

# BA Commentary: Matthew 1-4

## Before the Cross, There's a Wilderness

The Gospel of Matthew doesn't ease into Jesus' life with poetic introductions or comforting assurances. Instead, it punches in with a genealogy, a scandal, a manhunt, a wild prophet, and a full-on spiritual war in the wilderness. These opening four chapters are a theological boot camp—each one forged to awaken complacent hearts and call men into biblical manhood rooted in obedience, repentance, and grit.

Let's break it down.

## Matthew 1 – Grace in the Genealogy

We begin with a list of names. It's easy to overlook, but Matthew intentionally leads with a *family line* to showcase God's promise-keeping character and His relentless grace. The genealogy is structured into three sets of 14 generations (vv. 17), likely for memorization and symbolic significance, possibly linked to the numeric value of "David" in Hebrew (DVD = 14).

More importantly, this list is filled with the flawed and the forgotten:

- **Tamar** (v. 3) dressed as a prostitute to expose injustice.
- **Rahab** (v. 5) *was* a prostitute.
- **Ruth** (v. 5) was a Moabite, an outsider.
- **David** (v. 6) committed adultery and murder.
- **Manasseh** (v. 10) practiced witchcraft and filled Jerusalem with blood.

**Application:** God does not erase sin from His story—He redeems it. This genealogy reminds us that redemption is stronger than shame. If you're disqualifying yourself from spiritual leadership because of your past, you're disagreeing with God's grace.

## Matthew 2 – Obedient Manhood and Costly Protection

Joseph plays a critical role in this chapter, but he never speaks. His faith is shown entirely in action.

- In **verse 13**, an angel warns him to flee. He obeys immediately.
- In **verse 19**, he's told to return to Israel. He goes.
- In **verse 22**, he redirects again to Galilee after another warning.

Joseph doesn't ask questions. He doesn't delay. He *moves*.

**Contrast that with Herod**—a man so afraid of losing power that he murders infants. Herod is the image of fragile masculinity driven by fear. Joseph, in silence and strength, is the image of true manhood—protective, responsive, obedient, and grounded in trust.

**Application:** Masculinity is not about volume or dominance. It's about responsibility. Men who lead their homes biblically must be ready to obey quickly, sacrifice willingly, and listen carefully—even when it's inconvenient or costly.

## Matthew 3 – Repentance Before Revival

John the Baptist appears “in the wilderness” (v. 1), preaching repentance. His message cuts through the noise:

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (v. 2)

He's dressed in camel's hair, eating bugs, and living in the desert. His life is a rebuke to soft religion and comfortable theology. John prepares the way for Jesus by preparing hearts—through confrontation, not coddling.

Notice who shows up in verse 7: the Pharisees and Sadducees. Religious elites. And John calls them “a brood of vipers.” These weren't atheists or rebels—they were respected leaders. But John exposes their superficiality and demands *fruit in keeping with repentance* (v. 8).

**Application:** Real repentance isn't saying sorry—it's changing direction. Repentance is proof you take sin seriously. Men who follow Christ should constantly evaluate: “Where have I gotten comfortable with compromise?”

## Matthew 4 – Tested in the Wilderness, Armed with the Word

Jesus is *led by the Spirit* into the wilderness (v. 1). Let that sink in. The same Spirit that descends on Him at baptism (3:16) doesn't lead Him into celebration but into confrontation. Why? To demonstrate that the Son of God doesn't only *possess* the Word—He *uses* it.

Satan's three temptations target the core of manhood:

1. **Provision** – “Turn these stones to bread” (v. 3)
2. **Power** – “Throw yourself down” (v. 6)
3. **Purpose** – “Worship me and gain the kingdoms” (v. 9)

Jesus answers each one with Scripture, quoting Deuteronomy (8:3, 6:16, 6:13). This is not accidental—it's deeply theological. Jesus is reliving and redeeming Israel's wilderness journey by succeeding where they failed.

**Application:** The Word is your weapon. Not motivational quotes. Not emotional resolve. Not religious talk. If Jesus needed the Bible to face temptation, so do we. The battlefield is your mind, and Scripture is your sword.

## Final Thoughts

Matthew 1–4 isn't just the intro to Jesus' life—it's a *template* for yours:

- A broken past doesn't stop God's plan.
- Obedience is how real men lead.

- Repentance is a habit, not a moment.
- The wilderness is where God sharpens you.
- Scripture isn't optional—it's essential.

If you're a man of faith, then lead like one. Own your past. Obey quickly. Repent deeply. And fight daily—with the Word as your weapon.

