

## 64\_800111 HLH Mat 1\_7

This evening Mr. Tkach would ask that we begin a series in the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and he's asked me to handle the book of Matthew in terms of every other week, which would mean that we have alternative subjects such as one coming up this next week that I'll read about momentarily.

I should like to, on this occasion, have the deacons pass out and assistance some material that I have done on notes for you so that you will be able to add things beside what is on the paper.

We have divided the book of Matthew into four parts, so this part will cover chapters 1-7.

If you wish you can take one for each member of the family, or if you wish you could just have one, I've tried to do enough here to our own staff to have you all have enough to work with, and I should like to do it for each of the four sections in the book of Matthew.

So you will normally find, if you have it passed out to you at page one, and on the reverse you will have page two, of course we don't type it that way, we can print it that way, so you'll have two sheets.

Now they do not cover all seven chapters, now I'll appreciate if they are handed out.

Now from a student who received the book of Matthew, if you wish others later or have friends who are not here, I do have a few more, they are in part available for those who may want the tapes.

In going through the Gospel material, the Mr. Tkach suggested that we take a particular book rather than the harmony of the Gospel's perspective, which means that I will allude to matters elsewhere, but we will not compare matters.

It's a different approach than what we might have done in years past, and we're trying to move as rapidly as possible, which means we're taking roughly seven chapters each time, and I should like to have in these handouts the background of the more technical, not the more spiritual, but the more technical material that you would have perhaps a little difficulty pursuing or should not be able to take in notes as rapidly as one might need or some of the problem verses that we can expound on better in print than just orally.

First we will note that Matthew is the Gospel that immediately links the Old Testament accounts with the New.

I will not at this time go into many of the ideas, one of which is that Matthew didn't write Matthew, that even as an apostle he never drew anything up like this, it was left to disciples to listen to what he said, perhaps to take notes from what he said or to take his notes and work up the Gospel in the present form.

This is a perspective that I will not waste your time or mine with.

Matthew is an apostle, there is no reason to assume that he did other than give us material from a perspective that he had.

Now not every apostle has written material.

In this particular case Matthew did have a government job, a previous to his being called, as you will later note, he was in fact a man involved in a low-ranked government office handling monies.

Now he writes to the Jewish community in a unique way in contrast to Luke who wrote to the Gentile community and you should briefly examine the way Luke and the way Matthew began the accounts.

We should note that there are traditionally views that Matthew was the only Gospel account directly addressed to the Hebrew-speaking people, the Aramaic-speaking people, and written in Hebrew.

It is a fact also that we only have the Greek and so I have laid out in the notes under when was Matthew written a general statement which I can summarize for the few who either will hear the tape and will not have the written material or those who would like a few more comments to go with it.

We're told in Greek literature of the Greek Orthodox Church as we now know at the ancient Greek churches of God which do not necessarily mean that we are dealing with those that are converted but we're picking up the story in the Greek world where Paul founded the churches and from where the churches of God made up of those who were converted fled when the Byzantine Empire began to persecute all those who did not go along with the concepts of Emperor Constantine and the bishops he gathered at Nicaea in 325.

The general view of the Greeks and it is my view that it is wise with respect to the Old Testament to listen to the Jews and to listen to the Greeks and the new with respect to the background and the preservation and the canon and all things related to the scripture and how we have obtained it.

I'm not talking about spiritual insight, I'm talking about preservation.

The tradition is that Matthew wrote both in the 8th year and in the 15th year after the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If you note carefully, in the brief article I wrote for the good news nearly a year ago, I pointed up that Paul, sorry Peter, went to Cornelius, nearly a decade, that means near the year 4041, to bring Cornelius the message to, in this case, an uncircumcised Italian Gentile.

Now it is important, therefore, to realize that for the first decade the church was Aramaic and Hebrew-speaking without a question and it is absolutely illogical if any gospel were written during that time to have decided it should be addressed to the Jewish community in Latin or Greek.

We are also told that there was a time when the apostles left and this was just before Paul made his journey that he describes in the book of Galatians.

In that journey he says that I've met Peter and James, the brother of Christ, of course, and the rest of the apostles were gone, except John, and what you had is a situation in which only the remnant of the twelve that once were at Jerusalem were there, those were the men basically responsible to the circumcision and the others had gone to the Jewish community elsewhere or especially the house of Israel.

And we are told then that 15 years after the crucifixion, Matthew also left an account of the gospel and it is illogical that he should have issued another edition in Hebrew.

It is much more logical that since Paul was now working in Tarsus, Paul and Barnabas had been working in the city of Antioch where the Jews and Greeks were in Syria, that we had already reached Cornelius now for a few years and you know other Italians and Greeks and Paul was about to journey

to the island of Cyprus with Barnabas and by this time with the impact of the gospel among Greek-speaking Jews living outside of Judea and Galilee that we should have the gospel written in Greek.

It was only later that the Jewish community rejected all of the New Testament and so we have preserved for us only that which is in Greek.

Now that is the view that I think is historically the most sound of all.

That is not something that we need to invent, it is merely what we report.

With this in mind, we now begin a quick view of the gospel account that Matthew has given.

That means the story of the life of Jesus and his message as the Apostle Matthew viewed it from his perspective, Mr. Armstrong has said on numerous occasions on the radio that the four accounts are like reporters, each one who is impressed more with one or another thing, a time setting, a principle, maybe diseases, Luke was a physician, different individuals who will write and emphasize different points of view.

Matthew necessarily writing to the Jews must start with the relationship of Jesus to the Old Testament and so he begins with a genealogy.

In fact this was undoubtedly the original title of the book, the book of the birth or the birth role of Jesus Christ.

The Greeks later assist us in defining this book as pertaining to Matthew, Kara Matayo.

Now the story is, as we immediately note, that we are introduced to Jesus Christ.

We discover that Christ already has become a personal name, not merely a title.

He was defined as Huyu David, the son of David, Huyu Abraham, the son of Abraham.

The Messiah in Jewish literature is called the son of David and here is Jesus Christ who is a son of David.

In all the world we should share blessings with one another but those originate with Abraham.

So the whole world should be blessed through Abraham and Jesus Christ is the son, the descendant of Abraham.

Now we have a list, there is no question, beginning with verses 2 and 3 going on to verse 6, that we have a quick summary of the material from Abraham to David.

Now draw attention, since the promises were made to Abraham, Matthew is not recording any earlier genealogy, he is linking the office of Christ as the Messiah to the man to whom the promises were first made and hence he starts with Abraham.

When we come to the next section of the period from David to the carrying away into captivity, we note a few peculiarities.

One of which is the fact that between Joram or Jehoram and Jotham we have a reference to a king who is normally translated as Uzziah, the end of verse 8.

Now it is at this very point that a controversy has arisen as to why Matthew leaves out some generations.

In other words, Matthew in fact does not include all the generations.

He has in fact broken down the major periods of history, the time of the promise given, the time of the building of the first temple, and the carrying away into captivity to the birth of the Messiah into three sets of 14 generations.

But it does not mean that in any such period of time there are necessarily only 14.

He has in fact left out some generations between Jehoram or Jehoram and Jotham.

Now uniquely in this story, as I have pointed up here, the Septuagint from which Matthew on occasion quotes, the Septuagint meaning the translation by seventy Jewish scholars into Greek, done for the Greek-speaking people in Egypt that was introduced to the library of Alexandria.

In that translation there were different kinds of spellings of the kings, and interestingly enough some of the Septuagint manuscripts have Uzzias, O-Z-I-A-S.

Now Uzzias has been understood normally to be Uzziah, yet in this particular case Uzzias is also the spelling of Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram or Jehoram.

So what Matthew has done here, has in fact, is in fact, he has removed the names of all of those in between which means Ahaziah, Joash, and let me have my King James here a moment, his son Uzziah, and he has in fact placed one name instead of four.

Now in so doing, what he has actually left us with interestingly is that Jehoram is pictured as the father of Ahaziah, and Uzziah is pictured as the father of Jotham.

And in this instance Matthew has chosen to shorten the genealogy and to introduce a single name without defining which of the kings of Israel it is, because the same spelling has been found in the Greek manuscripts to pertain to both kings.

In the sense then his statement may be simply given that he wanted to have 14 generations in each instance, and he would have had 17 if he had adopted the whole.

Now 14 was typical of the way the Jews viewed things, that is two times seven, and he presented it in the traditional Jewish manner of finding a significant number in the generations that he lapsed.

So in fact he has dropped out names and chosen to use a single name as a bridge between Jehoram in verse eight and Jotham in verse nine, in which case the word Uzziah should be understood that Jehoram was the father of Ahaziah, and Uzziah was the father of Jotham.

And the linkage between the two is made clear in the Old Testament and is in fact not included here.

He has one other problem that I draw to your attention.

It mentions Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

Now Josiah, this is verse 11, Josiah was not the father of Jeconiah but the grandfather.

The critics have wondered whether Jeconiah should mean Jehoiakim as distinct from Jehoiakim, as distinct from Jehoiakim, C-H-I-N, the earlier name was K-I-M.

You remember there were two kings in a row, Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, who was the father of Jehoiakim, C-H-I-N, who we normally know in the Greek as Jeconiah.

On this basis, it appears that Matthew has pointed up that Jeconiah had brothers who were the sons of his grandfather.

That is peculiar in itself, but Matthew is not inventing something because, as I point up in the notes, you may quickly turn to 2 Chronicles 36-10 where you will find that Zedekiah is there, the uncle by descent of Jeconiah or Jehoiakim, and he is defined right in 2 Chronicles as a brother.

The only possible explanation is that the nephew of Zedekiah was adopted by the grandfather, and so Jehoiakim or Jeconiah was not merely the nephew of his brother Zedekiah or of his, I should say of his uncle Zedekiah or of his father Jehoiakim, but he was in fact adopted by his grandfather and made, therefore, a brother with his uncles.

That means that we are to carefully look at the history that Josiah, in fact, intended in the long run that his grandson should be his heir rather than his two sons.

This would also explain something, not in Matthew, not in my notes, that states that when this man, Jeconiah or Jehoiakim, became king, one statement says he was eight years old, the other says he was eighteen.

When he was eighteen is when he reigned his full three months.

When he was eight is undoubtedly when he reigned ten days, because there were those who knew that his grandfather, who had adopted him as his own son, wanted him to succeed him, and in fact came on the throne at the death of his grandfather, who had adopted him, and reigned only for ten days when his father displaced him and reigned then until the other uncle, that is the brother of his father, reigned.

So there were two kings who were uncles, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, and those in fact are defined as brothers.

Now, if you look carefully, if Solomon is the first king, then the brothers of Jeconiah would be the fourteenth, numbered in this set, yet fourteen from Abraham through David, now from Solomon through the brothers of Jeconiah you would have fourteen, but if you begin with verse twelve, you discover there are only thirteen names given, and yet Matthew says there are fourteen.

Well now there are really fourteen names given, because Matthew intends that Jeconiah should be counted in the last set and not the first, sorry, and not the second set of fourteen.

So that when Matthew was defining this, and I'm taking some time because this is one of the contradictions of the Bible, and I think it would be good for you to know that before we proceed to the spiritual truth, we should recognize that Matthew had certain reasons for doing what he did, and it was typical of the way the Jews often developed the genealogy and saw significance in numbers, especially multiples of seven.

So we should count in the second seven Solomon as one and the brothers of Jeconiah as fourteen, and in the third seven we should count Jeconiah as the first one of the fourteen and Jesus the last.

Now we proceed to another section.

The story of the birth of Jesus Christ is given.

We are told that his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph.

This was not our typical engagement.

If Mary was betrothed, she was legally bound to the man whom she was going to live with.

Jewish custom had two parts to the legal ceremony.

The original betrothal in which there was an acceptance on the part of the families of both parties and the young man and the young woman, and finally her transfer to the bridegroom's home.

Should there be necessitated a divorce because of *cornea*, which is the Greek word implying some sexual promiscuity? Should this knowledge have come after the betrothal, then the betrothal had to be set aside by a legal divorce, not merely writing your friends that you're no longer engaged.

This is different from our custom in the United States and the Western world.

Well, I mention it because, one, we ourselves did not use to understand this situation in terms of divorce and the relationship of divorce to marriage is distinct from an annulment.

But the more important point at this moment, when Mary conceived, she was a married woman.

She was not an unmarried woman.

Jesus was not conceived out of wedlock.

Jesus was conceived in wedlock.

I think that is an important point to note.

The rest of the material, and of course we won't have time to go through every verse, I will assume in general that that which is reasonably clear to you in reading, we will skip over except the very highlights and proceed with the more difficult things.

Most commentators do the other way around.

They proceed to write in elaborate wording, that which is simple and clear, and then when they come to the difficult, they leave you wondering why they didn't comment on it.

I think it's better to say what we can know or take a good look at the more difficult.

So we are now introduced to the question of the nature of Mary's moral status.

She is called in verse 23, a virgin.

Now the Hebrew is a word in Isaiah from which this verse is taken, which implies a young woman.

The general argument is then it couldn't be a virgin.

Well, that might be true for some cultures.

The fact remains, however, that the Hebrew word, presumed by its nature that a young woman was a virgin, and when the Greek, that is when the Greek-speaking Jews who translated for the Greeks rendered this particular verse in Isaiah, which you should all be familiar with, they defined it in terms of the nature of this particular woman as the word itself normally should be understood.

They rendered it by the word *Parthenos*, which has reference to a virgin and has no other meaning, whereas the Greeks had another word for just a young woman without any reference to her moral status.

*Alma*, the Hebrew word, is used in Deuteronomy 22, verse 23, in the sense of a betrothed virgin, and it says that if a man, you see, is involved with a betrothed virgin, and there's no other sense to that word there, that if she defiles herself, or allows herself to be defiled in a city, there are certain penalties.

If it's in the country, those penalties are not involved, you read that for yourself, and here the same word is used, and it is understood clearly in context to be a virgin.

Therefore, there is no reason why the verse should not be so translated.

That she is a virgin is also emphasized by the fact that Joseph was surprised by what she said.

Until after he took her home, until she had brought forth her son, and I happen to be reading there the revised standard version.

He knew her not until she had borne a son, and he called his name Jesus.

Last verse, chapter 1, now this is not the way the Greek ought to be rendered into English.

This is a text that in my judgment is typical of the mistakes that are found in the texts that came out of Alexandria, Egypt, and elsewhere, but not the fundamental texts found in the Greek world.

The King James normally follows the texts found in the Greek-speaking world in Asia, Minor, and Greece.

All new translations that are done by groups of scholars that I know of go to the texts which have alterations and were never part of the traditional preservation of the New Testament in Greek in the Greek world.

The New Testament, as it should be rendered, has the following statement, which you will find in the King James Version, much better because it followed the correct text.

He knew her not until she had borne her first-born son, or until she had given birth, would be nicer sound in English, had given birth to her first-born son.

That's very significant because the implication right in the scripture is that she had others that is not alone proof, but it is an implication.

Jesus was her first-born son, and all the promises pertained to a person who was symbolized in the Old Testament ceremonies as a first-born.

You remember the ceremonies that began in Exodus 13, pertained to the first-born, the sanctification of the first-born.

Jesus was therefore to be born not only of a virgin, but he was to be the first child she should have, not to be preceded by a daughter of the mother you see.

So the text should be corrected.

I'm not going to correct every point in the text which is not important in reading, but only those which are important in reading.

Number two, now that we have the story of the conception of Jesus and his lineage, that is the lineage that comes down through the family of Joseph all the way, and we note that Joseph is married to a woman who is the mother of Jesus.

Jesus therefore is the legal son of Joseph, and he descends on his stepfather's side from the house of David, and from Governor Zerubbabel in verse 12 of the first chapter.

In chapter 2, now Jesus was born in Bethlehem and Judea, this was in the days of Herod the King.

I have defined briefly in the notes the time element for the reign of Herod the King so that we may have a general understanding.

We know therefore that Jesus could not have been born later than 4 B.C., because Herod the King died in the year 4-3 B.C., which was his last year of reign.

At this time we are told there were wise men who came from the east.

I would suggest that it's always better when we have a good original word that we use just to use it.

We will call them Magi, Magos the singular, Magi as we pronounce it in English for the plural.

This was a professional class mentioned in the book of Daniel.

A comparable parallel in ancient Israel would be the house of Levi or Aaron.

In northwestern Europe a comparable level of function would be the Druids.

In ancient media one of the tribes of the Medes whom Herodotus mentions, Herodotus the Greek writer who lived in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, he says that the priestly tribe that handled matters that we might find parallel with Levites or Druids culturally were called the Magi.

And in a sense we find a professional people in the book of Daniel among the Babylonians because the Babylonians ruled over the Medes and the Persians at the time at the beginning.

They didn't rule over the whole area but there was an alliance and later on it broke up and Babylon was finally destroyed.

It's better to speak of them in terms of their professional name.

Now we are not told how many there were.

We are not told whether they were Gentiles or Jews or the house of Israel.

We are told clearly that they were familiar enough with Scripture which they might have known if they were influenced by what Daniel had said or had known what interestingly Balaam had said in the book of Numbers.

In the book of Numbers is a prophecy that Balaam gave to the Moabites whose descendants in part live in Jordan.

He was the only one in all the Old Testament to my knowledge who spoke of a star that should rise in David, I should say, in Israel.

Now in this premise there is no reason to draw the conclusion that these people had to have any other knowledge but a general perception of the time when the Jews expected a Messiah based on Daniel's prophecy in chapter 9 and a notice that Balaam himself had been given because God had revealed it to him that a star should rise and in terms of astrologers and astronomers there did appear probably in the year 6-5 B.C. in that period of time because we are not told any further details, a star that appeared in the east, Anatoli, from which the word Anatolia, this area of modern Turkey, of course takes its name in the Greek, but east of course could have any area, east of Palestine and since Turkey was east of Greece they have preserved that word so you can know what that word is for this region that we call Turkey, it is why it is called on maps through history as Anatolia, it means a land east of Greece.

So these magi came from a land at some unstated distance east of Palestine.

They came to pay honor to a king of the Jews who was being born at this time.

Now what is significant, something that you should know, that to begin with the concept was that Jesus, sorry, let's say that the Messiah Christus Christ should be born, not should descend as a spirit from above, but should be born on earth.

There has been no one in the Jewish community who has been born since and Daniel's prophecy certainly came to a conclusion with respect to the time of his appearance in the days of the Herodian family.

We'll now move along in our story, I'm trying to give special background to the start here.

As we note in the rest of chapter 2, they paid homage to Jesus.

Herod wanted to know where this person was.

He lied of course, he wasn't going to worship him, he wanted to kill him, he wasn't going to share his office with any Jewish boy.

Herod of course was a circumcised Edomite.

God told them to go somewhere other than back through Jerusalem.

They had met Herod in Jerusalem, Herod was therefore not yet on his sick bed in Jericho.

They did not return to Herod, he said about immediately, to have the children there slain from two years old and under which implies that the star had risen long enough before on the horizon and so appeared so that they would be able to arrive in time for his birth.

Now Luke does not tell us this, but Matthew says that Joseph was born in a dream and by night almost immediately after the Magi left he went to Egypt, stayed there till the death of Herod, a traditional date for the death of Herod.

Now again, the scholars of course have their own opinions, they have no opinion, nobody really knows if you ask the scholarly world, but in the Hebrew calendar I happened to have an old edition of the Hebrew calendar done by the Jewish community in Canada.

This particular one was published in 1854, there was a festival still known commonly in the calendric circles in the Hebrew community, though then discontinued and now nearly forgotten of course, but on the seventh of Keith's left there was a festival on account of the death of Herod the Great.

Now this seventh day of Keith's left in the year 4 B.C. would have fallen on the 26th of November beginning the previous evening.

Now if Jesus were born roughly around the time of the beginning of Tisserie, I only say roughly, which means Tisserie in 4 B.C. occurred in the 22nd of September that we may draw the conclusion that the word therefore two months approximately to the death of Herod.

Now Herod when he became ill did not last more, seriously ill, he was ill before he finally went to Jericho, but he became seriously ill and went downhill in short order and it is doubtful that he survived more than a couple of months in the time of the illness, which implies that there is strong reason to see that his quick death occurred because of trying to destroy the child Jesus.

And so somewhere from the middle to late September to the middle to late November, you have two months approximately 60 days, Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day, his mother was purified by

certain rituals, Luke tells us on the 40th day, and it appears, excuse me, that after that occasion Joseph was back there in Bethlehem, the wise men presumably came somewhere about this time, and it was now you see only about three weeks before Herod would have died and he was becoming more and more ill as time went by.

When the wise men did not, the Magi did not return, he became very angry, which was typical of the later stages of his illness, Joseph fled, and was therefore in Egypt, somewhere between two and three weeks, excuse me.

In so doing we have a general picture that Jesus would have been born somewhere in later part of September, the family had to get into Egypt in a hurry somewhere in early November, they stayed there to the death of Herod, and on the basis that the death is commemorated on the 26th, they undoubtedly returned to Palestine toward the area of Bersheba or Bersheba in the south, somewhere in the beginning of December, Joseph was quite concerned when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea, and so he settles in Nazareth in Galilee.

We are told at this point at the end of chapter two that he was to be called, that is Jesus in Nazarene, which means in general someone who rose up in the city of Nazareth.

This is peculiar because there is no verse in all the written Old Testament that actually says so, but if you note carefully Matthew does not say that it was written by any one prophet, he says that this was spoken by the prophets.

What was spoken by the prophets certainly not written in any of the scriptures we have has been preserved right here by Matthew himself.

We are now suddenly introduced from the year four to three B.C. to the days of John the Baptist in 27 A.D. I will not demonstrate the reason for such dating at the moment.

The rest of the story of the youth of Jesus is simply skipped over as not relevant to his office of Messiah, and now we are introduced to a cousin, John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness.

His message is repent for the kingdom of God is at hand.

That is better translated, I think more effectively, repent for the kingdom of heaven.

It should have been heaven.

I said God by a slip because Mark and Luke use the other term Matthew uses heaven.

The kingdom of heaven is fast approaching.

Now in a sense, if you recall, if God has called you, the kingdom of God is as near as the last breath you draw, at which point death ensues and then a resurrection.

Now in terms of looking back through history, 19 centuries have elapsed.

We're talking here not about how long it would be to the manifestation through a six thousand year period, but it is an addressed one to repent and to those who repent the kingdom of God is fast approaching.

And it could approach for some of you this week if you die.

That's how close it could be because to you it depends on your daily and hourly status spiritually.

The story of John the Baptist was written by the prophet Isaiah.

John introduced, not baptism, but a special reason for baptism.

The Jewish community accepted converts.

Men and women had to be baptized.

Men were circumcised and it was expected of someone who was baptized or immersed and circumcised that he should now keep the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law called taking upon himself the yoke of the law.

John the Baptist said, I am telling you, the children of Abraham, you also must be baptized and first repent of your sins.

It is not enough to be the children of Abraham.

It is rather important for you that you do not say we have Abraham to our father, but rather that you acknowledge your sin and you wash your sin away and you therefore in a repentant state are prepared to listen to what the Messiah who is coming after me will say.

This is not a baptism pertaining to the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

It is John's baptism for repentance.

It is not the baptism we use, the same immersion, but for a different purpose.

We have different words.

We acknowledge thereby today that if you die and have your sins figuratively in the water and have your sins washed away, that you can receive the promise of the Holy Spirit.

John said, I baptize with water and one who is coming who will do so, but he will also baptize with fire which has reference to the final purging of this earth of sin.

Jesus was baptized, we are now told in the third chapter.

Why was he baptized? Not only as an example, but he was baptized as an illustration of the state of his spirit because no one was baptized by John or should have been who was not in a repentant attitude.

Now it may not really come to your mind to realize that Jesus was always in a repentant attitude.

That is an attitude that says, not my will, but thine be done.

It does not define that Jesus sinned, but it defines an attitude that would prevent you from sinning further if that attitude perfectly guided you.

And Jesus was in the attitude that all of us should be.

John ascending the Father himself conveyed the sound of a voice that said, this is my beloved son or my son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased, end of chapter 3.

That was heard publicly, not only is Jesus chapter 1 an heir of David, an heir of Abraham, not only is he born of a virgin, not only is he born in Bethlehem, not only does he grow up in Judea, but the Father in heaven has testified that he is his son.

These are all evidences that he is the Messiah, and this is Matthew's approach in developing the account for the Hebrew people who were expecting the Messiah, at which point in time now Jesus is

led up into the wilderness of Judea, where he was tempted of the devil having fasted forty days and forty nights.

At this point we note, as Mr. Armstrong has said, I will not go into any detail here, and before he entered into his ministry or performed any miracles, before he functioned in any other way, after having been baptized he was tested of the devil and overcame every temptation.

I know there's a person who was in the ministry who left us who developed a harmony of the gospels in which this person tried to place a large number of verses found in John, parts of chapter 1 and 2 and 3, all of these as if they occurred before Jesus was tempted.

This is simply wrong.

The first thing he did was to show that he would not only obey God, but he would resist the devil and he could command the devil himself.

So the issue was an issue in terms of world rule.

Others are not asked to face this question in quite the same way, an actual confrontation in which the devil was permitted.

The Abalosin Greek offered his control of the world to Jesus if Jesus just wouldn't mind acknowledging that he, after all, had the power to give it to him, challenged him on the question of his vanity, if you think you're the son of God, prove it to me.

Jesus, of course, knew that the devil knew he was.

Jesus was the first to quote the Bible and the devil starts quoting it, only he doesn't quote it in its intent and purpose, leaves something out, misconstrues it.

Jesus resisted the temptation to take over the world now.

He volunteered.

Here is the Creator who volunteered to forego world rule for more than 19 centuries, practically one-third of all human experience, but he qualified.

The devil left him, the angels ministered to him, verse 3, verse 11, chapter 3.

Now note carefully, please, chapter 3, verse 12, now when Jesus heard, should be Jesus, not he, the revised standard version doesn't have it correct, they have altered these things little by little, that's a good translation, meaningful, and I'm reading from it just so I can point out these problems.

Now when Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been arrested, I've added the Baptist so you know which John it is, he withdrew into Galilee and leaving Nazareth, he went and dwelt in Capernaum.

May I draw attention, please, to John's account, you turn over to John, you will discover that in John's account Jesus baptizes when the Lord knew, chapter 4, verse 1, I have other notes for you to read, that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing even more disciples than John, although Jesus himself didn't do the baptizing but his disciples did, then he left Judea and departed again for Galilee and he goes through Samaria.

This means that Matthew has left out every single thing found in John 1, 2, 3, into the beginning of 4 and has jumped to the point where John is in prison and at this point yet he's not, Jesus had been in Judea and baptizing in the area of Jordan, his disciples were doing it for him.

It was now late spring and Jesus is moving through Samaria to go to Galilee, most Jews went around Samaria.

Chapter 4 of John is the story of what Jesus was doing at the time that John the Baptist was arrested.

If you want to know what happened from the time John began his ministry to the time he was in prison, don't go to Matthew, go to John's account.

Matthew is concerned with John's role in the baptism of Jesus and in his testimony.

Matthew is concerned no longer with any part of the ministry of John and goes right to the time after the first Passover.

Jesus baptized in the autumn of AD 27, first Passover AD 28.

I've laid it out in your account here.

Just notice it where you were in John in chapter 2.

I'll do a quick flip back to that same spot that I had it open.

In chapter 2 we have the story in verse 23.

Now when Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name.

He started out while John was still in prison, was still baptizing and ministering.

He starts out speaking and baptizing Jesus does in Judea.

But as soon as John is imprisoned, Jesus is found in Galilee.

He already was aware that Herod would try to imprison John and he was leaving for Samaria at the very time that Herod took action, which is why Jesus spent the bulk of his ministry not in Judea except during the festival time, but north of Samaria in Galilee.

He comes to Capernaum.

This is the land of Zebulun and Naftali of which it is said that this is Galilee of the Gentiles because many of the cities in Galilee were in fact Gentile cities in which the Jews were a very significant population.

This was long after the house of Israel was moved from the region.

Where does Jesus preach when he comes? From that time on, Jesus began to preach, verse 17, and he says, repent for the kingdom of heaven is fast approaching, the same message that John gave.

Notice it, verse 17.

Now we learn that Jesus begins to call some disciples, not merely to listen to him as some of them might have been doing in Judea, but now directly to follow him wherever he goes.

Two scepters of brothers are called here.

They respond immediately, which is typical of those to whom God has revealed himself.

Verse 23, Jesus goes out through Galilee into the synagogue.

The law of Moses did not establish a synagogue but a tabernacle.

The synagogue arose as a result of the need to assemble on the Sabbaths.

Notice what he does.

He goes throughout the synagogues in Galilee.

His fame spreads northward into Syria, where the Jews were and certainly some Gentiles.

He heals the sick, those who had various diseases and pains.

Most people don't have diseases, they only have pains, arthritis or emotional or mental cause ones.

He heals people who are epileptics.

He casts out demons.

I want to stress here very, very carefully for you that there were demoniacs and epileptics, which is the same as to say, though a demoniac may have the demon upon leaving him create an epileptic fit that is not a disease called epilepsy.

And we must know the distinction between a disease that is epilepsy and demon possession which is something else altogether.

That is a matter for us to properly understand.

Great crowds followed him, not only from Galilee but from the ten cities, the Capolis.

There are really eleven cities ultimately including Damascus among these.

And Pella where the church fled after 69 A.D.

That is the church of Jerusalem.

And there were some from Jerusalem who followed him and from beyond Jordan.

There is a minimal emphasis on Judea at this point.

Now while in the north, Jesus seeing crowds goes up to a mountain and sits down to instruct and he now tells the disciples a number of important principles, probably the most important chapter laying out the sense of the new covenant is here introduced.

Note the following points.

Jesus starts out his instruction in a manner different from the law of Moses.

The law of Moses had blessings and curses.

The blessings were physical in this life.

The curses were physical in this life.

Jesus here gives a number of blessings.

You will find parallels, I've given it in the notes here, where even David has parallels in his Psalm 37.

I will just quickly turn to that here on my own copy in Psalm 37 as well as Isaiah 61.

There are parallels.

Jesus didn't invent these ideas.

He summarizes the fact that the message he teaches pertains to eternal salvation for which there are spiritual problems, pardon me, spiritual rewards that pertain to the kingdom of heaven, to eternal comfort, to inheriting the earth, being filled with righteousness, obtaining mercy, being able to see God, being called the sons of God, inheriting the kingdom of heaven.

Notice that through verse 10.

Those are not the promises to take over the cities of Canaan and to have grain and corn and oil.

These are spiritual promises because Christ is proposing a spiritual message.

Now he defines the brethren, he defines them first in terms of salt, verse 13.

Now there's low-grade salt and there's high-grade salt.

There are too many brethren over the years who become low-grade salt.

We're the light of the world.

No oil, light goes out.

Now insofar as he now begins to expound on the law, not merely the blessings in principle but the law itself, don't think that I am come, he said, to abolish law and profits.

I am come not to abolish but to fulfill.

Now you'll know there are arguments on the word fulfill, whether it means to enhance, to convey the full intent and purpose, or to do once for all so it doesn't have to be done again.

So you don't misunderstand what I say, says Jesus, I am telling you, that till heaven and earth pass away, not the least letter of the Hebrew, the yach, or the Greek, the iota, not the least tittle, King James, or dot, RSV, that is this crown or decoration on certain letters, would be allowed to pass from the law till the whole thing.

Everything that the law intended is accomplished.

Whoever relaxes the least of these commandments gives undue permission, will be least in the kingdom of heaven, and he who teaches and does them will be great.

In the church today we have had those who relax more or less, or who do more or less.

Our righteousness must exceed that of scribes and Pharisees, or we will never inherit the kingdom of God.

These are broad principles at which point now he proceeds to address the commandments.

Now I've gone over this in sermons, so I propose to spend only a very short time this evening.

Let's note verse 21, he says, you shall not kill.

Let's note verse 27, you shall not commit adultery.

These are two of the ten commandments.

He says now in the proposal I am making to you, I want you to look at the ten commandments, I want you to look at the law of Moses.

I don't want you to say, because you have not killed, you can hate your brother.

I want you to consider the whole picture.

Don't even get angry with your brother without a cause.

Tragically, the RSV leaves out without a cause, verse 22.

King James has it corrected, it belongs in there.

Anger in itself is not a sin.

To be angry without a cause is.

Let me tell you, I don't care what the critics say.

The basic Greek text preserved by the Greeks is doctrinally sound.

That which was corrupted by Greek-speaking people in Egypt is not.

Therefore, the King James version, though not as accurate a rendering perhaps in general as the RSV, because it didn't know how to translate some things so well, is still more accurate in terms of the text used, and I address this question as a result of a special desire on the part of the managing editor for the New Good News, which will be coming out this next week, if not tomorrow, in the whole series on Bible study.

Anger is angry without a cause, is liable to judgment.

Now I have gone into some detail with one point here.

I will not go into it except to have you note that Jesus tells us very carefully that when we look at the commandment, we should look at all sorts of ramifications, one of which, let me take note with respect to the present situation.

If you have something where your brother has ought against you, instead of just giving a gift to God, you go reconcile and settle up with your brother, even to the point, verse 25, that you should make friends quickly with your accuser while you were going with him to court, lest he hand you over to the judge.

Now it is one thing to deal with this matter in this way, where you are at fault, reconcile yourself.

It's another thing to be falsely accused and have to defend yourself, but Jesus will have something to say on that at another point.

He exemplifies the true use of divorce, not for every cause, not because a man has found some other woman he likes better, not because she isn't as good a cook, but only if it's porneia is there an exception.

Porneia is promiscuity, illicit sex, that which violates the relationship that marriage was intended to hell.

Then he goes to other administrative principles, not only on administering divorce, but the question of oaths in court and vows, and it is very clear that he means to explain that we simply should not only not take an oath in court, but we really shouldn't get involved in vows either.

That's the real sense in the full sense of verse 33, and on to the end of that section.

Then he points up to what extent, if you are in a situation where you're in a court, do not resist one who is evil, but if anyone strikes you or insults you by hitting you on your right cheek, turn to him the left.

We're dealing here not with a fight in your backyard, we're dealing here with a court situation, eye for eye, tooth for tooth.

We're not dealing with the question of keeping a criminal out of the house who wants to rape your wife.

We're dealing with the question of when a judge or when a lawyer or somebody else abuses you in court.

Be very careful not to rail in return.

Nothing to do with whether or not you can appeal at a higher level, Paul did, he appealed to Caesar.

Jesus didn't, he wasn't a Roman citizen, he had no right to.

Peter not a Roman citizen could not appeal to Caesar, Paul could.

Hence the tradition, Peter was hanged, he was not a Roman citizen, Paul was beheaded, was a blessing to be beheaded if you were a Roman citizen.

That was justice in that day.

So he goes through all of this, then he picks up in chapter six, he defines alms or piety, he defines your function in prayer, he defines what kind of prayer you should have.

Let me now note, please if you note the last word of chapter six, verses four, six, eighteen, all of these should have the word openly added.

The King James is correct, the RSV is wrong, your father who sees in secret will reward you openly every time the Greeks should have that.

I don't know why they left it out except they thought God didn't always do it, but he says he does, Jesus said so.

He may not reward you always openly, but if you do things in secret you will be surprised what God does for you before others.

Now, I do not like an RSV translation in verse 12, and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.

The proper rendering is not have forgiven, but as we also forgive, it is an ongoing state of mind, ongoing state of mind.

Verse 44, the previous chapter I have a note I didn't mention, pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you rather than merely pray for those who persecute you.

In verse 44, the RSV again has left out a whole phrase.

He points out that you can't put God and money as two masters, verse 24.

He explains to the disciples about being over anxious of things in this life, verse 25.

In chapter 7, our last and short chapter here, he says, don't sit in a judgmental situation if you don't yourself want to be judged in like manner, which is why we recommend that we do not participate in jury duty.

How you handle your judgmental matters will be how God deals with you.

Then he goes through and points up, he has reference to dogs and swine, typical verse 6 of Gentiles, that's what the Jews meant by it.

Don't give dogs what is holy, it meant don't give to people who have no understanding the truth I am giving you.

But if you ask, you will receive.

If you seek, you will knock.

If you knock, you will find.

If you seek, it will be open to you in all those expressions he uses.

Then he defines the fact that the way he is setting it out here is not the easy way of compromise with the world, but the hard and narrow, the way the world is not going.

The world builds highways, you are asked to travel the rutty roads, verse 13.

Now also in this connection, beware of false prophets or teachers, there are two kinds of problems now he begins to explain in verse 15.

One, there will be those who are wolves in sheep's clothing and were never sheep, ministers in this church, some of whom were never converted.

There are thorns that can never produce grapes, thistles that can never produce figs, people who were never converted, beware of.

There are also problems, there are trees that are sound spiritually and trees that bear the same kind of fruit but are sick.

This is not like the other.

Verse 15 and verse 16 talk about the unconverted to beware of, who appear to be converted.

Verse 17 is talking about those who are converted and have been, some of whom are spiritually sound and others wrought away.

The bad tree bears evil fruit, diseased.

The sound tree cannot bear such and you have to beware of those who even were converted who produce evil fruit.

He says, beware of those who use my name Lord, Lord all the time, verse 21, which is very typical of our modern world.

Miracles were done because of the faith of the people who came to them but not because of the spiritual state of those who thought they were performing the miracle.

When Jesus had finished these saints, the crowds were astonished at his teaching because he conveyed his message with authority and not like scribes.