

BIBLICAL REF – MATTHEW – Gardner

Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *Matthew*
(Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991),

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Matthew 2:13-23 Jesus' Ministry

Refugee Christ

Matt. 2: 13-23 (Can be preached on the First Sunday after Christmas)

13. Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "**Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.**" 14. Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother **by night**, and went to Egypt, 15 and **remained there until the death of Herod**. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "**Out of Egypt I have called my son.**" 16. When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and **killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under**, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. 17. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the **prophet Jeremiah**: 18. "**A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled**, because they are no more." 19. When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 20. "**Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel**, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." 21. Then Joseph got up, took the child

and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 22. But when he heard that **Archelaus was ruling over Judea** in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the **district of Galilee**. 23. There he made his home in a town called **Nazareth**, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a **Nazorean.**" [Is. 43: Judges 16:7]

마 2:13-23:

13. 예수의 가족이 이집트로 피신하다> 박사들이 돌아간 뒤에, 주의 천사가 꿈에 요셉에게 나타나서 말하였다. "헤롯이 아기를 찾아서 죽이려고 하니, 일어나서, 아기와 어머니를 데리고, 이집트로 피신하고, 내가 네게 일어줄 때까지 그 곳에 있어라." 14. 요셉이 일어나서, 밤 사이에 아기와 그 어머니를 데리고 이집트로 치신하여, 15. 헤롯이 죽을 때까지 거기에 있었다. 이것은 주께서 예언자를 시켜서 말씀하신 바 "내가 이집트에서 내 아들을 불러냈다" 하신 말씀을 이루려고 하신 것이었다. 16. 헤롯은 박사들에게 속은 것을 알고, 몹시 노하였다. 그는 사람을 보내어, 그 박사들에게 알아본 때를 기준으로, 베들레헬과 그 가까운 온 지역에 사는 두 살짜리로부터 그 아래의 사내아이를 모조리 죽였다. 17. 이리하여 예언자 예레미야를 시켜서 하신 말씀이 이루어졌다. 18. "라마에서 소리가 들려 왔다. 울부짖으며, 크게 애곡하는 소리다. 라헬이 자식들을 잃고 있는데, 자식들이 없어졌으므로, 위로를 받으려 하지 않았다." (i. 렘 31:15)/ 19. 예수의 가족이 이집트에서 돌아오다> 헤롯이 죽은 뒤에, 주의 천사가 이집트에 있는 요셉에게 꿈에 나타나서 20. 말하기를 "일어나서, 아기와 어머니를 데리고, 이스라엘 땅으로 가거라. 그 아기의 목숨을 노리던 자들이 죽었다." 하였다. 21. 요셉이 일어나서, 아기와 어머니를 데리고, 이스라엘 땅으로 들어왔다. 22. 그러나 요셉은, 아켈라오가 아버지 헤롯의 뒤를 이어 유대 지방의 왕이 되었다는 말을 듣고, 그 곳으로 가기를 두려워하였다. 그는 꿈에 지시를 받고, 갈릴리 지방으로 떠나서, 23.

나사렛이라는 동네로 가서 살았다. 이리하여 예언자들을 시켜서 말씀하신 바 "그는 나사렛 사람이라고 불릴 것이다" 하신 말씀이 이루어졌다.

Explanatory Notes

In the God uses a dream to reveal critical information to Joseph. When the angel warns that Herod *is about to search for the child, to destroy him*, the language used conveys the sense of an imminent danger. Wasting no time, therefore, Joseph and his family leave town by night and head for Egypt. ¹

As a classic land of refuge for those fleeing political danger in Palestine (cf. I King 11:40; Jer. 26:21), Egypt was a likely destination for the family in our story. For Matthew, Egypt is important not only as an appropriate asylum for refugees but as a land which figured prominently in Israel's early history. It was in Egypt that Jacob's family found refuge under the protection of another Joseph. And it was *out of Egypt* that the children of Israel came when God delivered them from bondage and called them to be his people. It is this connection which Matthew has in mind when he introduces the fulfillment quotation from Hosea 11:1 in verse 15: *Out of Egypt I have called my son* (cf. Num. 23:22; 24:8). ²

With Jesus safely out of the country, the story shifts now to the massacre of the children at Bethlehem. Herod is determined to destroy the newborn king. Herod dispatches officers to kill *all of the children in and around Bethlehem* born after the start appeared (cf. 2:7, 16). The story before us reflects Herod's well-known rage and brutality in the face of real or imagined threats. From Josephus writing

¹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 53.

² Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 53.

we know that he had several of his own children killed, as well as countless others.³

In verse 17-18 Matthew comments on the episode at Bethlehem with a quotation from Jer. 31: 15. He states that the passage from Jeremiah *was fulfilled* at the time of Herod's massacre. He refrains, however, saying that the tragedy took place in order to fulfill Scripture. In the passage which is quoted, we hear of the matriarch Rachel crying out from her grave to mourn a nearby tragedy. In the original setting of the text in Jeremiah, Rachel is lamenting the tragic deportation of God's people to other lands. It is assumed that Rachel is buried north of Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin, near Ramah (cf. 1 Sam 10:2), where the people are gathering for their march into exile. In Matthew, however, Jeremiah's words acquire a new meaning. Here the assumption is that Rachel is buried in the vicinity of Bethlehem (cf. Gen. 35:19; 48:7), making her a witness to the slaughter carried out by Herod's officers. Weeping over the loss of her later-day children, she cries out with a voice that is heard as far away as Ramah!

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Matthew is drawing on Moses' story to tell Jesus' story. In the Exodus account, Moses had to flee from Pharaoh because Pharaoh "sought to kill Moses (Ex. 2:15). Later, however, Moses received a command to "go back" to his people, because "all those who were seeking your life are dead" (Ex. 4:19).⁵ Earlier God had warned Joseph to flee, since Herod was seeking to destroy Jesus (v. 13). Here Joseph is instructed to take Jesus and his mother back to their country, *for those who were seeking the*

³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 53-54.

⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 54.

⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 54.

child's life are dead (v. 20) .⁶

Archelaus:

At Herod's death, his kingdom was divided between three of his sons: Herod Antipas, Philip, and Archelaus. Judea was one of the areas that came under the rule of Archelaus. Archelaus apparently inherited his father's violent tendencies, for he was reputed to have murdered 3,000 people at the beginning of his reign. His brutality and dictatorial ways finally became so intolerable that he was deposed by Rome in A.D. 6 and exiled to Gaul. All of this helps to explain why Joseph is afraid

To go back to Judea and heads instead for Galilee. Although Galilee was also ruled by a son of Herod, Herod Antipas, the circumstances there were relatively less threatening. Because he resides in Nazareth, Jesus will be known as a *Nazarene or Nazorean*.⁷

The Text in the Biblical Context

Jesus and his family do not leave Judea on a pleasant sabbatical excursion to see the biblical world. **Instead, they leave because hostile forces are closing in on them, forcing them to seek a place of refuge elsewhere. Like Luke in his story of the inn with no vacancy, Matthew wants us to understand that Jesus' world did not receive him with hospitality. Jesus must begin his life as a homeless wanderer, threatened by the very world he comes to save. Jesus' flee from Herod gives us a preview of what Jesus will experience later in his ministry. *Foxes have holes to lay his head* (8:20). To put it another way: The hostility which threatens Jesus at Bethlehem is a foretaste**

⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 55.

⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 55.

of the hostility which will manifest itself at Calvary.⁸ However, it was God's purpose that Jesus came to this world. God delivered baby Jesus from destruction, for it is God's purpose to save others through his life.⁹

The Text in the life of the Church

To view Jesus as a fugitive or refugee, caught in the conflict between God's agenda and Herod's

agenda, raises a number of questions. Chief among them is the calling and destiny of Jesus'

community: **Does Jesus' fate say something about our own fate as his disciples?**

Matthew himself leaves little doubt on this matter. To follow Jesus is to choose a course of homeless wandering (8:18-22) and to face persecution which forces one to flee from one town to the next (10:16-23). Such was the experience of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century and countless groups and individuals across the centuries.¹⁰

Even today, many believers do the same thing.

It might be difficult for many of you to identify with the way of refugee because you have never had to seek a refuge.

Refugee is someone who has no country,

someone who is running from persecution and imminent danger to life.

Refugee is someone who is in foreign country with no rights, no privilege.

⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 56.

⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 57.

¹⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 57.

But can you imagine we have many people in our midst live like refugee?
Homeless people experience different kinds of refugee life. It is not political persecution per se.

But when they are sleeping in the car, police chase them away if not giving them ticket. People pitch tents and the city comes in and destroy tents. That's a huge threat. In such a cold winter having no place to sleep is a huge threat.

I experienced political refugee life from North to South Korea when communist regime came in. We had to escape again in Korean war fleeing from communist occupation to remote country. And in destroyed nation we had to be homeless.

How does Matthew's story speak to us? to our greedy world, that is not killing people politically but physically and emotionally. The life span of the homeless is only 44. This means our economic and political culture that boost individualism and limitless accumulation of wealth have been killing many poor people at early age.

For us, it is difficult to identify with the way of the refugee. We have never had to seek a more hospitable city or country. How does the Matthew's story speak to us? At least it is a reminder that the comfortable, settled life we now live is a precarious blessing, subject to disruption at any moment. **Beyond that, it is an invitation to express our solidarity with those are refugees – homeless – and to welcome them into our mist.** When we do so, we confirm our kinship with the refugee of Bethlehem, Jesus the Christ. ¹¹

[In Matt. 25, Jesus said what we did to the homeless, we did it to himself. What we do for the poor, makes us beloved friends of Jesus Christ.]

¹¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 57.

3: 1-12 John's Word as the Forerunner

According to Mark 1:1-8, "the good news of Jesus Christ" begins with John the Baptist.

From the historical point of view, John the Baptist and his followers belong to a wider movement of separatist groups which flourished in Palestine and Syria, especially in and around the Jordan valley, in the centuries before and after the time of Jesus. Each of these groups tended to pursue an ascetic style of life, apart from the religious mainstream, and to practice some rite of washing with water. The best known such group is the Essene community at Qumran, which left behind the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls. Some scholars like to imagine that John the Baptist had a connection with the Qumran group at some point. While remains uncertain, it is clear that John shared many of the convictions of those calling for a more radical expression of the Jewish faith, including the conviction that the endtime was close at hand. [Jewish Groups and Parties. P. 421.]¹²

John has a singular and distinctive role in relation to Jesus' messianic ministry, a role in keeping with the biblical promises. John's activity as a forerunner fulfills a prophecy from Isaiah, and to drop a few hints about John's true identity. John the Baptist is none other than the great prophet who was returning to prepare people for the coming of the Lord (cf. Mal. 3:1-2, 4:5-6). Matthew cites Is. 40:3 affirming that John the Baptist is the *one crying out in the wilderness* who starts things rolling.¹³

John proclaims: *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near*. Repent, *metanoeo*, repentance *metanoia*, likely reflects the Hebrew verb *sub*, which means turn around or return. This verb was used frequently by the prophets to

¹² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 59.

¹³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 60.

urge Israel to return to a right relationship with God (cf. Deut. 30:2; Jer. 4:1; Ezek. 18:30-32; Hos. 14:1). When John appealed for repentance, therefore, he was inviting his hearers to make a radical break with their sinful past and to turn afresh to the God who would soon come in judgment.¹⁴

Matthew 4: 1-11: Jesus' Temptation

*4*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.²He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.³The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.'⁴But he answered, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."'⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,⁶saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."'⁷ Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."'⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour;⁹and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.'¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written, "Worship the

¹⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 61.

Lord your God, and serve only him.”¹⁵ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The setting of the test is the wilderness, the occasion for the test is hunger, and the issue at stake is loyalty. What is different in Jesus' case is outcome. To paraphrase the author of Hebrews 4:15, Jesus is "tested as Israel was, yet without sin."¹⁵ The struggle centers on fidelity to God's will.¹⁶ The reason the Spirit takes him to wilderness is clear: He is to be *tempted* by the devil.¹⁷

A Test of Priorities (4:3-4)

Jesus was hungry - and vulnerable. Now the test can begin. If you are the Son of God ... The phrase assumes rather than questions Jesus' sonship. The tempter is proposing ways for Jesus to claim and demonstrate his messianic role. Jesus responds by quoting texts from OT which challenge these propositions. All of the texts come from Deuteronomy and, appropriately, to deal with Israel's wilderness experience.¹⁸

The first of the devil's three propositions is that Jesus command stones to become loaves of bread. At one level the appeal relates to the immediate situation of Jesus' hunger after forty days of fasting. At another level the story poses the question of how Jesus will exercise his messianic power throughout his ministry. Jesus "is asked to become a self-serving wonder-worker, flexing his power for his own ends." The reply in verse 4 makes clear that he is not about to act independently to God and use his power to gratify his own desires.

¹⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 69.

¹⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 70.

¹⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 71.

¹⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 71.

In his reply Jesus quotes Deut. 8:3, which interprets Israel's dependence on manna as a lesson on feeding on God's will for our lives.¹⁹

A Test of Confidence (4:5-7) [that God is with him]

For the second test, the actors move in some manner from the wilderness to the holy city, Jerusalem. Jesus is invited to throw himself down from this lofty place. From one perspective, it is a subtle attempt to get Jesus to destroy himself (through false confidence). From another perspective, it is an appeal to Jesus to seek public acclaim for his work through miracle and magic. This time the devil himself quotes Scripture (Ps. 91: 11-12), bolstering his challenge with the promise that God will protect those who trust him against all harm. But Jesus is not deceived and shows himself to be a more faithful interpreter of biblical texts. Quoting Deut. 6:16, he reminds his adversary that it is a mistake for us to try to force God's hand. At Massah in the wilderness (Ex.17:1-8), the people of Israel did just this when they "tested the Lord" by demanding water. Such demands reveal unfaith rather than faith. Jesus, however, neither needs nor seeks miraculous proof that God is with him.²⁰

A Test of Allegiance (4:8-10)

The devil takes Jesus to a very high mountain for the third test, dealing with power and authority. The devil makes the offer - and the price he demands is Jesus' allegiance.²¹ The devil represent world ruler (cf. John 12:31; 16:11; Eph. 2:2; 6:12). He is in a strategic position to grant dominion to Jesus, at least the dominion that conventional Messiah might seek. Once again, however, Jesus refuses to succumb. He commands Satan to depart, in much the same way that

¹⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 71,

²⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 72.

²¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 72.

he does when Peter tries to divert him from the way of the cross (cf. 4:10); 16:21-23) And he reminds Satan of the basic tenet of Israel's faith that only God deserves our worship and allegiance (Deut. 6:13).²²

THE TEXT IN BIBLICAL CONTEXT

Jesus ordeal in wilderness, Abraham (Gen 22:1-14), Job (Job 1-2), persecution (I Pet.4:12) and trials related end time (Rev. 3:10). Sometimes testing comes from our own evil desires (James 1:14) or from the powers of darkness which seek our downfall (I Tess. 3:5). At other times God conducts the test (Deut.8:2), not to entice or entrap us but to probe the depth and genuineness of our loyalty. Whatever the source, testing comes again and again to God's servants in the biblical story.²³

In this particular struggle we are dealing with a cosmic conflict, a collision of divine and demonic authority which will characterize Jesus' ministry from beginning to end. Further, the test does not deal with faithfulness in generic senses but with faithfulness in the context of a messianic calling; How will Jesus act as the Son of God? At this point, the story serves at least three purposes: (1) It gives a preview of the way Jesus will approach his mission in the stories to follow. (2) It suggest that any discrepancy between the shape of Jesus' ministry and traditional view of the Messiah's role results not from a lack of credentials on Jesus' part but from his adherence to God's will. (3) It provides clues on what

²² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 73.

²³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 73.

it means for the church to be faithful as the messianic community which acts in Jesus' name.²⁴

THE TEXT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

His temptation went to the core of who he was and what he was about. Jesus is tempted to trade his true calling for instant power and glory. It is at this point that the story invites us to reflect on temptation in the life of the church. All too often, the church has succumbed to temptation, coveting the power which Jesus rejected and betraying the loyalty which Jesus modeled. The church today still confronts the temptations of Jesus, whether as a temptation to serve its own institutional needs, or to esteem charismatic gifts above the weakness of the cross, or to make success the criterion of the church's mission, or to give allegiance to alien ideologies and causes.²⁵

Similar tests come to us in our individual experience. For some, the test may occur as they make decisions about life vocations. For others, the occasion is a position of leadership, where the abuse or misuse of power is an ever-present possibility. For still others, faithfulness is tested in every day moral choices, where conflicting values compete for our attention and loyalty. Whenever and however the temptation comes, we need to listen afresh to Matt.4:1-11.²⁶

Matthew 4:12-16 Jesus' Galilean Ministry

EXPLNATORY NOTES

Capernaum by the Sea – 4:12-13

²⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 74.

²⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 75.

²⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 75.

Matthew reports Jesus' change of residence from Nazareth to Capernaum, a prominent city of Galilee. Matthew quotes a passage from Isaiah to show how Galilee fits into God's redemptive purposes. **The time and place are now right for Jesus to launch his messianic program.**²⁷

The hostile action toward John actually *prompted* Jesus to turn to Galilee. This *withdrawal* to Galilee is not simply a move to evade evil powers. Instead, Jesus interprets John's arrest as a signal to begin his own work and so *returns* to the place where that work must take shape. The reference to John's arrest points toward the time when Jesus too will be delivered to the authorities (cf. Matt. 17:22; 26:2).²⁸

Once in Galilee, Jesus passes through his hometown of Nazareth, but moves on immediately and settles in Capernaum. **Capernaum was a busy and prosperous community. Because it lay near a political border, it had a tax office or customs station (cf. 9:9) and also served as an outpost for a detachment of Herod's troops (cf. 8:5-13). Capernaum was a major center of Jesus' activity (cf. 11:23),** referring to the city some sixteen times. Only Matthew, however, explicitly identifies Capernaum as the place of Jesus' residence, *his own town* (9:1). **As Matthew describes Capernaum in verse 13, he uses language which connects the city with the quotation from Is.** in verses 14-16: It is a city *by the sea* (cf. v15), in the area which once belonged to the tribes of *Zebulun nad Naphtali*.²⁹

Galilee of Gentiles 4:14-16

The passage from Isaiah which Matthew cites is yet another fulfillment quotation, one of several drawn from the book of Isaiah (cf. 2:23; 8:17; 12:18-

²⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 76.

²⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 76.

²⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 76.

21). The passage comes from Is. 9:1-2 (8:23-9:1 in the Hebrew text), which Matthew has edited in his own distinctive way. In their original context, the words of Is. 9:1 about “the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations” may refer to the three provinces which the Assyrians set up when they conquered Israel: Dor, Gilead, and Megido. The phrase *Galilee of Gentiles* may allude to the large number of non-Jews who resided in Galilee. Or it may simply designate Galilee as the place from which God launches a program of salvation that eventually will encompass Gentiles. (Gentile, P. 420) ³⁰

The quotation continues in verse 16, which depicts Galilee as a land of darkness. For those who first heard Isaiah’s words, *darkness* referred to a political climate marked by gloom and anxiety. For Matthew the metaphor takes on a broader meaning, describing a people who have yet to discover a right relationship with God. Life in Galilee, however, about to change. With Jesus poised to begin his messianic work, *light has dawned on those who live in darkness...* The fact that Galilee is a land of the *Gentiles*, hits at a wider circle of darkness to which Jesus will bring light through the work of his followers. ³¹

THE TEXT IN BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The text shows subtle signs of God’s intention to include the Gentiles in God’s design.... 4:12-16 sets the stage for what is to follow. With Jesus settled in Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee, the story is ready to move on to Jesus’ public ministry. ³²

³⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 76-77.

³¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 77.

³² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 77.

God's salvation is not confined to one particular geographical arena. It can manifest itself in new and unlikely locations, places like Nineveh, Babylon, Antioch, and Rome. Matthew's treatment of Galilee works at both points simultaneously. Inasmuch as Galilee is a part of the area of Zebulun and Naphtali, it represents God's fidelity to the old land of promise. Inasmuch, however, as Galilee is a land *of the Gentles*, a gateway as it were to other nations, it represents God's freedom to expand the boundaries of holy geography and claim new lands for his purposes.³³

GOSPEL –Jesus' Ministry of Word and Deed (85)

(Matt. 4:23-25 (Luke 6:17-19; Acts 2:43-47; 9:31)

The passage begins in verse 23 with a threefold description of **Jesus' activity**: He **teaches** in the synagogue, **preaches good news** of the kingdom, and **heals diseases** of every sort. This description is repeated in 9:35 (creating what is known as a literary inclusion), reinforcing the thematic framework of the story. Verses 24-25 report the reaction to Jesus' work – and again the description includes three elements: Jesus' fame spreads and wide, the sick are brought to Jesus for healing, and great crowds follow Jesus.³⁴

Good news of the kingdom

1) **Matthew** views the coming of God's reign as a joyous event, bringing hope to those who receive it. 2) Jesus goes *through Galilee*, and *all Syria* hears of his deeds; the people bring *all the sick*, and Jesus heals every illness; *great /crowds* follow Jesus, from every quarter of Israel.

³³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 78.

³⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 85.

3) Only Matthew informs us of Jesus' fame throughout Syria, which was the name of the Roman province to which Palestine belonged.

The Text in the Biblical Context

Two themes surface in 4:17-25 which are basic to the message of the synoptic Gospels. One of these themes is *the kingdom of God*, which Matthew prefers to call the kingdom of heaven (probably to guard against overuse of the name God; cf. Ex. 20:7; Dan. 4:34-37). In each of the Synoptics, the kingdom of God is the primary metaphor for God's saving activity.³⁵

The kingdom comes as God's gift (Lk 12:32), fully establishing God's sovereignty over human life (Matt. 12:28), and offering blessing to the poor and others crushed by life (Luke 6:20-23). It brings fulfillment to history (Mk 1:14) and inaugurates a new era (Lk. 16:16), opening the doors even now to participation in the endtime banquet of life with God and God's people (Matt. 22:1-14). A NT theology of *salvation*, therefore, does not begin with Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. *It begins, as Matthew tells us, with the good news of God's reign and the blessing it brings.*³⁶

The second theme which 4:17-25 introduces is following Jesus or *discipleship*. Outside the four Gospels and Acts, there are no references to disciples and only scattered references to following Jesus... In the First Gospel, the author works with a two-track approach to discipleship. For the duration of Jesus' ministry, Matthew restricts the term *disciples* to the limited circle of the twelve (cf. 10:1-5; 11:1; 19:28). all those who hear the gospel will now be invited to follow Jesus as disciples. At that point the reader realizes that the disciples in the preceding chapters have much more than historical significance.

³⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 85.

³⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 86.

Jesus' training of the twelve was a backdrop(배경) all along for instructing future disciples in every age to come.³⁷

The Text in the Life of the Church 86

Misconception of the kingdom have been all too common in every age of the church. Some have equated (같다로 표시) the kingdom with the **institution** of the church or with a **theocratic** (신정국가) state in which the saints hold the power. Others have viewed the kingdom as a wholly **future reality**, whether in terms of a millennial reign or in terms of a heavenly realm. Still others have **spiritualized** the image of the kingdom, restricting its meaning to an **inward reign in the heart**. Finally, there are those who speak of Christians *building* the kingdom, **losing sight** of the fact that God's reign is God's doing. While each of these views contains an element of **truth**, each **distorts** or truncates(잘라준다) the NT message.³⁸

Fortunately, there are voices in our time which are helping us to reclaim Jesus' vision of God's reign. We hear voices of scholars who have analyzed the kingdom texts and worked to clarify their meaning. From another direction we hear the voices of Christians in oppressive societies, who attest the power of Jesus' vision in their ongoing struggle against violence and injustice. The word

³⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 86.

Both the word gospel (Anglo-Saxon: godspel) and the Greek term *evangelion* which it translates mean *good news*. In the early church *good news* referred either to Jesus' own preaching or to preaching about Jesus. Matthew, for example, speaks of Jesus proclaiming the good news of the kingdom (4:23). Paul, on the other hand, speaks of the gospel which he and other apostles preach, the good news of what God has done to save us through Jesus (cf. Rom 1:16; 15:19; I Cor. 15:1-2). Only later, in the second century of the Christian era, did *gospel* become a designation for a literary document about Jesus, such as the Gospel According to Matthew. The author of Mark probably contributed to this development by the use of *evangelion* to describe his subject matter in the opening line of his work (Mark 1:1): Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 421.

³⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 86-87.

we hear from both sources is that the metaphor of the kingdom is a *potent* image, challenging old ways of looking at life. It speaks of God's mighty presence and power to save, the power of the future at work in the present, reaching into our world to reshape and reorder. That is what we ask for when we pray. *Your kingdom com* (Matt.6:10). And that is the cause for joy when we hear Jesus say: "*the kingdom of heaven has come near!*"³⁹

5: 1- 16: the Beatitudes

The setting of Matthew's beatitude is *the mountain* from which Jesus speaks. There are two groups in the audience that is present to hear Jesus. The larger group is the *crowds*, who come from every corner of Israel. Closer in is the smaller group, the cluster of Jesus' *disciples*. The smaller group is sitting in a semicircle in front of Jesus, while the larger group forms a deep concentric semicircle behind them, down the slope of the mountain. Jesus himself is also seated, the customary posture for teaching in Jewish circles. To whom is Jesus speaking? In 5: 1-2, it is clear that Matthew contains instructions for disciples. At the same time, it is striking to observe at the end of the Sermon that *the crowd were astounded at his teaching* (7:28). It is clear when Jesus teaches about the claims of God's kingdom, he is addressing all of Israel, whom the crowds represent.⁴⁰

Gardner claims that Matthew highlights the religious stance of the blessed, while Luke focuses more on their circumstances in society. The language the Matthew uses draws on OT texts, notably Isaiah 61. To understand the Matthean Beatitudes, we need to be attentive to this biblical background.⁴¹

³⁹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 87.

⁴⁰ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 92

⁴¹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 93.

The first of the Beatitude lifts up *the poor in spirit* (In Luke 6:20 the designation is “you who are poor”). Gardner claims that the vocabulary used to speak of the poor calls attention not only to their economic deprivation but to the lowly situation that accompanies poverty, often as result of oppression. Thus it is that *the poor* eventually comes to signify the whole community of those in need who look to God for help.⁴²

For some [people] the phrase [*poor in spirit*] refers to those who cultivate a humble spirit, who empty themselves and relate to others in the unpretentious way of the poor. Others suggest that the phrase describes those who like the poor have a needy condition, but whose poverty is more an affliction of the spirit.⁴³

The second beatitude promises comfort to *those who mourn*. In the parallel saying in Luke 6:21, the contrast is expressed in terms of weeping and laughing. There the language recalls Ps. 126:5-6. Matthew’s version, however, uses the vocabulary of Is. 61:2-3, which speaks of comfort to those who mourn the plight of Israel following the exile. This gives some clues; the grief is not merely bereavement at the grave, nor is it limited to sorrow over personal sin. What they mourn is the condition of the world as it now exist – all the loss and suffering they have experienced in this world.⁴⁴

The language reflects the promise of Psalm 37 that “*the meek shall inherit the land, delight themselves in abundant prosperity* (cf. Is. 61:7). There the meek are those powerless to defend their own claims, but who trust God to intervene and break the grip of oppressors.⁴⁵

The meek [humbled] receive assurance that they will inherit the *earth* [land]. Gardner claims that in the OT texts which lie behind our saying, the land or earth to be possessed is the land of Canaan (cf. Gen. 17:8). In Jesus’ beatitude,

⁴² Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 93.

⁴³ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 93.

⁴⁴ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 94.

⁴⁵ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 95.

however, land or earth has a broader meaning. It is a way of depicting a place to dwell without fear in the new realm of God's kingdom. Such will be the lot of the meek who follow Jesus.⁴⁶

Jesus blesses peacemakers not because they are merely peaceful persons but they are those who work actively to bring peace or make peace. Thus they work to restore wholeness in their relationships with others. Because those who make peace are acting as God acts, they show themselves to be the true children of God.⁴⁷

As Gardner asserts, Matthew's readers are well acquainted with persecution. It identifies the social plight of the blessed. Persecution is one of the reasons for the needy condition and state of mourning in which the blessed find themselves. Whatever deprivation they may experience here and now, the persecuted are assured that they will receive God's kingdom.⁴⁸

Persecution remains the topic in this last beatitude. Note the shift from third-person to second-person language, and note further the way Jesus speaks of *trouble on my account*. Both features confirm that the Beatitudes in Matthew are directed to a specific group.⁴⁹

Matt. 6:9-14 – Lord's Prayer

The words *Our father* was more than a traditional Jewish formula. Jesus had a special relationship with God as Father and enables his followers to enter into that familiar relationship (cf. Matt. 11:27; 12:50). This for Matthew is why Jesus can invite us to pray, *Our Father*. The additional words in heaven, serve to distinguish this Father from other fathers and to identify him as *God*. The phrase

⁴⁶ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 95.

⁴⁷ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 97.

⁴⁸ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 97.

⁴⁹ Gardner. *Believers Bible Commentary on Matthew*, 98.

also points to God's sovereignty. It does not however, imply that God is distant from us.⁵⁰

The first three request directed to God in the Lord's Prayer are often labeled *you-petitions*: Let *your* name be hallowed. Let *your* kingdom com. Let *your* will be done. In each petition we are saying to God: "Do what is important to you. Make yourself central in our world" – "magnified and sanctified be his great name in the world which he created according to his will; and may he establish his kingdom in your lifetime and in your days and in the lifetime of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon." The petitions to God have an eschatological flavor. For Jesus' followers such petition for the future are closely linked to what is already happening. They beseech God to *complete* the work of salvation inaugurated in Jesus' ministry.⁵¹

The topics of the three requests are much interrelated. The first petition speaks of God's *name*, which represents God's person or being. God's name is hollowed when people acknowledge God's holiness and live accordingly (cf. Ezek. 36:22-23). In the petition before, we likely are praying for both things to happen: "Act in such a way, O God, that the world sees your greatness and praises you for who you are!" "Let your kingdom come. Manifest your reign in its fullness. Take control of life and history in every way."⁵²

When God's rule is fully established, then the request of the third petition will also be granted: The *will* of God will *be done on earth as it is in heaven*. God's will can refer either to God's purpose for history (cf. Is. 46: 10, 13; Matt. 26:42) or to God's will for our lives in an ethical sense (cf. Ps. 40:8; Matt. 12:50). Here again it is likely that both meanings are intended: "So rule in our

⁵⁰ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 118.

⁵¹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 119.

⁵² Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 119.

midst, O God, that your redemptive purpose is accomplished, and that our lives exhibit the righteousness you desire.”⁵³

Having prayed first for God’s agenda, we may then offer petitions to God concerning our own needs. These are the focus of the three “we-petitions” in verses 11-13: Give *us our daily bread*. Forgive *us our debts*. Do not bring *us* to the time of trial, but rescue *us*. A major question for interpreters is how these petitions are related to the first three. Do these petitions, like the preceding ones, endtime with things yet to come (messianic banquet, final judgment, endtime testing)? Or do they deal with day-to-day issues that Jesus’ followers face at all times? The second view is probably more nearly correct. Jesus most likely enumerating needs that related as much to the present as they do to the future.⁵⁴ At the same time, the eschatological hope expressed in the you-petitions forms the backdrop for the we-petitions.⁵⁵

The first we-petition is for *bread*, which refers primarily to food or nourishment, but may suggest other basic provisions for life as well... It could mean *necessary, for today, for the future, or for the morrow*. The latter meaning being the most probable.⁵⁶

Forgiveness for our sins is the subject of the next petition: the metaphor Jesus used for sins is that of *debts*, which suggests unmet obligations in our relationship with God. God’s forgiveness is linked to forgiveness at the human

⁵³ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 119.

⁵⁴ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 119.

⁵⁵ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 120.

⁵⁶ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 120.

level. When we ask God to forgive *our* indebtedness, we are to do so as those who have already forgiven the unmet obligations of others.⁵⁷

The final petition is a double request, one which seeks God's help in facing evil yet before us: *Do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from evil.* *Trial and evil* are equivalent terms and refer to everything that could endanger our relationship with God. In praying the final petition, we ask God to protect this relationship: *Do not bring us into situations that might overwhelm our faith, but rather deliver us from every peril that awaits us.* In the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus correlates God's forgiveness and human forgiveness in precise terms: If you forgive, God will forgive. If you do not forgive, God will not forgive.⁵⁸ The point made is not that we have to earn or prove ourselves worthy of God's forgiveness. Matthew agrees with the view expressed elsewhere in the NT (Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:32) that God's forgiveness precedes and underlies our forgiveness of one another (Matt. 26:28; 18: 23-35). The point of Jesus' saying is that there has to be a reciprocity between the way we respond to misdeeds (trespasses) of others and the way God responds to our own. If we refuse to practice forgiveness in our relationship with others, then we void God's forgiveness in our own lives as well.⁵⁹

Matt. 6:24 (Luke 16:13)

⁵⁷ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 120.

⁵⁸ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 120.

⁵⁹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 121.

'No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.'

Let God be your focus 6:19-23:

In verse 19-24 we find a cluster of three sayings, which Matthew uses to develop the theme of a life with one focus.

The cluster begins with a saying on *treasures* in verses 19-21 (cf. Luke 12:33-34), which builds on the reward motif in 6:1-18. As he does throughout the sermon, Jesus makes his point by contrasting one thing with another. One kind of treasure is a chest full of earthly goods, such as clothing and precious metals. The problem with this kind of treasure is that it is all too perishable (cf. Is. 51:8; James 5:3; Job 24:15-16). Beautiful clothing is often eaten by moths or worms (the word translated *rust* most likely refers to an insect in the larva stage. cf. Mal. 3:11). And precious metals can be easily stolen when thieves break into (literally: *dig through* the wall of) the storeroom where one's treasure chest is kept.⁶⁰

By contrast, *treasures* in heaven are imperishable. In Jewish writings, treasure in heaven is frequently associated with keeping the law or charitable deeds (cf. I Tim 6:17-19), and Mathew could have this association in mind (cf. 6:1-18). The point of the whole saying, however is not that the thing we try to accumulate merit points in heaven, but that the things we treasure most should be God rather than possessions. As Robert Guelich puts it: "*To have one's treasure in heaven means to submit oneself totally to that which is in heaven - God's sovereign rule.*"⁶¹

⁶⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *Matthew* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 126.

⁶¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 126.

The saying that follows in verses 22-23 talks about eyes and light and darkness (cf. Luke 11:33-36; Mark 4:21-23). According to one interpretation, the saying warns us not view life from a selfish, possessive perspective. The eye that is unhealthy would refer to a mean, stingy, or greedy eye (cf. Deut. 15:9), while a healthy eye would be one that looks on others with a liberal or generous attitude.
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A more likely interpretation, however, is that Jesus is dealing with need for a clear vision of God's will and telling a parable to make this point. When we have good (healthy) eyes, our world is one of light, and we see and walk clearly. But when our eyesight is poor (unhealthy), life is a dark and blurry affair. So it is, Jesus suggests, with the spiritual realm. If we have only a shadow awareness of God's will, how dark life will be! If on the other hand our vision is focused on God and illumined by God, our lives will be full of light.⁶³

In the third saying, found in verse 24 (cf. Luke 16:13), Jesus uses yet another illustration to make the case for a life focused on God. This time the parable comes the world of slaves and hired servants - and their relationship with owners and employers. To divide one's basic loyalties between two masters, Jesus says, simply doesn't work. We will inevitably come to prefer one over the other (this is the meaning of the verbs *love* and *hate* here), or feel attached to one while actually despising the other.⁶⁴

The application of all this to the world of faith occurs in the final phrase: *You cannot serve God and wealth.*

⁶² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 126.

⁶³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 126.

⁶⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 127.

The word translated as *wealth* (*mamona*) refers to material possessions of every sort, including property, and belongings. Here we return to the theme of treasures introduced in verse 19, and again Jesus confronts us with clear alternatives for our priorities in life: Will we be devoted to our possessions? Or will we be devoted to God? ⁶⁵

Matthew 6: 25-34 (Luke 12: 22-34) Trust in God's Goodness

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink,* or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?²⁷ And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin,²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?”³² For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.³³ But strive first for the kingdom of God* and his* righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 ‘So do not worry

⁶⁵ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 127.

about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

The prohibition *do not worry* translates a Greek verb which can mean either *worry about or strive after*.

Don't let anxiety about life lead to preoccupation with getting enough to eat and wear.⁶⁶

Jesus invites his listeners to learn from the way God cares for the birds. If God cares for the birds, who do nothing deliberate to raise their own food, will God not also supply you who are worth much more than birds?⁶⁷

We are forgetting that God is already aware of our needs. If our striving is a striving for God's kingdom, we know that all our needs will be cared for because of who God is (cf. Phil. 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7). Here at last we learn how life is *more than* food and clothing (cf. v. 25). The quest that should govern all our activity is the quest for God's rule in the world and God's will in our lives.⁶⁸

Tomorrow's concerns will take care of themselves; today is all you need to deal with. Or, it is bad enough dealing with today's problem; don't add on tomorrow's before they get here! One way or another, the text advises us to live one day at a time, and not to succumb to anxiety about the future.

Matthew 7: 24-27: Tale of Two Houses - on sand and on a rock

This is a story about two builders - and the fate of the houses they construct. In Luke's version of the parable (Luke 6:47-49), both houses apparently are built on a river plain, and rising floodwaters destroy the houses which lacks a deep foundation. Matthew on the other hand, envisions houses in two different

⁶⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 127.

⁶⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 128.

⁶⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 128.

locations, one on the rocky terrain of a mountainside, the other on sand in a valley. Here the destruction of the second house results from a combination of wind, torrential rain, and swollen streams rushing down the mountainside into the valley.⁶⁹ [and no deep and strong foundation].

In both versions, the picture of destruction by water is a metaphor for God's judgment (cf. Ezek. 13:10-16; Is. 28:17-18; Matt. 24:37-39). And Jesus teaching is the solid rock on which the parable encourages us to build our lives to avoid judgment (A similar theme appears in a parable attributed to Rabbi Elisha ben Abuya, where good works and knowledge of the Torah provide a foundation against the flood; cf. Luz: 452).⁷⁰ [it is rather the consequence of human error in building houses - not acting on words they hear]

Jesus' ethic. P. 139-141 (Sermon on the Mount)

Matthew 12: 20

We are told that God's servant will not wrangle (언쟁, 논쟁하다) with others (v. 19a). He comes to restore those broken in body and spirit (bruised reeds and smoldering wicks) rather than crush them in pursuing his own edns (v. 20). And he will not seek publicity for himself as he carries out his mission (v. 19).⁷¹

Matthew 13: 1-23: Parable of Sower

⁶⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 137.

⁷⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 138.

⁷¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 197.

Matthew 13: 1-9 Seed and Soil

It was customary in Palestine to sow seed before plowing the ground, and that is what the sower is doing here, scattering or broadcasting seed by hand.

According to the text, some of the seed ends up on the path and is never plowed under. Some falls on rocky terrain, where the soil is too thin to sustain life.

Some lands in good soil and sprouts, but is choked out by other plants. Some finds the right soil and conditions for growth, yielding up to a hundredfold return at the harvest.⁷²

Hearing and Understanding 13:10-17

Four kinds of hearers (13: 18-23)

In the parable itself, the primary concern to be the fate of the seed. Here, however, the emphasis falls on the various kinds of soil, which are related to different types of hearers who receive Jesus' word: some listeners never make it from hearing to faith. Some respond with a short-lived faith that vanishes when hard times set in.

Some accept the word but allow worldly concerns to suffocate their faith. And some hear, believe, and actually do what God desires.⁷³

1) Matthew identifies the word sown as the word of the kingdom (v. 18), which is the subject of each of the parables in the collection. 2) He contrasts the first and last types of hearers in terms of who does and doesn't *understand* (vv. 19, 23), picking up the theme of the previous section. (3) He underscores the fact that hearing should lead to *doing*, adding a verb which here is translated *yields* (v. 23), but which is the same verb used elsewhere for one who *does* God's will.

⁷² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 211,

⁷³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 213.

Matthew 22: 34-40: The Greatest Commandment

According to rabbinic tradition dating from the second century, the Torah contains no fewer than 613 laws (365 prohibitions and 248 commands). Already in Jesus' day, Jewish teachers were wrestling with the question of how all these commandments relate to each other, and whether the totality of them can be derived from one or more basic commandment. The text reflects this ongoing discussion when the lawyer (scribe) mentioned in v Matthew 22: 35 asks Jesus: *Which commandment in the law is the greatest?* ⁷⁴

It states explicitly that everything *in the law and the prophets* hangs or hinges on these two commandments. Matthew tells us that the multitude of laws in Scripture are valid *inasmuch as and insofar as* they embody Jesus' central injunction to love God and neighbor. ⁷⁵

Matthew 25: 31-46 Jesus' Last Sermon

The judgment scene in **25:31-46** involves a *final* judgment. It is final in terms of the narrative of the Gospel, the finale to which the many earlier allusions to judgment point. It is final in the way that it marks the end of the age and renders God's decisive verdict on all human history. And it is final in the sense of the *finality* of

the two contrasting destinies for humankind announced by the One who judges.

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Outline

Gathered and Separated, 25: 31-33

⁷⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 328.

⁷⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 329.

⁷⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 357.

Come, You Blessed, 25: 34-40

Depart, You Accursed, 25: 41-46

Those gathered encompass *panta ta ethne*, which can be translated either *all the Gentiles* or *all the nations*. The latter translation is better suited to express the all-inclusive character of the judgment in view. Since the good news is to be preached to every people or nation (24: 14; 28:19), *all humankind* will be held accountable at the end of the age.⁷⁷

The text draws on similar parabolic imagery in Ezekiel 34: 17-22 to depict the separation into two groups that judgment implies. Overarching picture of a gathering of the nations for judgment is found in Joel 3:1-12; Zech. 14:2-5; Is. 66:18. In these texts, it is God who acts as the ruler of history and executes the role of judge. In Matt. 25, however, it is *the Son of Man* (=Jesus) who comes, reigns, and carries out the divine judgement.⁷⁸

Come, You Blessed 25:34-40

As Israel was given an inheritance in the promised land, so the blessed in the endtime inherit a place in the promised kingdom. The distinguishing characteristic of the blessed that *qualifies them for life in God's reign is that they are righteous* (v. 37), which is defined in terms of the *six works of mercy* catalogued in verses 35-36: They have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked, cared for the sick, and visited the imprisoned. The deeds cited all exemplify hospitality toward those in need, and all are mentioned in Jewish literature as deeds that commend a person in God's

⁷⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 357.

⁷⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 358.

sight (cf. Is. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7; Job 22:6-7; Sir. 7:35; Tob. 4:16; T. Jos. 1:6; 2Enoch 9-10; Midr. Ps. 118).⁷⁹

The surprise that the righteous ones register in verses 37-39 is not that they are being credited with such deeds, but that **the recipients of their works of mercy was the exalted king himself!** “How so?” they asked. In a Jewish midrash on Deuteronomy 15:9, God tells the people of Israel: “My children, when you have given food to the poor, I account it as though you had given food to me” (cf. also **Prov. 19:17; Heb. 13: 2-3**). Along similar lines, Jesus responds to the blessed with the familiar words of 25:40: *As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.*⁸⁰

As we are most accustomed to, *the least of these* are defined as **the poor and needy** of the world, whoever they happen to be. However, Gardner understands the identify of *the least of these* for Matthew was **disciples** of Jesus as written in Matt. 10:40, 42; 18:6, 10; 12: 46-50; 23:8-9| 28:20; cf. 18:20). For Matthew then, the conversation Jesus has with all the nations in the final judgment focuses on the way humankind has responded to Jesus in the person of his *disciples*, from the greatest to *the least of these*.⁸¹

In my opinion, considering Jesus’ relationship with and his mission for the poor and sick, *the least of these* can be the poor, the sick and outcast of any society at any age (Jean Kim).

Gardner sees the text from the Biblical context and from the life of the church.

⁷⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 358.

⁸⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 358-359.

⁸¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 359.

The Text in the Biblical Context

The theme of Matt. 25:31-46 is regularly associated with Jesus' coming is that of judgment. Thus James describes the One who is to come as "the Judge ... standing at the doors" (James 5:9). The author of 2 Thessalonians speaks of the repayment for evil deeds that will occur "when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven" (2 Thess. 1:5-10; Rev. 20: 11-15; cf. 11:15-18; Mal. 3:5-6; **Underlying Jewish and Christian texts alike are the assumptions that God holds humankind accountable for its conduct, and that God will act to rectify the situation when humankind acts contrary to the divine purpose.**

- 1) the drama of faith and unfaith as people respond to Jesus and the salvation he brings.
- 2) Jesus himself occupies center stage in the final judgment.⁸²

The Text in the Life of the Church

The text has inspired Christian ministries of compassion for the hungry and oppressed, including both denominational programs and cooperative ventures such as Bread for the World, Church World Service, and World Vision

The biblical writers presuppose that **the outcome of the story of God and humankind** hinges not only on God's intention, but on human decision and responses as well. History is not simply a playground, where God says at last "It was only a game," but an arena of moral accountability, where life choices really matter. The dark side of this reality is the possibility that some will remain stubbornly resistant to God's reign, unwilling to live within its grace and demands, unwilling to seek justice and practice mercy. That is what stories of final judgment are all about.⁸³

Two Issues: one is the question of where the *church* finds itself in the story.

⁸² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 361.

⁸³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 362.

Insofar as we find ourselves in the role of Jesus' homeless, wandering disciples, afflicted and in need as we serve as Jesus' emissaries, we may claim the identity of the *least of these*.

More often than not, however, the church as we know it in Western culture more nearly resembles *the nations* to whom Jesus' messengers are sent. We are settled communities who must decide how we will receive Jesus. From that vantage point, the all-important question to ask ourselves is this: Have we welcomed the radical witness of those disciples who in Jesus' name challenge our usual preoccupation? When worldly powers afflicted them, have we stood alongside them in love and solidarity and active care for the needy? *Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.*⁸⁴

A broader issue to address is the popular interpretation of 25: 31-46 as a story about serving human need wherever it is found. Here Jesus' brothers and sisters are identified as the hungry and poor of the world, and Christians (along with others) are called to minister to them. It is this approach to the text that has spawned the worldwide programs of service and compassion.⁸⁵

How shall we evaluate this use of Matthew's story?

From an exegetical standpoint, it represents a misreading of the text. Matthew's own agenda in the story is **how the world receive and respond to Jesus**, not how Christians respond to the world. As the same time, **Matthew might not be unhappy with the new frame** of reference we have given to his story. Elsewhere in the Gospel, he includes an episode that underscores **love of neighbor as** the place we show our love for God (22:34-40; cf. 5:43-48). The view that we find and serve God where we find and serve human need thus fits

⁸⁴ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 362-363.

⁸⁵ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 363.

with Matthew's faith – and echoes other biblical voices (cf. Heb. 13:2-3; Gen. 18:1-15 – 아브라함이 천사를 대접한 이야기). To put it another way: If we use the text at hand as an appeal to God's people to show compassion to all in need, we are going beyond the immediate story, but not beyond the biblical story.⁸⁶

GENTILE (P. 420)

The word *Gentile* comes from the Latin *gens* (people, nation) and means a non-Jew. In the NT, the plural *Gentiles* translates the Greek *ethne*, which can also mean *nations*. The distinction between Jews and Gentiles is reflected in numerous NT texts and mirrors a mutually felt separateness in the ancient world. From the Jewish perspective, Israel as a nation had a calling that set it apart from other nations. Further, the people who inhabited these other nations were viewed as alien because of their worship of false gods and their generally sexual conduct. While Jew and Gentile could not avoid dealing with each other in the course of every day life, the Jewish community sought to maintain symbolic boundaries through the rite of circumcision, special dietary laws, and other practices. In the Gospel of Matthew, the boundary between Jew and Gentile becomes apparent in the way Jesus restricts his mission and that of his disciples to Jewish territory. Throughout the story, however, there are hints that Gentiles will eventually share in God's kingdom. And at the end of the Gospel, Jesus lifts the earlier restriction and commissions his apostles to make disciples of *all* nations, to create a community to which Gentiles as well as Jews may belong.⁸⁷

Matthew 26: 6-13 An Unnamed Woman Anoints Jesus

All four gospels contain a story about a woman who anoints Jesus.

⁸⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 363.

⁸⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 420-421

(Mark 14:3-9; Luke 7:36-50; John 12: 1-8)

Jesus offers yet another prediction of his impending death (v. 2), similar to those in 16:21; 17:22-23; and 20:17-19. Here the pronouncement links Jesus' death with Passover, a feast that coincided with the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread commemorating Israel's rescue from slavery in Egypt (cf. Ex. 12:1-28). Passover fell on the fifteenth of the lunar month Nisan (March/April), and that is the probable date of Jesus' crucifixion as well. The purpose of the pronouncement, of course, is not to satisfy the curiosity of the historian. Instead, it prompts the reader to ponder Jesus' death as a type of Passover event.

예수그리스도의 죽음에 대한 예견과 유월절을 연결시킨다. 유월절은 음력 니산달 (3 월/4 월)이 되는데 예수그리스도가 십자가에 달린 시기가 유월절 시기와 맞먹는다. 말하자면 예수님의 죽음을 독자들로 하여금 일종의 유월절로 상기시키기 위함이다. (유월절이 이스라엘이 애굽의 종살이에서의 해방을 기념하는 절기라면 주님의 죽음 역시 인간해방을 위함이라는 의미이다.)⁸⁸

Except for Luke's account, which possibly reflects a different episode, the story is located in a home where Jesus is lodging in Bethany (cf. 21:17). According to Matthew and Mark, the owner of the home is a certain *Simon the leper*, whose name recalls another leper healed by Jesus earlier in the narrative (8:1-4). 이 여인의 이야기는 4 복음이 다 기록하고 있는데 마태복음과 마가 복음에서는 예수님이 그 때 잠시 묵으신 베다니의 나환자 시몬의 집에서 일어나는 것으로 보고한다.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 368.

⁸⁹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 369.

The woman herself, introduced without a name, is one of several characters in the Gospel who stand outside the circle of the twelve, but who honor Jesus with gestures or words appropriate for disciples. Indeed, the woman is sensitive to Jesus' needs in a way that eludes (살짝피해서) the disciples! Jesus therefore needs to defend the woman's action in verses 10-12, alluding (넌지시 비추다) as he does so to Deuteronomy 15: 11. The point Jesus makes is not that poverty is predestined, nor that his community should ignore the poor. Instead, he argues that this particular act of extravagant love is proper at this particular point in the story in light of what lies ahead.⁹⁰

1) Whatever the woman's own perception of her deed, Jesus interprets her action as a preburial rite. The use of oils and spices to prepare a corpse for burial was a customary act of Jewish piety. Here, however, the body being anointed is still certainly alive, and the rite is being performed in anticipation of death. 2) A possible second level of meaning in the story focuses on the pouring of oil on Jesus' head. Such was the practice in the coronation 즉위식 of kings in ancient Israel (cf. I Sam. 16:12-13), and Matthew may see the woman's action as confirming Jesus' destiny as God's anointed ruler. 그 여인의 기름을 부은 행동에 대한 첫째 해석은 매장을 준비하기 위해 시체에 기름과 향을 바르는 일은 당시의 유대의 풍습이었다. 그러나 아직도 살아있는 예수님의 몸에 양유를 바른 것은 닥쳐올 그의 죽음을 미리 준비한 행위로 주님은 해석하셨다. 둘째의미는 고대 이스라엘에서 왕의 즉위식에서 행하는 의식이였다. 마태는 그 여인의 행동을 하나님께서 기름부으신 통치자로서의 예수의 운명을 확인하는 것으로 해석했을 것이다.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 369.

⁹¹ Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 369.

In any case, the woman's deed is described as one that will be recounted when *this good news* is preached. The phrase *this good news* refers to the message about God's kingdom, particularly this reign takes shape in the drama of Jesus' passion. By her action, the woman has made herself part of this drama –and will be remembered accordingly. 이 기쁜 소식과 함께는 하늘나라에 대한 복음을 의미한다. 그 여인의 행동은 복음이 전파되는 모든 곳에서 함께 전해지라는 말씀인 것이다.⁹²

MATTHEW 26: 17-29 Jesus Last Supper (Gardner)

*17 On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?'*¹⁸ *He said, 'Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, "The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."'*¹⁹ *So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal. 20 When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve;*²¹ *and while they were eating, he said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.'*²² *And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, 'Surely not I, Lord?'*²³ *He answered, 'The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.'*²⁴ *The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.'*²⁵ *Judas, who betrayed him, said, 'Surely not I, Rabbi?' He replied, 'You have said so. 26 While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.'*²⁷ *Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you,'²⁸ for this is my blood of the* covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of*

⁹² Richard B. Gardner. *Believers Church Bible Commentary on MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 369.

sins.²⁹I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

MATTHEW 26: 17-29 Jesus Last Supper

Jesus last meals with disciples occurs in the last week of his life, immediately preceding his arrest and crucifixion. ...Jesus is together with his disciples for the last time. The centerpiece throughout this section is a farewell meal, the mood is one of saying goodbye and letting go.⁹³

Technically, the festival would not have started until the sundown when Thursday the fourteenth of Nisan ended and Friday the fifteenth of Nisan began. [The preparation of the Passover meal included] the disposal of all leavened bread, the baking of unleavened bread, and the slaughter of a Passover lamb. In the Fourth Gospel [John], Jesus is *crucified* on the day of preparation (cf. John 19:14-30). In Matthew, however (as in Mark and Luke), Jesus and his disciples prepare and eat a Passover meal, and Jesus is not crucified until the following morning or afternoon [Friday].⁹⁴

This is My Body 26: 26-29

According to Jewish practice, Jesus takes bread and wine, and blesses and thanks God for them. Then he redefines their significance and invites the disciples to partake. In the setting of the text, this moment in the story is usually labeled "the Last Supper." In the setting of the church, when the ritual of bread and cup is reenacted, the event is called the Lord's Supper, communion, or Eucharist. The latter name derives from the Greek verb *eucharisteo*, *giving thanks*, which is used in verse 27. Frequently the words of Jesus cited in the text are referred to as the "words of institution." Thus they are viewed as instructions

⁹³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 372.

⁹⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 373.

that *institute* the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the life of Jesus' community.

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The breaking and distributing of the bread acts out what Jesus is doing with his body/self for the sake of others.

The pouring and offering of the cup acts out the way Jesus' lifeblood will be sacrificed for the sake of others. It is in this sense that Jesus proclaims *this is my body* and *this is my blood*.⁹⁶

In the case of the cup, Matthew extends his interpretation further with addition of the phrase for the forgiveness of sins (v. 28; cf. 1:21; Rev. 1:5). The words for many reflect language used to describe the role of the suffering servant in Is. 53 (cf. 53:10-12), with many denoting the numberless multitudes for whom one individual acts.⁹⁷

Blood of the covenant alludes to the blood ceremony by which the covenant of Sinai was established (cf. Ex. 24:8; Zech. 9:11), and the identification of the covenant with Jesus' blood suggest a new or altered covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31; Luke 22:20-22; Rom. 3:25). According to Matthew, the covenant made at Sinai is "renewed and embodied in Jesus himself. He becomes the living blood bond between God and God's people."⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 375.

⁹⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 375.

⁹⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 375.

⁹⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 375.

By *eating the bread* and *drinking* the cup, the disciples will signify their desire to be part of this living blood bond. They will be acting out their own parable in response to the action Jesus initiated.⁹⁹

GETHSEMANE (26:41)

Jesus is faced with an overwhelming assignment to give himself as the sacrifice. Knowing what lies before him, he wants support as he prays, and he chooses three closest disciples to accompany him. Jesus told them, It is to them that Jesus confides his deepest feeling: *"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow, to the point of death.*

He returns to his companions and find them sleeping. They have proved unable to fulfill Jesus' request to keep watch with him in an hour of crisis.¹⁰⁰

Jesus elaborates on his command to watch urging prayerful vigilance in order to remain faithful when faith is tested. In contrasting spirit and flesh, he is describing "two opposing tendencies struggling for domination within the one body-person." We are to watch and pray, then, so that the fleshly tendency to evil and weakness does not gain the upper hand, jeopardizing our commitment as persons of faith. The three disciples are still groggy from sleep.¹⁰¹

RESURRECTION

Both the word gospel (Anglo-Saxon: gospel) and the Greek term *evangelion* which it translates mean *good news*. In the early church *good news* referred either to Jesus' own preaching or to preaching about Jesus.

⁹⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 375.

¹⁰⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 377.

¹⁰¹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 377.

Matthew, for example, speaks of Jesus proclaiming the good news of the kingdom (4:23). Paul, on the other hand, speaks of the gospel which he and other apostles preach, the good news of what God has done to save us through Jesus (cf. Rom 1:16; 15:19; I Cor. 15:1-2). Only later, in the second century of the Christian era, did *gospel* become a designation for a literary document about Jesus, such as the Gospel According to Matthew. The author of Mark probably contributed to this development by the use of *evangelion* to describe his subject matter in the opening line of his work (Mark 1:1):¹⁰²

Matt. 28: 16-20 (Acts 1:6-9)

Discipling the Nations

The promised reunion of Jesus with his disciples in Galilee is the episode with which Matthew concludes his Gospel. He made three distinct statements: a declaration of authority (v. 18), a formula of commissioning (vv. 19-20a), and a word of assurance (v. 20b).... The gospel story ends where it began - in Galilee (28:16-17) (cf. 4:12-16; 2:19-23). Jesus and the disciples are not simply coming home, however. Galilee signifies hope for the Gentiles (4:15-16), the wider family of nations to whom the disciples will soon be sent (28: 19).¹⁰³

When the moment of reunion finally occurs, the experience evokes two reactions. Disciples worship Jesus. Some, however, even as they worship, do so with the same hesitant or little faith that has characterized the disciples throughout the

¹⁰² Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 421.

¹⁰³ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 401.

Gospel. They doubt (cf. 14:28-33; 17:20-21). It will take the reassuring word of Jesus in the verses that follow to fortify them for their calling.¹⁰⁴

v. 18 - declaration of authority: the authority of God has granted to Jesus by raising him from death.¹⁰⁵

The great commission in verses 19-20a expands the directives for mission found in Chapter 10. There Jesus commanded the disciples to restrict their mission to Israel. Now that restriction is lifted. It is God's design that the church Jesus promised to build (16: 18-19) be a universal community, comprising persons from *all nations*.

The verb in the Greek text of the great commission is *matheteuo*, make *disciples*. Jesus instructs the eleven, his disciples thus far, to expand the circle, to invite others to join them in the following Jesus.¹⁰⁶

Given this structure, we might paraphrase verses 19-20a as follows: *As you go forth, call people everywhere to become disciples, which will involve both baptizing them into God's community and summoning them to embody my teaching in their lives. We are baptized in the name of (and thereby enter into a new allegiance with) a God we know as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*¹⁰⁷

I am with you always: It is the promise that God gave to Jacob in Genesis 46:3-4, to Moses in Exodus 3:12, and to the exiles in Isaiah 43:1-7. Now Jesus speaks as God speaks. The One who is named God-with-us [Emanuel] at the outset of

¹⁰⁴ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 401

¹⁰⁵ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 402

¹⁰⁶ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 402

¹⁰⁷ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 402

the Gospel (1:23) promises that he will continue to be God-with-us in his community. (Note how 28:20b and 1:23 thus form a literary inclusion). Earlier, Jesus indicated that he would be with his disciples when they assembled in his name (18:20). Here he assures us that he will accompany us in our going out as well, until they day dawn when his now hidden presence becomes visible in glory.¹⁰⁸ 위의 Gentile 참고할것

THE TEXT IN BIBLICAL CONTEXT

Resurrection of Jesus

Empty tomb

Jesus' reunion in Galilee

The stories of Jesus appearance include commissioning episodes like Matthew 28:18-20, in which the disciples receive a new or expanded mandate for mission. The Book of Acts begins, as the Gospel of Luke ends, with a commissioning scene that echoes the theme of universality we find in Matthew: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8; cf. Luke 24:46-49). In the fourth Gospel, the commissioning statement is brief (John 20:21-23), but alludes to a much fuller statement of the church's mission to the world found in Jesus' high-priestly prayer in John 17 (John 17:18). Finally, there is the autobiographical testimony of Paul concerning Jesus' belated appearance to him. God was pleased "to reveal his Son to me,"

¹⁰⁸ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 402

Paul writes, "so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles" (Gal. 1:16; cf. I Cor. 15:8-11; Acts 26:12-18).¹⁰⁹

While God chooses one people to act on his behalf, God's ultimate concern is with all the peoples of the earth. We hear this message in the short story of Jonah. We hear the same message as God speaks to a community of exiles about their mission: "... I will give you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Is. 49:6). Indeed, we hear that message already at the outset of Israel's saga, as God declares a promise to Abraham: "I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing... and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3). It is this universal calling that Jesus entrusts to his disciples in the great commission.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 403.

¹¹⁰ Richard B. Gardner. Believers Church Bible Commentary on *MATTHEW* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 404.