation story, Jesus pairs it with a prediction of His suffering, death, and resurrection (8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-34). In Jerusalem, He will be given over to the Roman Empire, and His enemies will mock Him and kill Him. He will even be betrayed by His own people, but three days later He will rise again. He will again be transfigured. Travail is coming, but so is transformation.



Discipleship (8:22-10:52) / Jesus reveals Himself on the way, but this revelation relates not only to His glory and power, but His suffering, agony, and crucifixion. Therefore, after Jesus has revealed His glory, He also predicts His death three times (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34). The disciple wondered who Jesus is, and now they misunderstand His messianic calling (8:32-34; 9:33-34; 10:35-41). Peter rebukes Jesus for speaking about His death, the disciples argue about who will be the greatest, and James and John ask if they might sit on His right and left in His glory. Therefore, Jesus corrects them; He gives them a lesson in servant leadership. They must deny themselves and take up their crosses (8:34-9:1), they must become servants of all (9:35-37), and they must not lord their authority over others but become slaves to all (10:42-45). Jesus is a Servant-King, calling others to emulation.



JESUS' SUFFERING (11-16)

How will Jesus become the messianic king? He has already told them it must be by suffering, death, and resurrection. Now in Mark 11-16 those predictions are fulfilled. If the first half of Mark is about Jesus' power, this half is about His power *through* suffering. The Lion submits to His own demise. Jesus first enters Jerusalem and confronts the leaders and their places of power (11-13). Then Jesus conducts His last supper with His

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disciples and goes to trial (14-15). Jesus' crucifixion reveals His identity as the King of the Jews who sacrifices Himself for the nation and the world. A centurion recognizes Him as the Son of God *in* His suffering (15:39). Finally, His body is missing from the tomb, just as He predicted (16). Readers have been at eye level with the disciples all along, and continue to watch in shock, shame, amazement, and even fear.



The Royal Entry (11-13) / Jesus' royal entry is all about the temple. He enters the city as a conquering but humble king (11:1-11) and condemns the corrupt temple (11:12-21). God has tended His vineyard, but when He comes, there is no produce to be seen. Therefore, judgment awaits. The religious leaders understand Jesus' subversive actions, so they test Him. Jesus has now performed His most "authoritative" action in the temple and they ask Him where He gets the authority to do this (11:27-33). He answers by giving a parable about the vineyard, but they continue to test Him: about politics, party disagreements, and the explanation of the Torah (12:1-34). Jesus shuts down the conversation by stumping them with the Scripture (12:35-37). Playtime is over. Therefore, He pronounces the destruction of the temple connecting it to the coming of the Son of Man (13). Their rule is finished. A new Shepherd-King has arrived. These temple actions will spur on His death.



Last Supper & Trial (14) / Jesus' last days are numbered. The chief priests and the scribes search for a time to kill Him. A woman appropriately anoints Him for burial (14:1-9). Then Jesus celebrates the Passover with His disciples. This meal reveals the significance of the Christ's death. He is their new Moses, leading them out of exile. He is their sacrificial lamb, whose blood covers them from death. He is their new covenant leader, who gives them access to the presence of God. Jesus will die all alone. Judas betrays Him, and so does Peter. In the garden, the disciples flee from Him (14:32-50). Jesus goes to trial. He faces the Sanhedrin (His own people) and the empire (Pilate). Surprisingly, Pilate wants to release Him, but His blood relatives want Him crucified. A violent rebel is released instead of the Prince of Peace.



Jesus' Death (15) / Jesus' passion is depicted as a Roman triumph. In the first century, parades honored and celebrated a victorious Roman general for his military success. In the same way, dramatic irony fills the narrative as Jesus is crowned as the Roman victor in His suffering. Jesus goes to the praetorium, and a cohort of Roman soldiers await Him (15:16). This is the group who would be escorting a Caesar's victory. They adorn Jesus with a purple garment that would be placed on a Roman general after conquest (15:17). Jesus is mocked with praise (15:18-19) and taken to Golgotha, the place of a skull (15:22). Then Jesus is offered wine (15:23), as a triumphator would

MARK

be offered wine. Finally, He is crucified between two thieves and declared to be the new Sovereign. He cries out to His Father who has forsaken Him, and the temple curtain is torn in two as the heavens were torn open at His baptism. Access to God comes only through blood. A centurion recognizes Jesus' triumph and declares He is the Son of God (15:39).



Jesus' Life (16) / The Servant-King has now suffered and died. It would be a tragedy if the story were over. But this story is just beginning. Unlike the rest of the gospels, Mark's account of the resurrection is filled with mystery and fear. He continues to let the reader watch events from the front row. Some women go to anoint Jesus in the tomb, but when they arrive the stone is rolled away. An angel declares He has risen. But they don't see Jesus. They run in trembling and astonishment. They are afraid (16:8). This strange ending invites readers into Mark's story to imagine how they would react. Mark asks, "How will you respond to this powerful yet suffering resurrected king?"