



# Getting the Big Picture of the Bible: The Gospel of Matthew

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March 24, 2019

The Ethiopian *Abba Garima III* is the earliest reliably dated gospel book which has survived with intact portraits of all four evangelists and decorated canon tables. It is dated by radiocarbon testing to AD 330-650, based on three samples.

At left is one of the earliest visual representations of Matthew the evangelist from *Abba Garima III*.

# Outline of today's class

- Reminders on compositional history and genre
- Reading Matthew vertically
- Outline of Matthew
- Gospel for the church
- Affirmation of and hostility toward Judaism
- Genealogy and gentiles



# Authorship/ Audience for the Gospels

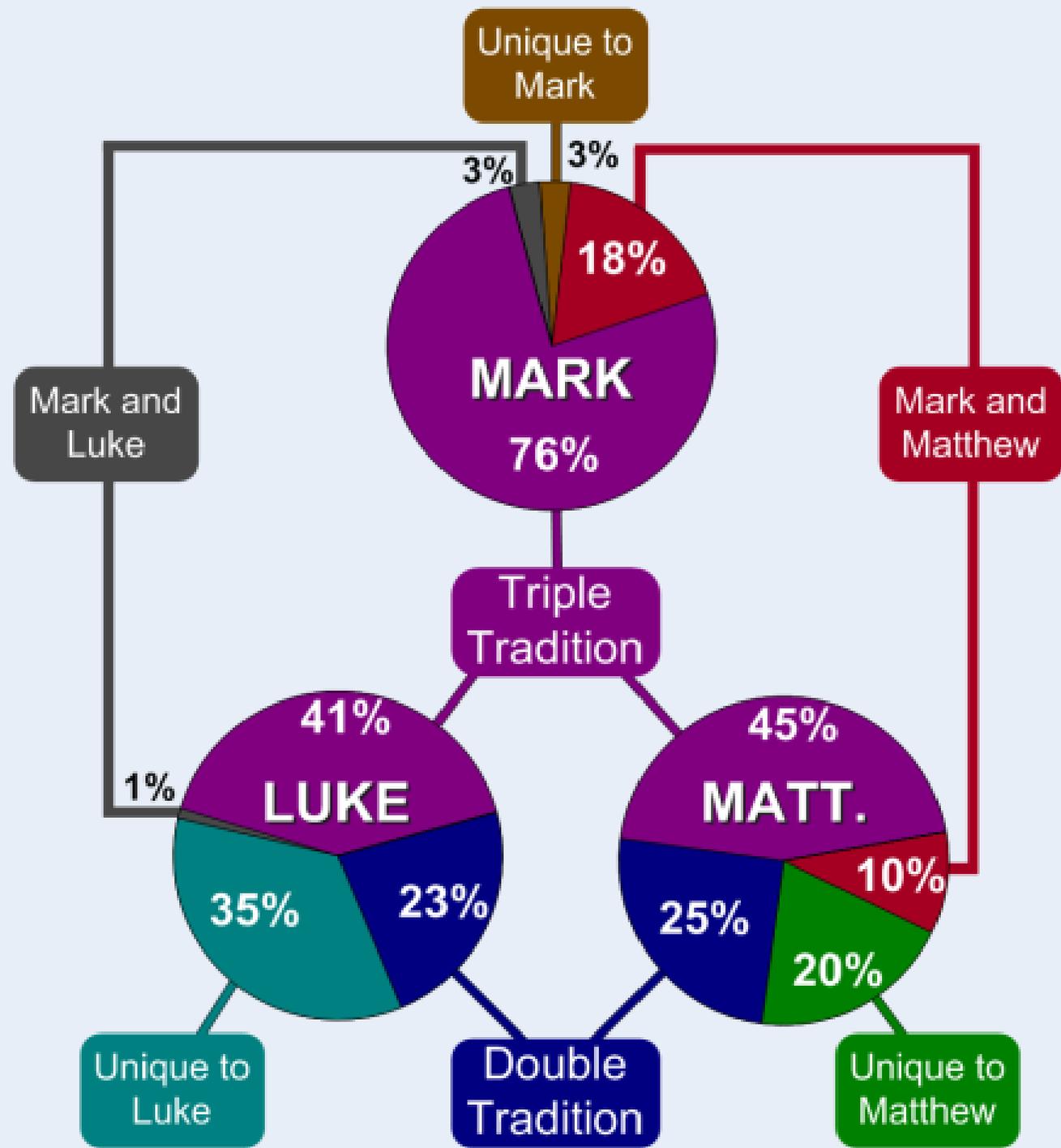
| <u>Gospel</u> | <u>Author</u>                       | <u>Audience</u> | <u>Dating</u>                          |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| “Mark”        | Jew living in Rome                  | Gentiles        | 65-75 CE, most likely between 68-73    |
| “Matthew”     | <b>Jew living in Antioch</b>        | <b>Jews</b>     | <b>80-90 CE, give or take a decade</b> |
| “Luke”        | Gentile (likely not from Palestine) | Gentiles        | 85 CE, give or take five to ten years  |
| “John”        | Jew living in Ephesus (or Syria)    | Unclear         | 80-110 CE, most likely btwn 100-110.   |

# Relationship between the Synoptic Gospels

**"MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE, SEE ME AFTER CLASS.**



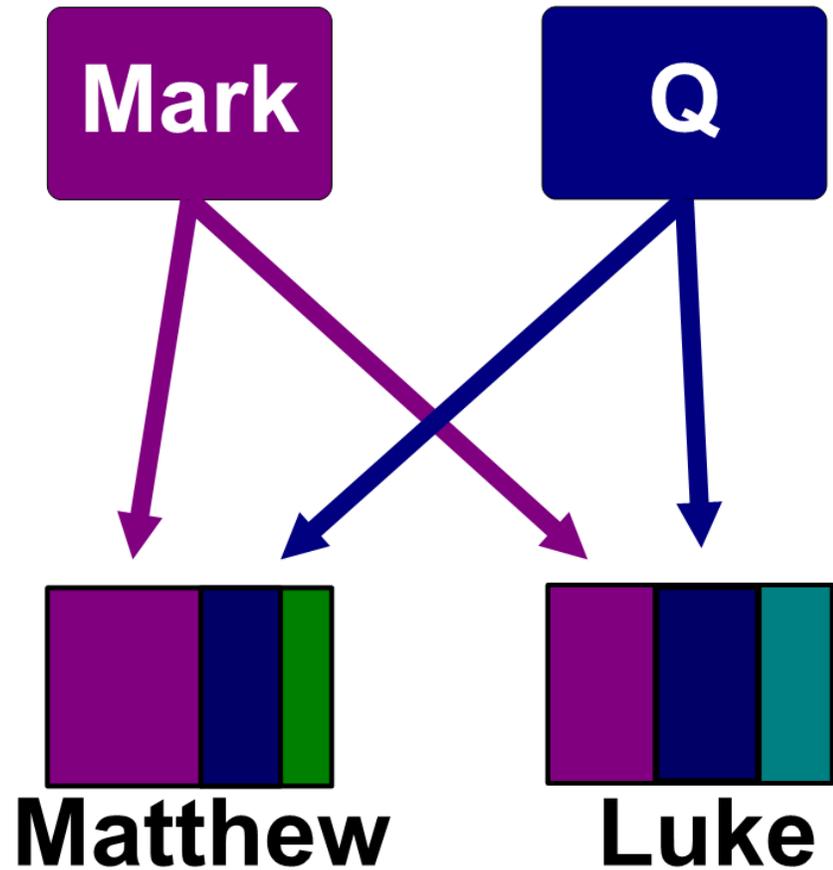
**YOUR BOOK REPORTS ARE SURPRISINGLY SIMILAR."**



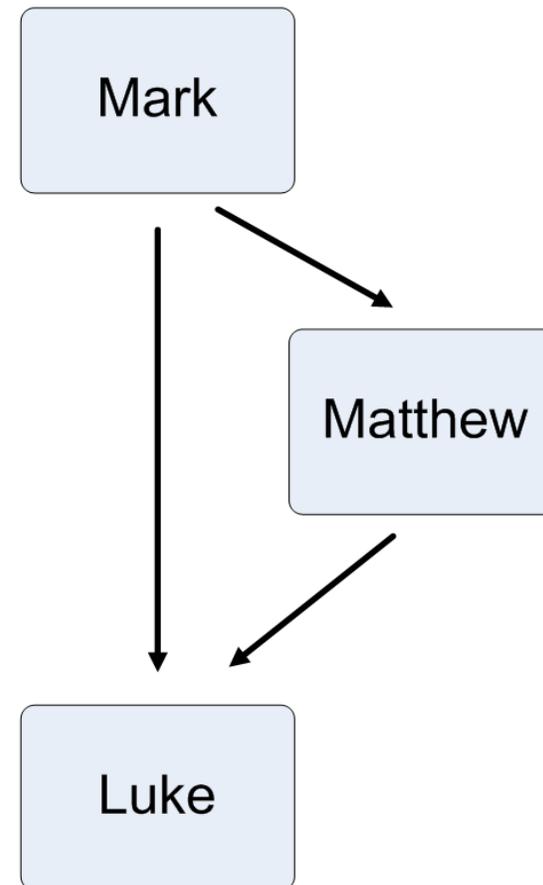
# How are the Synoptics related?

Markan Priority (meaning it came first), but it's unclear as to how Matthew and Luke are related to one another. The predominant theories are:

## Two-source Hypothesis

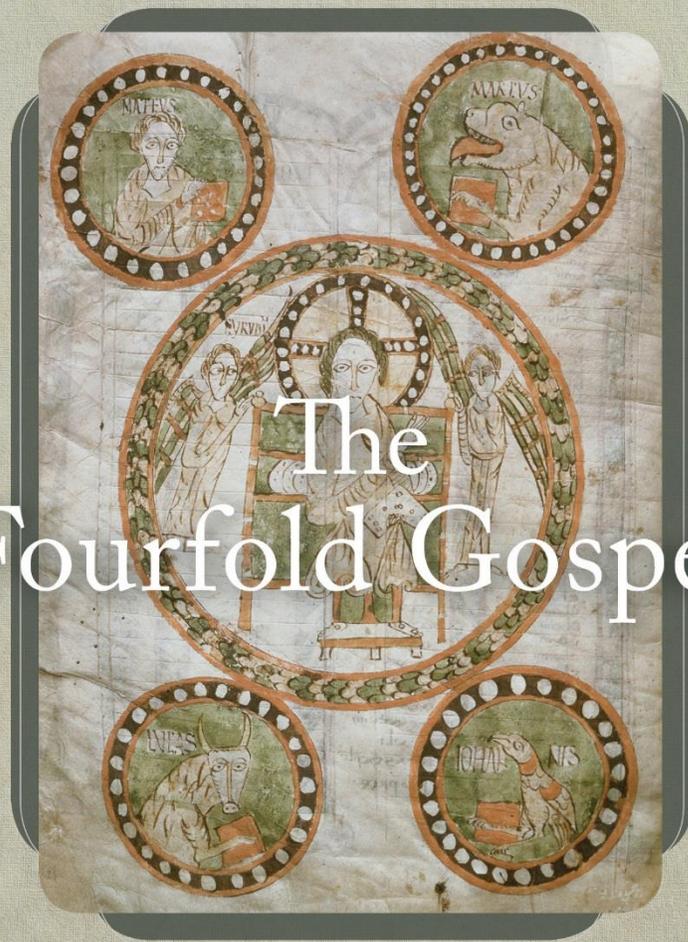


## Farrer hypothesis



The Farrer Hypothesis dispenses with Q completely and emphasizes the interdependence of the gospels.

“[Matthew] wants to provide a more comprehensive account than his predecessor. He may perhaps have expected his text to be used alongside Mark’s, a second gospel to complement the first. More likely he expects to *replace* Mark. His is not an independent work with himself as sole author. Matthew is not only an author; he is also an editor who takes upon himself the task of preparing an enlarged and improved second edition of the earlier gospel text. So the questions arise: Do we have here two gospels, or two editions of a single gospel? Does Luke then add a third edition? Are the evangelists more like individual authors or anonymous editors?”  
(Watson, 6)



# The Fourfold Gospel

A Theological Reading  
of the New Testament Portraits of Jesus

Francis Watson

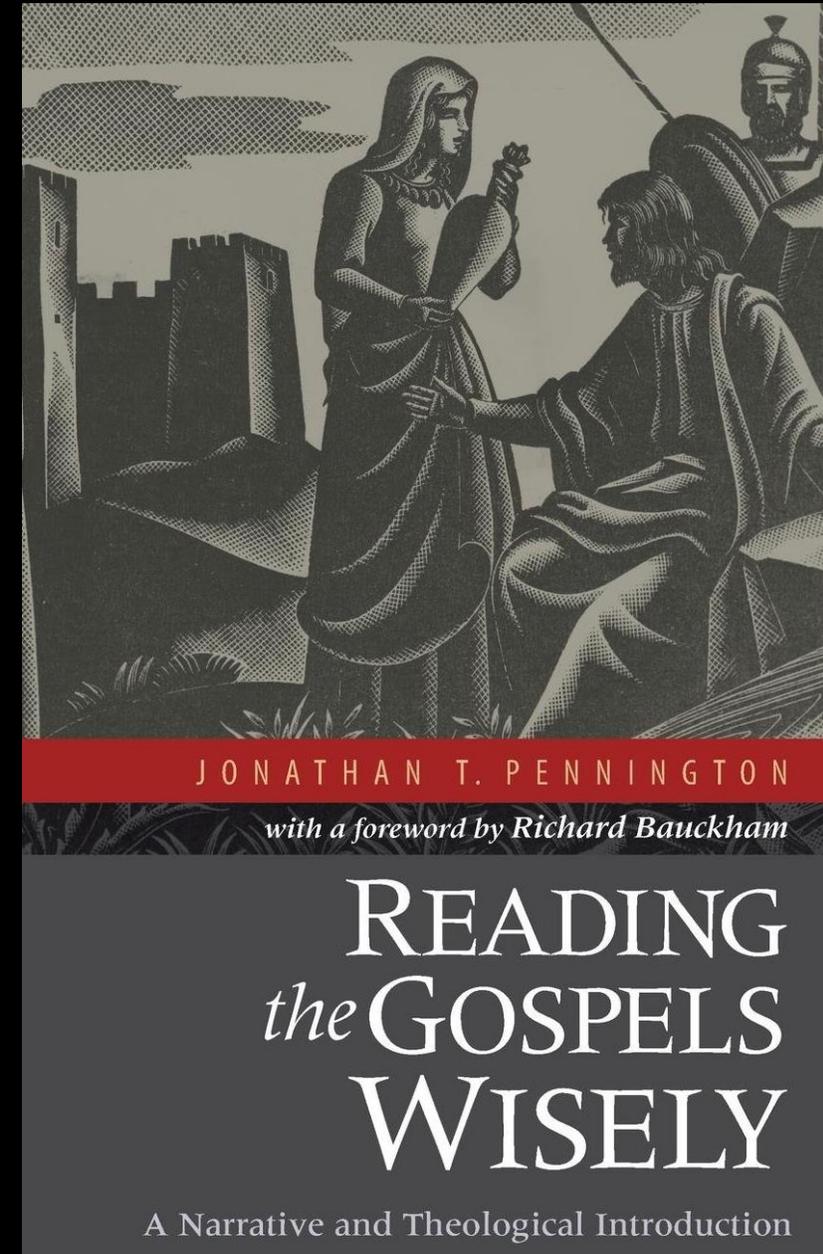
# Relationship between the Synoptics

- If Matthew sought to “*replace* Mark,” why would he have done so? Did he feel that the story was incomplete?
- Watson says Matthew is more than an author, but he is also an editor, who enlarges and improves on Mark in his own gospel book.
- At least, each gospel tells the story from baptism through resurrection (so, Mark).
- What major elements are added in Matthew?
  - Infancy Narratives (including genealogies)
  - Resurrection appearances



# Genre

- The Gospels are most like biographies, but ancient ones (called *bioi*) and not modern ones. With this distinction in hand, we can allow for greater flexibility in chronology and understand structure around topics and themes.



# Outline of Matthew's Gospel

|                  |       |                                                                                                    |
|------------------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Narrative</b> | 1-4   | Genealogy, Beginnings, JBap, Temptation, Calling                                                   |
| <b>Discourse</b> | 5-7   | Sermon on the Mount, Moral Instruction, Demand                                                     |
| <b>Narrative</b> | 8-9   | Miracles                                                                                           |
| <b>Discourse</b> | 10    | Missionary/ "Mission Sermon" (Brown 173)                                                           |
| <b>Narrative</b> | 11-12 | Response (mostly negative) and controversy                                                         |
| <b>Discourse</b> | 13    | Parables, Interpretation of Response, Sower, Wheat and Weeds/ "The Sermon in Parables" (Brown 173) |
| <b>Narrative</b> | 14-17 | Peter, Church, Feeding                                                                             |
| <b>Discourse</b> | 18    | Community/ "Sermon on the church" (Brown 173)                                                      |
| <b>Narrative</b> | 19-23 | Jerusalem                                                                                          |
| <b>Discourse</b> | 24-25 | Eschatological/ Last Things/ "Eschatological Sermon" (Brown 173)                                   |
| <b>Narrative</b> | 26-28 | Passion Narrative                                                                                  |

# Matthew as a Gospel for the Church



ἐκκλησία (church) appears only twice in all the Gospels and both times are in Matthew!

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. (Matt 16:18)

If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (Matt 18:17)

# Matthew as a Gospel for the Church



The most influential liturgical elements

- The Lord's Prayer (Luke's not common)
- Communion Liturgy (Eat and drink)
- Baptismal Formula
  - Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

# Discourses/ Sermons of Matthew's Gospel

|                  |       |                                                                                                    |
|------------------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Discourse</b> | 5-7   | Sermon on the Mount, Moral Instruction, Demand                                                     |
| <b>Discourse</b> | 10    | Missionary/ "Mission Sermon" (Brown 173)                                                           |
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B.W. Bacon popularized the view that these five sermons were the key to Matthew's structure and that Matthew was creating a new Law or Pentateuch of sorts, with the five sermons corresponding to the five books of Moses. (Blomberg, 143-144)

This view has been refuted by other, modern scholars (DCA, REB), but is nevertheless helpful to remember Matthew's overall structure.

# Matthew as the most Jewish (and Gentile) Gospel



“Matthew is perhaps the most Jewish of all the Gospels, and yet at key places it also foreshadows the Gentile mission as clearly as any of the other three.”  
(Blomberg, 148)

# Affirmation of Judaism (Borg, *Evolution of the Word*, 215)



“Not counting allusions or echoes, [Matthew] quotes the [HB] forty times with an explicit phrase such as ‘It is written’ and another twenty-one times without such a phrase... (61x!)

“Matthew affirms the eternal validity of the ‘law’ and the ‘prophets,’ designations for sections of the [HB] in his time.

See Mt 5:17-18 (unique)

Jesus restricts mission during his lifetime to Jews. See Mt 10:5-6

## Move Beyond Judea (Borg, *Evolution of the Word*, 215)

“It is only the risen Jesus, the post-Easter Jesus, in the last verse of the gospel, who commissions his followers to go to ‘the nations’ (the Gentiles).”

Since the mission is now focused outward, the identity of the early church will certainly change for good and for bad.



# Hostility toward Judaism (Borg, *Evolution of the Word*, 215)



“Matthew intensifies [conflict between Jesus and some of his Jewish contemporaries]... Matthew has been for many centuries the major scriptural justification for Christian anti-Semitism and often deadly persecution of Jews.”  
See Matt 27:25—The blood cry  
The historical interpretation is that all Jews everywhere and for all time are to be held accountable for Jesus’ death

# Hostility toward Judaism (*Jewish Annotated NT*, 62)



“the verse for Matthew is more likely about prophetic fulfillment than a universal condemnation of Jews. Further, for Matthew’s own context, it was ‘all the people’ of Jerusalem, and their children, who witnessed the destruction of the city in 70 CE.

Some scholars suggest Matthew meant also to suggest an irony; the crowd, unknowingly, calls Jesus’ salvific blood upon themselves.

## Excursus: Parting of the Ways (Borg, *Evolution of the Word*, 217)

Important events during composition of the gospels

The growing conflict between Christian Jews and non-Christian Jews was particularly intense near the Jewish homeland

Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE, meant the loss of the temple and the center of Judaism. With the threat to the Jews and Judaism, those within became protective of any external influences.

The growing number of Gentile Christians also added to the parting of the ways, because, as they didn't have to first become Jewish, they weren't as loyal or committed to trying to maintain close ties.



Excursus: Parting of the Ways (Borg, *Evolution of the Word*, 217)

“The more Gentiles there were, the less the movement struck other Jews as a form of Judaism... [Christianity’s] success in the Gentile world began the process of separation from Judaism”

“Expulsion from the synagogue” = exclusion/  
ostracization

“Though we do not know the details of what this included, presumably it meant no marriage between Christian Jews and non-Christian Jews and perhaps the severing of family and economic relationships. In locations where Jews were the majority of the population, the consequences could have been severe.”



# Genealogy

In line with the expulsion from the Synagogue and the parting of the ways, if family ties might have been severed, fellow Christians become a new family unit.

This might explain some aspects of Matt's genealogy  
Matthew 12:46-50 (Who is my mother?)

Odd or pastorally sensitive?

On closer inspection, the genealogy is not just about family or descent or heredity; rather, it is a highly condensed summary of the scriptural history of Israel.

(30)



|    | <b>Group 1</b>            | <b>Group 2</b> | <b>Group 3</b> |
|----|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1  | Abraham                   | Solomon        | Jeconiah       |
| 2  | Isaac                     | Rehoboam       | Shealtiel      |
| 3  | Jacob                     | Abijah         | Zerubbabel     |
| 4  | Judah + Tamar             | Asa            | Abihud         |
| 5  | Perez                     | Jehoshaphat    | Eliakim        |
| 6  | Hezron                    | Jehoram        | Azor           |
| 7  | Ram                       | Uzziah         | Zadok          |
| 8  | Amminadab                 | Jotham         | Akim           |
| 9  | Nahshon                   | Ahaz           | Elihud         |
| 10 | Salmon + Rahab            | Hezekiah       | Eleazar        |
| 11 | Boaz + Ruth               | Manasseh       | Matthan        |
| 12 | Obed                      | Amon           | Jacob          |
| 13 | Jesse                     | Josiah         | Joseph + Mary  |
| 14 | King David + Uriah's Wife | Jeconiah       | Jesus          |

Notice that there are three groups (Matt loves triads) and each group has 14ish people.

Gematria is an alpha-numeric code or cipher used in the Hebrew language where each letter also have a numerical value. Words, then, could be added up to equal a certain number. Some propose that in Matthew's genealogy for Jesus, the number fourteen appears as important because it is the total for the letters in the name David (dwd=daleth 4+waw 6+daleth 4=14).

David, David, David!

# Women in Matthew's Genealogy

Judah + **Tamar**

Salmon + **Rahab**

Boaz + **Ruth**

King David + **Uriah's Wife**

Joseph + **Mary**

“The evangelist [Matthew] completes his unique quartet of female characters, ancestors or foremothers of the Messiah: not Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel, but Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba... [all Gentiles!]

[For Matthew, there] is no interest in the twelve tribes; instead, the sacred scriptural past is reshaped so that it points toward a single goal, the birth of the Messiah. Everything superfluous has been cut out...

Matthew's genealogy seems intended to disturb his readers. It does not present the scriptural history of Israel as an inspirational story of faith and salvation. Rather, it directs attention to the shadow side of that history.”

(Watson, 33ff)

# Genealogy

The genealogy and the birth [of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Matthew] seem to contradict each other; more precisely, the miraculous birth seems to cancel out the genealogy. (28)

There is a tension between the genealogy and the virgin birth:

If Jesus really was born of a virgin (i.e., no genetic relationship to Joseph), what's the point of including his "step-father's" lineage?



SHEKINAH HOLY SPIRIT

Moses  
Prince of Egypt

Jesus  
Prince of Peace

And I will raise up shepherds... Jer 23:4

FED WITH MANKA

NUMBERS 21:9

LAW

LOVE

JOHN 3:14

FED WITH EUCHARIST

Mount Sinai  
10  
Commandments

Mount of Beatitudes  
THE GREAT  
COMMANDMENT

CROSSING the Red Sea  
FREEDOM from SLAVERY

BAPTISM in JORDAN  
FREEDOM from SIN

SHEPHERD of SINAI

SHEPHERD of SOULS

leads to Promised Land

leads all to Heaven

40

YEARS in  
the Desert

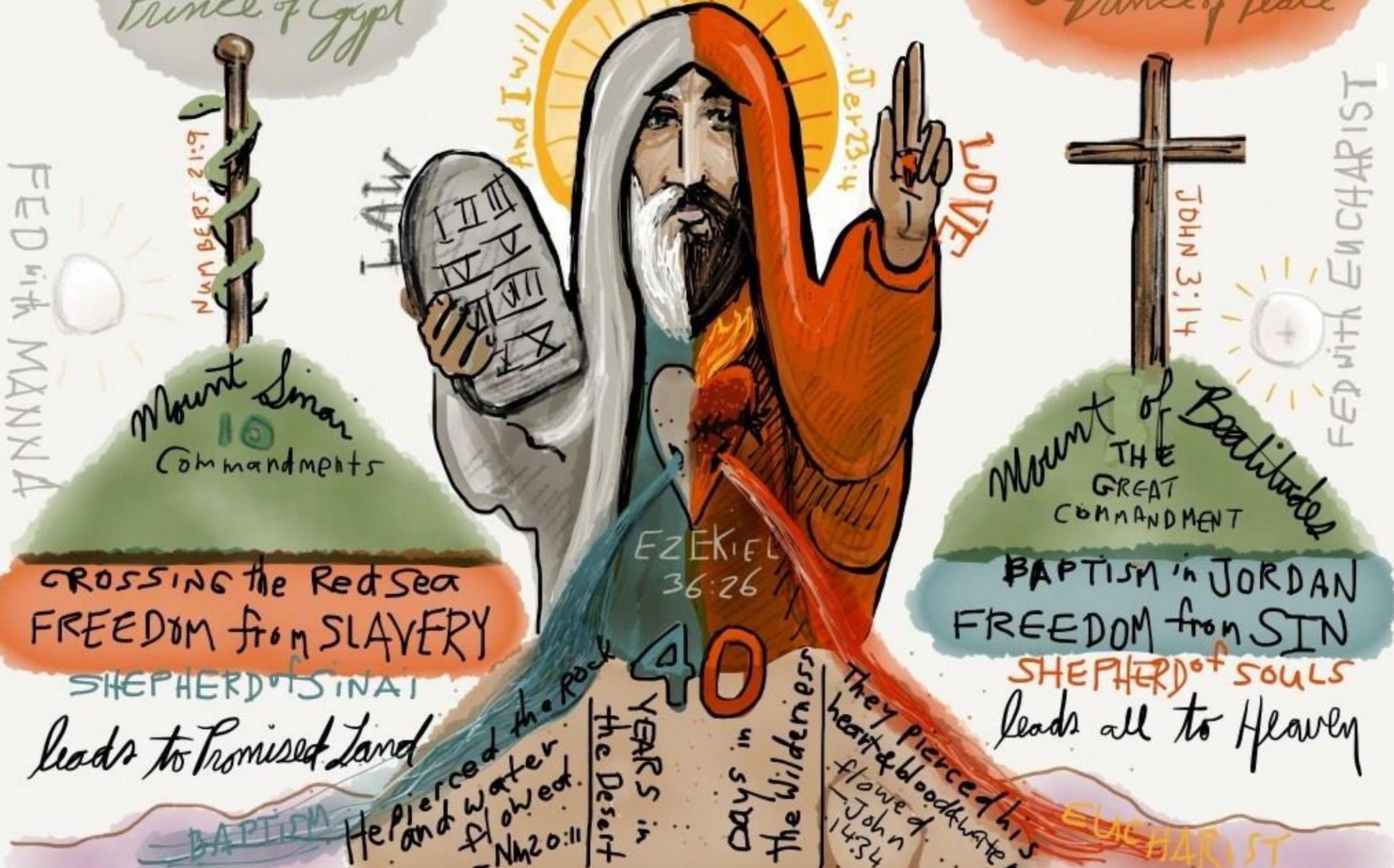
days in  
the Wilderness

They pierced his  
heart & blood & water  
flowed  
John  
14:34

BAPTISM

He pierced the Rock  
and water  
& blood  
flowed  
- Num 20:11

EUCHARIST



Moses  
Prince of Egypt

SHEKINAH HOLY SPIRIT

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SHEPHERD of SINAI

leads to Promised Land

EZEKIEL  
36:26

BAPTISM in JORDAN  
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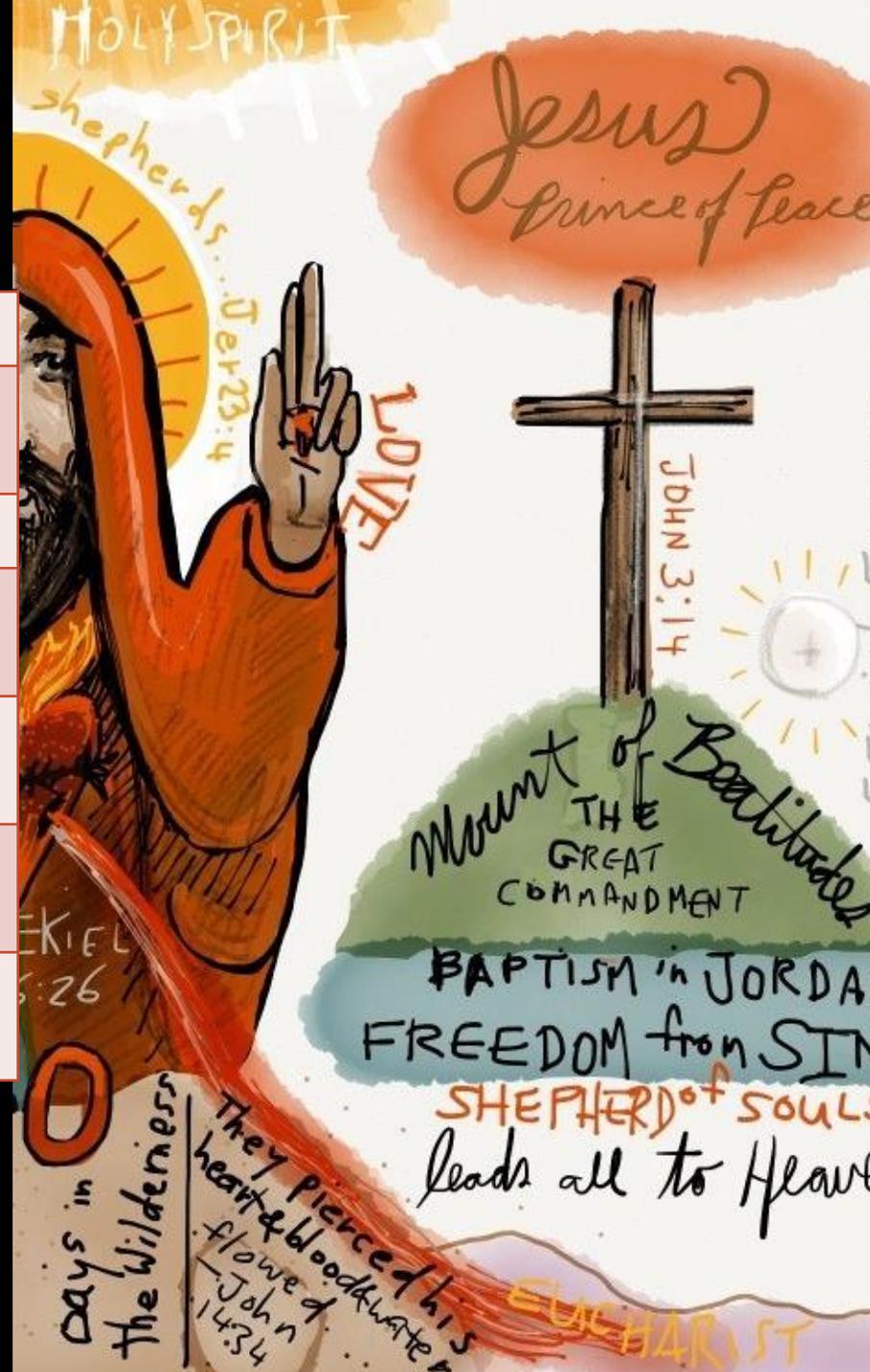
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# Jesus as the new Moses?

|                                                                  |                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Crossing the Sea                                                 | Baptism in Jordan      |
| Infancy Narrative, slaughter of innocents, flight to Egypt, etc. |                        |
| Teaching on a mountain                                           |                        |
| Face shining like the sun                                        | Transfiguration        |
| 40 years in wilderness                                           | 40 days in wilderness  |
| Freedom from slavery                                             | Freedom from sin       |
| Leads to earthy home                                             | Leads to heavenly home |



SHEKINAH HOLY SPIRIT

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Prince of Egypt

Jesus  
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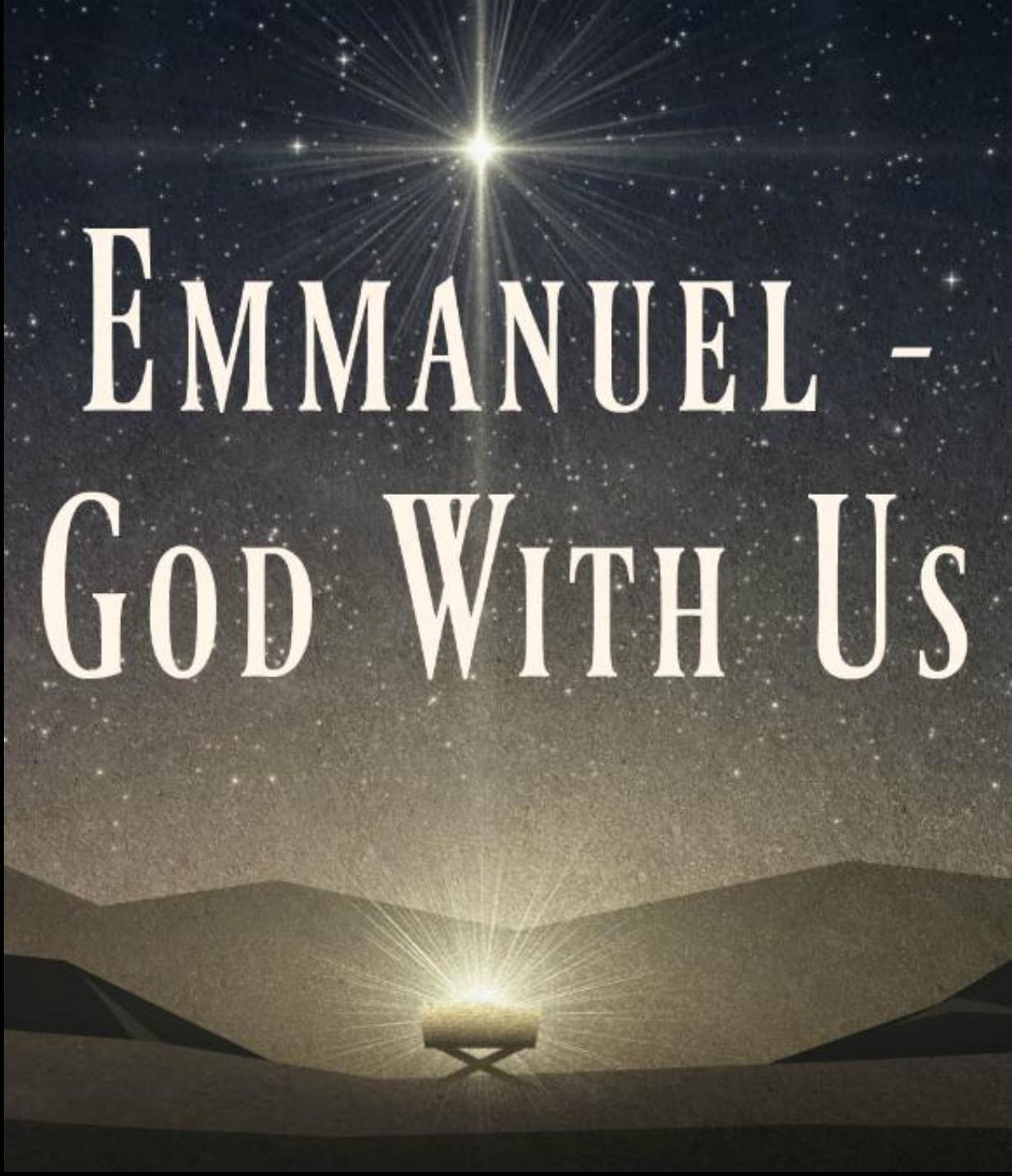
BAPTISM

He pierced the Rock  
and water  
& blood  
flowed  
- Num 20:11

EUCHARIST

# God is with us: Emmanuel

- Matt 1:23
- Matt 18:20
- Matt 28:20
- This narrative frame serves to depict Jesus as always present.



EMMANUEL -  
GOD WITH US

# Takeaways from today

- A Gospel for the Church (especially used in liturgy)
- Structured around Narrative-Discourse, with FIVE discourses, like the Pentateuch
- There is a simultaneous affirmation of Judaism and a hostility toward it
- Many parallels between Moses and Jesus (typological interpretation)
- Jesus is always with us!

Next: The Gospel according to Luke





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شكرا

شكرا

Gracias

شكرا لك

Merci

Thank you

شكرا لك

Danke

謝謝

Euxapio