Gospel According to Saint Matthew



Church of the Redeemer
2026-2027 Ladies Bible Study
Tuesdays
10:30AM - Noon (Goewey Hall)
or
6:30 - 8:00PM (Room 220)

The Calling of Saint Matthew
Caravaggio (1599)

The Contarelli Chapel, a side chapel located in San Luigi dei Francesi, the French national church in Rome, famously displays three works of the painter Caravaggio. Each of the paintings depicts a scene from the life of St. Matthew the Apostle: The Inspiration of Saint Matthew hangs above the altar, with The Calling of Saint Matthew and The Martyrdom of Saint Matthew on the left and right side of the altar, respectively. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, a Milanese-born painter living at the turn of the seventeenth century, is most often associated with the city of Rome. Among his most famous works – all of which display his characteristic chiaroscuro style that utilizes stark contrasts between dark and light to bring scenes to life – are The Crucifixion of Saint Peter (1601), The Conversion on the Way to Damascus (1601), and The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist (1608).

The Calling of Saint Matthew depicts the moment Christ invited St. Matthew to give up his life as a tax collector in order to follow him. In his gospel, Matthew recounts the scene simply: “As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him” (Matthew 9:9). In the painting, Christ and St. Peter stand in a room with five men seated at a table counting coins.

Christ and St. Peter stand on the right of the painting. While Peter’s back is turned to the viewer and his attention is fixed on Christ, Christ looks upon the five men at the table. Christ’s hand is raised, pointing at Matthew. It has been noted that Christ’s hand is strikingly similar to that of Adam in Michelangelo’s The Creation of Adam in the Sistine Chapel, echoing the tradition of viewing Christ as the “new Adam.”

St. Matthew's identity in the scene has been a matter of debate. One man, bearded and sitting in the center of the table, meets Christ’s gaze and points inwardly, apparently at himself. This man appears to be the same man as is depicted in the other paintings in the chapel. Others have argued that the bearded man’s finger appears to point at a younger man at the end of the table, either indicating that this younger man is Matthew or attempting to deflect attention from himself. The young man looks down at the coins, still not having met Christ’s gaze. Still others have questioned whether the ambiguity itself is an intentional feature of the painting.

The scene utilizes a single source of light shining into the dark room from behind Christ, aligning intentionally with the small window that serves as the Contarelli Chapel’s sole source of natural light. The light aligns with Christ’s gaze and his outstretched hand, all pointing at the men in the dark room. The room, a den of greed only moments before, is filled with the light of Christ, and “the darkness has not overcome it.”

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Date	Reading
September 8	Matthew Overview (No Readings)
September 15	Matthew 1-2
September 22	Matthew 3-4
September 29	Matthew 5-7
October 6	Matthew 5-7
October 13	Matthew 5-7
October 20	Matthew 8-10
October 27	Matthew 8-10
November 3	Matthew 11-13
November 10	Matthew 11-13
November 17	Matthew 11-13
November 24	Matthew 14-18
December 1	Matthew 14-18
December 8	Matthew 14-18
December 15	Matthew 14-18
December 22 - January 19	**Break**
January 26 - April 6 (new workbook)	Matthew 19- 28; Acts 1-2

Testament (Latin = testamentus, Greek = diatheke, Hebrew = berit) means **Covenant.**

Covenant: sacred, unbreakable bond of family kinship made through a solemn oath. A covenant creates a permanent, loving relationship with God

Old Testament = God's Covenant with Ancient Israel
New Testament = New and Eternal Covenant Fulfilled by Jesus Christ



The Prophecy of the Messiah's Death (Daniel 9)

Daniel's Prophecy	*Historical Events*	*Dates*
"Going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem."	Decree to rebuild the Temple by King Artaxerxes of Persia	ca. 457 BC
"Seventy weeks of years"	70 x 7 years = 490 years	AD 457–33
"Messiah" will be "cut off"	Jesus is crucified	ca. AD 33
"City and sanctuary"	Temple and Jerusalem	AD 70

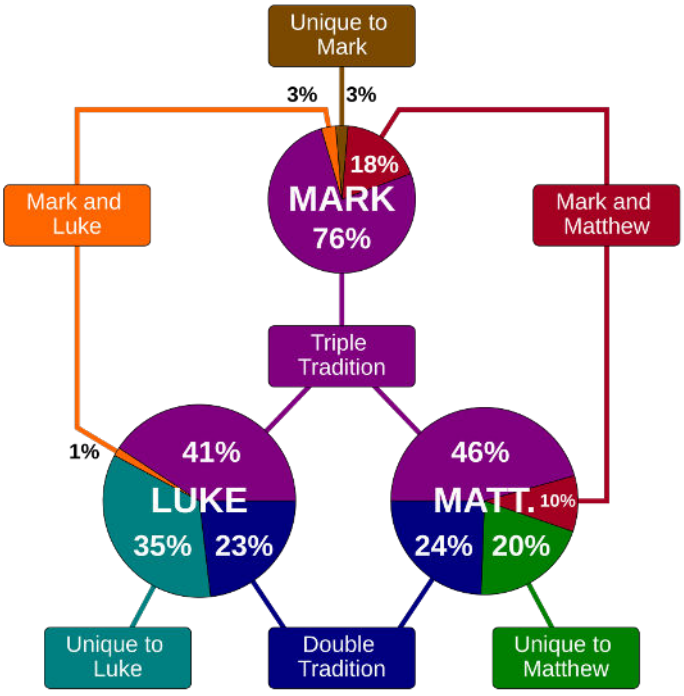
THE FOCUS OF THE FOUR GOSPELS

Among the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the first was written by Matthew, who was once a publican, but afterwards an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and it was prepared for the converts from Judaism, and published in the Hebrew language. The second was that of Mark, who composed it under Peter's guidance. ... The third, the Gospel which was praised by Paul, was that of Luke, written for gentile converts. Last of all, there is that of John.

Bishop Eusebius quoting Origen (185-253/54), head of the Catholic Catechetical School in Alexandria, Egypt, *Church History,* 6.25.4

Gospel	**Matthew**	**Mark**	**Luke**	**John**
Audience	Jews	Romans	Hellenists	Greco-Romans
Focus	Jesus is the Messianic King of the promised Davidic Kingdom who fulfills the Old Testament prophesies and covenants.	Jesus is the authoritative Son of God, and He is God's triumphant envoy who has come to suffer and die in order to claim victory over sin and death.	Jesus is the perfect Son of Man, the Messiah prophesied by the prophets, who has come to save and to minister to people of all nations through the power of God the Holy Spirit.	Jesus Christ is the fully divine Son of God who existed before Creation. He is the true Lamb of sacrifice through whom we receive the gift of eternal life.
Some key Scripture passages unique to each Gospel	Mathew 1:1; 16:16-18; 18:18; 28:18-20	Mark 1:1; 8:28-30; 10:45; 16:15-16	Luke 2:34; 11:9-10; 24:25-27, 44-47	John 1:1; 1:29; 3:3-5; 6:53-56; 20:22-23 21:15-19
Some key words	Kingdom of Heaven; fulfilled	Kingdom of God; immediately /now	Kingdom of God; Son of Man	Word of God; only begotten Son; believe; eternal life
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Relationships between the Synoptic Gospels



Gospel of Matthew Overview

Basic Facts

- Best organized and balanced Gospel
- Most comprehensive
- Most explicitly Jewish (50 explicit quotations, 200 references to Old Testament)
- Ideal “bridge” between the Testaments
- Strong influence on early Christian writings: ex: Origen (250 AD) wrote 25 volume commentary
- Gospel readings prior to 1969 were mostly Matthew and John (one year cycle). Currently lectionary has three year cycle (A: Matthew, B: Mark, C: Luke, with John in each year)
- Second longest Gospel (18,000 words; Luke: 19,000; John 16,000; Mark 11,000)
- Audience: Jewish Christians (early believers)
- Written probably in Antioch in 50-60AD
- Contains 90% of Mark (500 verses)
- Keyword: Kingdom (50 times, 30 times as Kingdom of Heaven). Kingdom of Heaven is the divine perfection of the ancient kingdom of David.
- Only Gospel to refer to the Church(16:18, 18:17 twice). Links the Church with the Kingdom of Heaven.
- Matthew frequently alludes to comparisons to Jesus and OT people, places, and events (typology). Examples: Jesus: New Moses, New David, New Solomon, New Jonah, New Israel, and New Temple.
- Throughout the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus urges embracing the demands of discipleship (principles, and priorities that define the Christian way of life).
    - call to repentance (3:2; 4:17)
    - commitment to making believers a light shining in the world (5:13-16)
    - pursuing righteousness (5:17-42)
    - unconditional love (5:43-48)
    - almsgiving (6:2-4)
    - communion with the Father in prayer (6:5-13; 7:7-11)
    - fasting (6:16-18)
    - putting God and His Kingdom first (6:25-33)
    - building the necessary relationship with Jesus (7:22)
    - shoulder a cross of suffering (10:38; 16:24)
    - humility (11:29)
    - integrity of speech (12:36-37)
    - mercy towards others (18:21-22)
    - performing works of service (25:35-36)
    - A disciple who is known by the Lord is the one who does the will of the Father (7:21) and comes to possess the Kingdom in Heaven (25:34).
    - Christian mission (Great Commission):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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.(28:19-20)

Who was Matthew?

- Disciple/Apostle named Levi: former tax collector (publican) called by Jesus to "Follow Me" (Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27)
- Name: Levi (Hebrew) means join/connect; Matthew (Greek) means gift of the Lord. Jesus renames Levi as Matthew.
- Tax Collectors (Publicans) were highly educated with abilities to read, write, and speak multiple languages. They were Jews authorized by the Romans to collect taxes. They were hated and despised by the Jews who associated them with sinners, harlots, and pagans (Mt 9:11;11:19; 18:17; 21:31-32)
- Levi/Matthew is identified as a son of Alphaeus (Greek)/Clopas or Cleophas (Hebrew) (Mark 2:14).
- Another son of Alphaeus disciple/apostle is James (James the Lesser, James the Just, first Bishop of Jerusalem, author of epistle James). Possibly Matthew's brother.

Unique to Matthew

- Genealogy emphasizing the royal, legal lineage through Joseph (Luke record biological lineage through Mary) (1:2-17)
- Birth of Jesus through Joseph's eyes (1:18-25)
- Magi visit and flight to Egypt (2: 1-21)
- Fulfillment of the Law and Prophets and Six Antithesis (5:17-43)
- Practices of Piety (6:1-18)
- Pearls before swine (7:6)
- Mission of the Twelve to Israel Limit (10:5-6)
- Invitation to rest (11:28-30)
- Parable Wheat and Weeds (13:24-43)
- Parable of Hidden Treasure in Field (13:44)
- Parable of Pearl of Great Price (13:45-46)
- Parable Net Good and Bad Fish (13:47-52)
- Peter walking on water (14:28-31)
- Peter and the keys to the Kingdom (16:17-19)
- Peter and the Temple tax (17:24-27)
- Recovering the sinful brother (18:15-20)
- Peter asking for forgiveness (18:21-22)
- Parable of Unforgiving Servant (18:23-25)
- Parable of Laborers in the Vineyard (20:1-16)
- Parable of Two Sons (21:28-32)
- Prohibition of titles (23:7-12)
- Denouncing the Scribes and Pharisees (23:15-22)
- Parable of Wise and Foolish Virgins (25:1-13)
- Parable of the Talents (25:14-30)
- Parable of the Sheep and Goats (25:31-46)
- Death of Judas (27:3-10)
- Pilate washing his hands (27:24-25)
- Resurrection of the Saints (27:52-53)
- Guard at the Tomb (27:62-66; 28:11-15)
- Great Commission (28:16-20)

Gospel of Matthew Outline

Prologue Narrative: The Ancestry and Infancy of Jesus (1-2)

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Book 4	Book 5
Narrative: Ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus's Preparation for Ministry in Galilee (3-4)	Narrative: Miracle Stories of Jesus (8-9)	Narrative: Jesus Confronts an Evil Generation (11-12)	Narrative: Revelation of Jesus's Identity to the Disciples (14-17)	Narrative: Jesus's Teachings in Judea and Jerusalem (19-23)
Discourse: Sermon on the Mount (5-7)	Discourse: Mission Sermon and the Commission of the Twelve (10)	Discourse: Mysteries Sermon: Parables of the Kingdom (13)	Discourse: Ecclesial Sermon: Life in the Church (18)	Discourse: Eschatological (End Times) Sermon: Olivet Discourse (24-25)

Passion Week Narratives: The Passion and Resurrection of the Messiah (26-28)

After Jesus delivers a major sermon (discourse),
Matthew delivers the refrain:

"When Jesus finished these……" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1).

This marks a transition from discourse to narrative.

TIMELINE 930 BC – 3/2 BC

-930: When King Solomon dies, his son Rehoboam becomes King of Israel. Jeroboam of the tribe of Ephraim leads the ten northern tribes in a revolt against Rehoboam. The civilwar results in the division of Israel into the Northern Kingdom of Israel, which will be ruled by nine different Israelite dynasties, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, ruled by kings who are descendants of King David

-722: The Assyrians conquer the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The ten northern tribes are disbursed into the Gentile world. Five pagan tribes are brought in by the Assyrians to resettle the land of the Northern Kingdom. These people come to be known as the Samaritans.

-626-539: Rise of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty

-609: King Nabopolassar of Babylon repulses the army of Necho of Egypt, who was coming to the aid of Assyria, Babylon's enemy and Egypt's ally. The Egyptians kill Davidic King Josiah of Judah in his attempt to stop the Egyptian advance through his kingdom, at the battle of Megiddo.

-605: Nebuchadnezzar, the 29 year old son of King Nabopolassar of Babylon, defeats the Assyrians at the Battle of Carchemish, putting an end to the Assyrian Empire. Nabopolassar dies and Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon. The Babylonians take children from royal and noble families of the region's conuered nations as captives to Babylon. The prophet Daniel is one of those captive children.

-600: King Jehoiakim of Judah resists Babylonian domination.

-597: Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem and conuers the city, taking King Jehoiakim and his son Jehoiachin, captive. Nebuchadnezzar makes Zedekiah a vassal king of the Babylonians. It is the second deportation and the beginning of the exile of large numbers of the Judean population to Babylon. The priest-prophet Ezekiel is one of the deportees.

-589: King Zedekiah of Judah revolts against Babylonian rule, forming an alliance with Egypt.

-587/6: The Babylonian army of Nebuchadnezzar captures Jerusalem, burning the city and the Temple of Solomon on the 9th of Ab. Zedekiah, the last Davidic king, and thousands of Judahite citizens are sent as exiles to Babylon. It is the beginning of a seventy-year exile in the lands of Babylon for the covenant people.

-539: King Cyrus of Persia conquers Babylon.

-538: The Edict of Cyrus allows the return of the Jews from exile. However, they return as vassals of the Persian Empire.

-537: The returning exiles rebuild the altar of Yahweh on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem, and reinstate the twice-daily worship service of the Tamid sacrifice. They lay foundations of the Second Temple.

-517/6: The exiles complete the rebuilding of the Second Temple in Jerusalem

-336: Alexander succeeds his father, Philip, as King of Macedonia. After conquering Greece, he begins the invasion of the Persian Empire the next year.

-332: The armies of Alexander the Great conquer the entire region of the Levant, including the nation of Judah.

-331: The Greeks defeat the Persian armies at the Battle of Arbela. It is the end of the Persian period and the beginning of the Hellenistic period.

-323: Alexander the Great dies in Babylon and his four most powerful generals divide his empire. Judah will be on the border between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Greeks.

-323-200: The Ptolemaic Greeks of Egypt rule Judah as a vassal state.

-280: Founding of the library at Alexandria, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

-200-100: Hebrew Bible is translated into Greek. This version is known as the Septuagint (The Seventy of LXX) and is the basis of the Catholic Old Testament Canon.

-200-142: Greek Seleucids of Syria rule Judah.

-167-164: Known as the Great Persecution, the Greek Seleucid rulers of Syria attempt to force Hellenistic culture and the worship of the Greek gods upon the Judeans. The revolt against this oppression by the priest Mattathias and his five sons is known as the Maccabean Revolt. Judas Maccabeus reconquers Jersulaem and rededicates the Temple. This is the origin of the Jewish feast of Hanukkah.

-141: The end of Seleucid occupation of Judah. Simon Maccabee forms an alliance with Rome. This is the beginning of the period of Judean independence known as the Hasmonean period. Hasmonean descendants of the Maccabees rule as high priests and kings of Judah.

-135-105: Hasmonean descendant, John Hyrcanus I, extends rule over Edom (Idumea) and forces Idumeans to convert (forced circumcision). He also destroys Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim.

-104-76: Hasmonean descendant, Alexander Jannaeus, successfully extended the Jewish kingdom to the limits of the ancient kingdom of Solomon. Conflict between

religious and political parties intensifies. Jannaeus sides with the Sadducees and crucified 800 Pharisees with they wives and children.

-64: Roman general Pompey invades the region. He deposes Philip II, the last of the Seleucid kings, and makes Syria a Roman province.

-63: Rival Hasmonean princes appeal to Pompey to settle a dynastic succession dispute. Pompey settles the dispute by conquering Jerusalem, making Judah the Roman province of Judea, and naming Prince Hyrcanus, the weakest, as the High Priest. Antipater, an Idumean, served as the real power behind the throne. He installs his sons, Phasaelis and Herod, as governors in the land. Hasmoneans exist in name only.

-44: The assassination of Julius Caesar. Octavian (Julius Caesar's great-nephew), Marc Antony, and Cassius form a partnership to govern the Roman Empire.

-40: With Marc Antony's urging, the Roman Senate names Roman ally, Herod of Idumaea, the King of the Jews. The Jews of Judea protest. The rebels are crucified.

-37: Herod marries Mariamne I, the granddaughter of the last Hasmonean ruler, to give legitimacy to his rule.

-31: Octavian defeats Marc Antony and Cleopatra VII at the Battle of Actium.

-30: Suicide of Antony and Cleopatra. Egypt becomes a Roman province and Octavian becomes the leader of the Roman Empire.

-30: Herod swears loyalty to Octavian and executes the last claimants to the throne of Judah, Hyrcanus II and his sons Aristobulus and Alexander. He also executes his wife, Mariamme. Artisobulus fathered 3 children. Descendants include Herod Agrippa I, Herodias, Salome, and Herod Agrippa II.

-29: The Roman Senate declares Octavian Imperator for life, ending the Roman Republic and beginning the period of the Roman Imperium.

-27: The Roman Senate names Octavian Augustus and he takes the title Augustus Caesar as the first Roman emperor.

3/2: The priest Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth give birth to a son they name John. The same year Mary of Nazareth gives birth to the Son of God in Bethlehem. This date is determined by the testimony in Luke 3:1, 23 that John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries when they were thirty years old, in the fifteenth year of the reign of the Roman Emperor Tiberius. Tiberius succeeded Augustus on the nineteenth of August, 14 AD.

Who's Who in First Century Judaism

Around the time of the Maccabees (160s BC), three Jewish "philosophies" arose: the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes. These philosophies were a small percentage of the population, but had a strong influence on Jewish society. The Pharisees were the largest group consisting of approximately 6,000 during Jesus's day. In ancient Judaism, there was no distinction between religion and politics. All three groups were concerned with religious behavior and the political issues of the day.

The Sadducees consisted mostly of the chief priest, priests, and those in charge of the Temple. Many priests were appointed by the Romans. They were the elite and Jewish aristocracy in Jerusalem. For the most part, they collaborated with Roman rulers and wished to keep the status quo. They only followed the Torah and rejected all laws not explicitly written in the Torah. They only recognized the Torah. They were harsh in their legal judgments and punishments. They believed the soul dies with the body, thus they rejected the concept of immortality of the soul, the afterlife with rewards and punishments, resurrection of the body and angels or spirits. They disappear after 70 AD when the Temple was destroyed. There are no surviving writings of the Sadducees. High priests Annas and Caiaphas were Sadducees.

The Pharisees were mostly non priests that mostly middle class and dispersed among the people in local synagogues. They were highly influential to the general population. They believed in a wider collection of scriptures consisting of books similar to modern day Old Testament. They emphasized rigorous following of the Torah and oral traditions (interpretation of the Torah). They were especially concerned with ceremonial laws that separate Jews from the Gentiles. They intensified Torah observance in areas (ritual purity, table fellowship, tithing, Sabbath observance, etc). They believed if the people would strictly follow God's Law, a new era would restore Israel and liberate them from their oppressors. Paul (Saul), Nicodemus, Gamaliel, and Josephus (Jewish Roman historian) were Pharisees. Most scholars believe the Pharisees will become rabbinic Judaism.

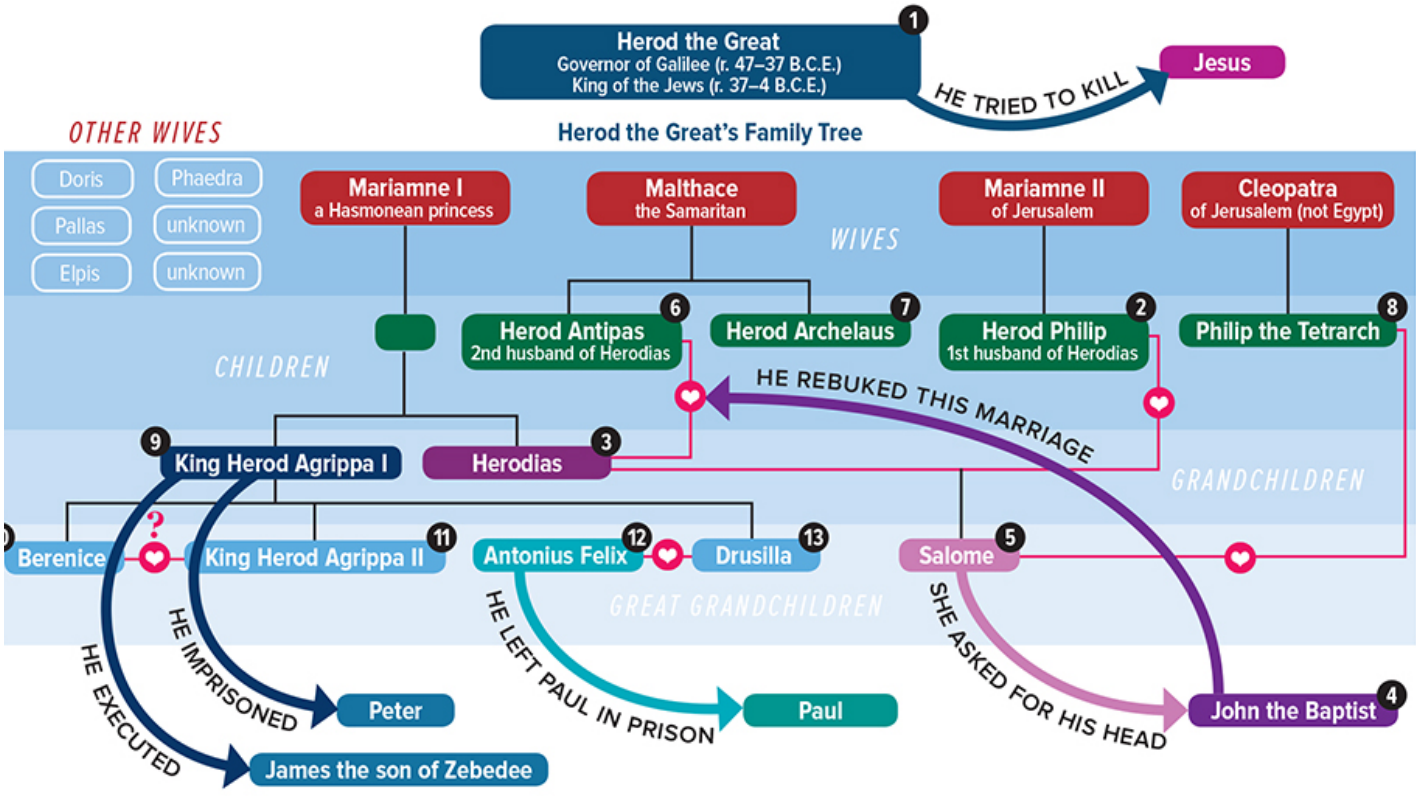
The Essenes are not mentioned in the New Testament. They believed the Pharisees and Sadducees were corrupt and separated themselves in isolated communities out of Jerusalem. Most scholars identify one branch of Essenes with the Qumran community where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. They had an extensive set of scriptures and observed a strict lifestyle in preparation for God's judgment. Some scholars speculate that John the Baptist may have been an Essenes since he preached an apocalyptic message of repentance in the Judean desert.

The Sanhedrin was the Jewish high council for both religious and legal matters. It had 71 members including the high priest (Sanhedrin President), heads of the 24 priestly service divisions, scribes, lawyers, and elders. Jews trusted the Sanhedrin to render justice. Sadducees were the majority of Sanhedrin members, Pharisees were the minority.

Scribes are often mention alongside the Pharisees. They were men who had reading, writing, and record-keeping skills. They served as judges, synagogue leaders, priest assistants, and professional Law teachers. Some were Pharisees, some were Sadducees.

Samaritans were inhabitants of land between Galilee and Judea, Samaria. They were descendants of captured peoples Assyria settled after conquering the northern kingdom of Israel in 721BC (2 Kings 17). The Samaritans claimed to be descendants of Israelite tribes, but the Jews did not recognize them as such. They only accepted the Torah, but their version was slightly different. They had different traditions and worship practices including a Temple on Mount Gerizim. This temple was destroyed by Jewish forces in 128 BC. Most Jews would travel out of their way to not go through Samaria.

The Zealots were an anti-Roman, nationalistic group advocating that Israel should overthrow their oppressors. It is unclear if the Apostle Simon (the Zealot) was "zealous" for the Law or was a member of the Zealots.





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Israel's Liturgical and Civil Calendar Year				
Month	**Liturgical year order**	**Civil year order**	**Modern equivalent**	**Feast days & agricultural season (+ = God ordained feast; * = national feasts)**
Abib (Nisan)	1	7	March/April	+Passover 14th, +Unleavened Bread 15-21st (sacred assembly on 15th and 21st), +Firstfruits on Sunday of Unleavened Bread holy week. Spring equinox 15th. The "Latter rains"& flood season, beginning of barley and flax harvest
Ziv (Iyyar)	2	8	April/May	Dry season, apricots ripen
Sivan	3	9	May/June	+Weeks (Pentecost) 7 weeks or 50 days from Firstfruits as ancients counted; wheat harvest, dry winds, early fig harvest, grapes ripen
Tammuz	4	10	June/July	Hot, dry season: grape harvest
Ab	5	11	July/Aug.	Hot, olive harvest
Elul	6	12	Aug./Sept.	Dates and summer figs
Ethanim (Tishri)	7	1	Sept./Oct.	+Trumpets = 1st, +Day of Atonement =10th +Booths (Tabernacles) = 15-21st & 22nd sacred assembly; Fall equinox 15th; "Former (early) rains," plowing & seed time
Bul (Heshvan)	8	2	Oct./Nov.	Rains, winter figs, wheat and barley sown
Chislev	9	3	Nov./Dec.	*Hanukkah (feast of dedication); winter begins
Tebeth	10	4	Dec./Jan.	Coldest month, rains and snow in mountains
Sebat	11	5	Jan./Feb.	Growing warmer, almond trees in bloom
Adar	12	6	Feb./March	*Purim; spring: "Latter rains" begin, citrus fruit harvest

+ Seven annual feasts are God ordained feasts (Ex 12:1-28; 43-51; 13:1-10; Lev 23:5-44; Num 28:16-39);
*Hanukkah and Purim are national feasts proclaimed by the people and are not God ordained (1 Mac 4:36-61; 2 Mac 10:1-8; Esther 9:20-32).
The Feasts of Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles fell respectively on the spring and fall equinoxes.
The ancients counted without the concept of a 0-place value: i.e. Jesus in the tomb 3 days from Friday to Sunday.



Major Seasons of the Western Christian Liturgical Year

• Season of ADVENT

o Time of watchful/joyful preparation for the Lord's Coming,"first coming" (Christmas) and "second coming" (Parousia).

o Begins four Sundays before Christmas (Nov. 27 to Dec. 3); thus 3-4 weeks long, only rarely four full weeks

• Season of CHRISTMAS

o Celebrates the Incarnation/Nativity/Birth of Jesus Christ; not just *Christmas Day*, but continues several weeks *after*.

o ***Christmas Day:*** Dec. 25 (begins Dec. 24 eve); can be any weekday.

o ***Christmas Octave:*** intensive celebration for eight days, with other feasts, up to Jan. 1

o ***Christmas Season:*** celebration continues through the Epiphany,

• Season of Ordinary Time - I (begins) (Also referred to Season of Epiphany)

Epiphany of the Lord: traditionally Jan. 6; now the Sunday between Jan. 2 and 8.

Baptism of the Lord: usually the Sunday after Epiphany.

o Also called "Ordered Time" or the "Season of the Year" (Sundays sequentially numbered).

o First part of Ordinary Time begins after Christmas season and runs up until Lent.

o Varies between 4 and 9 weeks long (since Christmas season can end between Jan. 6-8 and Lent can begin as early as Feb. 5 or as late as March 10).

• **Season of LENT**
o As preparation for Easter, Lent has both a penitential and baptismal character.
o Lent is thought to be “forty days” long, but its actual length has changed over the centuries.
o ***Ash Wednesday:*** a day of fasting and abstinence; receiving a cross of ashes on foreheads as a sign of our mortality and repentance.
o ***Passion/Palm Sunday:*** Sunday before Easter; commemorates entry of Jesus into Jerusalem;
o ***Holy Week:*** week before Easter, beginning Palm Sunday and including Easter Triduum
Easter Triduum: “three holy days” from Holy Thursday evening to Easter Sunday evening:
Holy Thursday: commemorates the “Last Supper” of Jesus with his disciples; the liturgy traditionally includes “the Washing of the feet” and is followed by a Eucharistic procession and a period of veneration of the Blessed Sacrament.
Good Friday: commemorates the Passion, Death, and Burial of Jesus; a special non-Eucharistic liturgy focuses on the Johannine Passion, the Veneration of the Cross, extensive Intercessory Prayers, and sharing of Communion.
Holy Saturday: commemorates the time when Jesus was in the tomb; no liturgical rites should be celebrated on this day (not before sundown).

• **Season of EASTER**
o Celebrates “Paschal Mystery”: Death & Resurrection of Jesus (central event of Christianity)
o *Easter Season:* continued celebration for fifty days (seven weeks) up to Feast of Pentecost.
Easter Vigil: *begins the liturgical celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus; a special* liturgy (celebrated Saturday after sunset, during the night, or Sunday before dawn) includes lighting of Easter Fire and Easter Candle, proclamation of Easter *Exsultet*, extensive readings from Old Testament, and Baptism of new Christians.
Easter Sunday: Day of Resurrection; includes renewal of Baptismal Promises for all.
o ***Easter Octave:*** eight days of intensive celebration, from Easter Sunday to 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday).
o ***Ascension of the Lord:*** traditionally the 40th day of Easter; now often moved to 7th Sunday.
o ***Pentecost Sunday:*** seven weeks or fifty days after Easter; celebrates coming of Holy Spirit.

• **Season of Ordinary Time - II (This larger part of Ordinary Time is called “*Season of Pentecost*”)**
o The rest of the liturgical year (up to 34 weeks total), from Monday after Pentecost Sunday until
First Sunday of Advent (beginning of next liturgical year).
o Several special celebrations fall soon after Pentecost:
Most Holy Trinity: Sunday after Pentecost
Feast of Christ the King: 34th or Last Sunday of Ordinary Time

The Significance of Numbers in Scripture

In sacred Scripture, numbers usually have more significance than their quantitative indicators. Often the number will have symbolic meaning. Below is a brief summary of a few numbers with symbolic meanings.

Number	Meaning
1	unity, quintessential number of monotheism (Deut 6:4)
2	duality: contrary (light/dark) or complimentary (human/divine)
3	divine completeness (third day, Jesus's 3 year ministry, Trinity)
3 1/2	half of seven, incomplete, prophetic period of trial (Daniel 7:25)
4	God's creative works associated with the earth (directions, winds, lunar phases, seasons, elements)
6	Man and rebellion, incomplete, not yet 7 (666, man created on 6th day, 6 days of work)
7	spiritual completeness, Holy Spirit, Covenant (sabbath rest, 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit, 7 days a week)
8	salvation, resurrection, new birth/regeneration (8 people on ark, circumcision on 8th day, Jesus rose on the 8th day of Passion week)
10	ordinal completeness (10 commandments, 10 Egyptian plagues, 10 tribes in Northern Kingdom)
12	government perfection, human completion (12 tribes, 12 apostles)
40	time of consecration or period of trial (40 days of great flood, 40 years in wilderness, 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness before His temptation, 40 days Jesus taught His disciples after Resurrection)
50	jubilee or deliverance (First Pentecost: 50th day after Exodus, God met Israel on Mt. Sinai, 50th year: Jubilee year, all debts forgiven, Second Pentecost: 50th day after Resurrection, Holy Spirit came to disciples in Upper Room)
Multiples of Numbers	examples: 7 x 10 = 70 : perfect spiritual, ordinal completeness 3 x 40 = 120: completeness of divine appointed period of trial or consecration