

# Gospel According to St Matthew

- [Resources](#)
- [HG Bishop Youssef](#)
  - [Gospel of Matthew Introduction: HG Bishop Youssef](#)
  - [Matthew 1: HG Bishop Youssef](#)
  - [Matthew 2: HG Bishop Youssef](#)

# Resources

Fr Daoud Lamei:

- Playlist (55 Parts):

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvMAQ886ucevru0Ubq5aRKd0k5-y6YUiH>

HG Bishop Youssef

# Gospel of Matthew

## Introduction: HG Bishop Youssef

His Grace Bishop Youssef ~ فسوي ابن الة فاين تاطع · MATTHEW - Intro & Ch 1 ~ Bible Study

### Introduction to the Gospel of St. Matthew

00:00-20:00

- The Gospel of St Matthew has always occupied a position of high esteem in the faith and life of the Early Church
- Most of the Early Church Fathers frequently quoted the Gospel of St Matthew
- Gospel of St Matthew was the most read gospel during the first two centuries of Christianity
- Author: St. Matthew
  - All the Church Fathers agree that the author is St Matthew, himself
  - Matthew means "Gift of the Lord"
  - Also called Levi
  - He was a tax-collector before being called to be one of the disciples of Christ
  - One of the Lord's earliest disciples
  - Because he followed the Lord Jesus Christ so closely, his account is considered a first-hand eyewitness account (contrast with St Luke who depended on others to write his gospel)
- Timing:
  - Irenaeus said it was written while St Peter and St Paul were preaching in Rome
  - Eusebius, the Church Historian, said it was written after St Matthew left Palestine and started to preach outside Palestine
  - Clement of Alexandria said that the first two gospels written were the Gospel of St Matthew and the Gospel of St Luke
- Two Versions
  - Hebrew/Aramaic Version (39-42 AD)
    - All of the Church Fathers reference this, but this work is lost

- Possibly lost when Jerusalem was destroyed; or destroyed by the Judaizers
- Greek Version (60-67 AD)
  - The version that we are using now
  - There is no consensus among scholars as to whether the Greek version is a translation of the Hebrew/Aramaic version, or if it is a different gospel
  - Regardless, the Gospel was written by St Matthew
- Audience: Jews who believed in Christ and became Christian
  - Gives details of Jewish Religious Observances
  - Uses Jewish style of argument
  - Starts with a Genealogy to show that Jesus is Son of Abraham and Son of David
  - Prophetic Formula
  - St Matthew Mentions many evidences that Christ rose from the dead
- Purpose
  - St Matthew wants to prove to them that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messianic King of the Old Testament whom they are waiting for
  - He refers many times to prophecies from the Old Testament to prove that Jesus is the Messiah and in Him the prophecies are fulfilled
  - To make clear that the New Testament is a continuation of the Old Testament
    - Christ came to fulfill the Law not to destroy it
  - To show that Christ was sent to the Jews (Matthew 15:24 - "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel")
- Theme: Jesus is the King of the Jews
- Sections
  - Matthew 1-4:11 - The Advent of the Messiah
    - Christ is the Son of David
    - Christ was born of a Virgin at Bethlehem
    - His way was prepared by John the Baptist
    - His Baptism
    - The Temptation on the Mountain
  - Matthew 4:12-16:12 - The Public Proclamation of the Messiah's Kingdom
    - He chose His first disciples and started His ministry in Galilee
    - Sermon on the Mount
    - Many miracles performed by Christ
  - Matthew 16:13-Matthew 23 - Distinct and Public Claim of the Messiahship
    - Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?
    - Account of the Transfiguration
    - Entering Jerusalem as the Son of David
    - Assuming Messianic Authority in the Temple
  - Matthew 24-27 - Sacrifice of the Messiah, the High Priest, on the Cross
    - Prepared His Disciples for His Sacrificial Death
    - The Crucifixion
  - Matthew 28 - Victory of the Messiah, the Savior and the King
    - The Resurrection
- Numerology
  - In Scripture in general, numbers usually have more significance than just a quantity
    - e.g. 7 is a symbol of perfection

- Gematria
  - Each letter has a corresponding number
  - So a name or a word has a number
  - D = 4
  - V = 6
  - DVD = 14 (in Hebrew, there aren't any vowels so the name David is DVD)
- St Matthew uses numerology a lot
  - 14 = King David's Number
    - St Matthew wants to establish the link between Christ and King David
    - Three sets of 14 in the Genealogy in Ch 1
    - Total 42
  - 42 is 6x7
    - 6 is the number of man (since man was made on the 6th day)
    - 7 is the number of God (perfect number)
    - So 42 is the conflict between man and God
      - Man rebelled against God
      - But God sent His Son to reconcile man with God
  - 7 is a perfect number
    - 7 Beautitudes (Matthew 5)
    - 7 Repetitions in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6)
    - 7 Parables (Matthew 13)
    - 7 Woes (Matthew 23)

# Matthew 1: HG Bishop Youssef

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## Genealogy of Christ

20:00-33:40

<sup>1</sup> The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

<sup>2</sup> Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. <sup>3</sup> Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. <sup>4</sup> Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. <sup>5</sup> Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, <sup>6</sup> and Jesse begot David the king.

David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah. <sup>7</sup> Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. <sup>8</sup> Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. <sup>9</sup> Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. <sup>10</sup> Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. <sup>11</sup> Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup> And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. <sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. <sup>14</sup> Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. <sup>15</sup> Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. <sup>16</sup> And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

<sup>17</sup> So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon *are* fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ *are* fourteen generations.

- Son of David, Son of Abraham
  - St Matthew opens the Gospel with these words
  - He wants to tell them that the long-awaited Messiah who was promised by the prophets to restore the Kingdom of David, is Jesus of Nazareth

- St Matthew traces the royal lineage (Jesus is the descendant of King David). This is one of the first things required to convince a Jewish audience that Jesus is qualified to be the Messiah
- Although Abraham came before David, and is the father of all Israelites, he mentions David first because in the Jewish mind, the Messiah is the Son of David.
- Three sets of 14 Names
  - In Scripture in general, numbers usually have more significance than just a quantity (e.g. 7 is a symbol of perfection)
  - Gematria
    - Each letter has a corresponding number
    - So a name or a word has a number
    - D = 4
    - V = 6
    - DVD = 14 (in Hebrew, there aren't any vowels so the name David is DVD)
  - 14 = King David's Number
    - St Matthew wants to establish the link between Christ and King David
    - Three sets of 14 in the Genealogy in Ch 1
    - Total 42
  - 42 is 6x7
    - 6 is the number of man (since man was made on the 6th day)
    - 7 is the number of God (perfect number)
    - So 42 is the conflict between man and God
      - Man rebelled against God
      - But God sent His Son to reconcile man with God
- He only mentions the names of people who are ancestors of Christ
  - He doesn't mention Ishmael, Esau, the twelve sons of Jacob, etc.
- Four women mentioned
  - Three by name
    - Tamar - Genesis 38
    - Rahab - Prostitute of Jericho - Joshua 2
    - Ruth - Moabitess - Book of Ruth
  - They are named for their remarkable history
  - The fourth is "her who had been the wife of Uriah"
    - Uriah was a Hittite (i.e. a Gentile) so his wife was also likely a Gentile
  - All of them are Gentile women - in order to show that Christ came from and for both the Jews and Gentiles
- Omitted names
  - Between Joram and Uzziah, three names are intentionally omitted
    - 1 Chronicles 3:11-12 - Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah
    - It was common to omit less important names in Genealogies
    - In this case, St Matthew wanted to preserve the number 14 in each of the three sets
  - Between Josiah and Jeconiah, one name is intentionally omitted
  - After Zerubbabel, the name Abiud does not appear in 1 Chronicles
    - Some say that it was skipped
    - Others say that it was just another name

- End of the Genealogy
  - Jews carefully kept public and family records of genealogy because everyone wanted to know where the Messiah would come from.
  - St Matthew must have gotten the end of this genealogy from some of those records
- Joseph
  - Although Joseph is not the biological father of Jesus, he is the legal father of Jesus (because he is the legal husband of St Mary because of the betrothal)
  - This lineage that has a long chain of kings ends with a poor carpenter
- Genealogy of St Luke
  - Comparing the two genealogies, they are different in many areas (especially between David and Joseph)
  - St Matthew gives the line of St Joseph - the legal line
    - This is acceptable to the Jews. They would not recognize this genealogy as a fulfillment of prophecies if St Matthew had used the line of St Mary.
  - St Luke gives the line of St Mary - the biological line
    - St Luke, being a Gentile and writing to a Gentile (Theophilus), he is more interested in proving that Christ is Son of David biologically.
  - Jesus is the Son of David through the legal line AND the biological line

## Nativity of Christ

33:40-44:15

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. <sup>20</sup> But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

<sup>24</sup> Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, <sup>25</sup> and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

- Joseph her husband, being a just man
  - St Mary was betrothed to St Joseph
  - Betrothal was considered a civil (legal) marriage. There was a formal ceremony and it was a binding obligation. The time of betrothal was usually 1 year before the marriage.
  - Any unfaithfulness after betrothal is considered adultery
  - He found her with child, and assumed that she had committed sin.

- As a righteous man, he didn't want to ruin her reputation. He didn't want her to be stoned. He decided to divorce her in secret. This shows his righteousness.
- Angel of the Lord
  - Most likely, this was Archangel Gabriel who appeared to St Mary and Zacharias
  - "Joseph, son of David" - emphasis here by St Matthew on King David
  - The angel is preparing him for this marvelous announcement that the Son in St Mary's womb is God incarnate, the Messiah
  - "Do not be afraid"
    - You are not offending God
    - You are not bringing upon yourself any scandal
    - This conception is from the Holy Spirit
  - Jesus
    - Joshua - Hosea - Josiah are synonymous meaning "Savior" from the verb "to save" (like Hosanna)
    - Jesus is our Savior to save us from the curse of sin, condemnation and banishment
    - "He will save His people from their sins"
- Prophecy from Isaiah 7:14
  - St Matthew supports this with a prophecy from Isaiah
  - St Matthew uses this prophecy to prove to the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah and King of the Jews that they are waiting for
- Immanuel
  - "God with us" - God, who is above us, became man and came and lived among us
- Joseph does not delay
  - After the angel assures him, as soon as he wakes up, he immediately took Mary back and did not take any action
- "did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son"
  - "know her" means to have relationship as husband and wife.
  - There are two words that arouse questions: "till" and "firstborn"
  - "till"
    - Does not necessarily reply that they lived differently afterward
    - "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool" (Psalm 110)
      - Does this mean that the Lord will sit at the right hand, but once He makes His enemies His footstool, He will tell Him "don't sit here anymore"? Of course not
    - "David did not know Michal his wife until the day she died"
      - Does this mean that after she died, he knew her? Of course not
  - "firstborn"
    - Called for the firstborn child whether there are other children or no other children
    - Using the word "firstborn" does not indicate whether there are other children or not, but of course we believe in the perpetual virginity of St Mary
    - "brothers of the Lord" that we read about in the Gospels are His cousins (as St Jerome explains in detail)



# Matthew 2: HG Bishop Youssef

His Grace Bishop Youssef ~ فسوي ابن الالة فاين تاطع · MATTHEW 2 ~ Bible Study

## Wise Men from the East

<sup>1</sup> Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

<sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

- St Luke recorded in detail the events related to the day of the birth of Christ. But St Matthew did not mention those details.
  - St Matthew was writing to the Jews and wanted to tell them that Jesus is the King of Israel and Messiah that they are waiting for. So he didn't go into the details of the birth but chose certain events to prove to the Jews that Jesus is King
  - Wise men who followed the star to find the infant and worship Him
- Bethlehem
  - Means "house of Bread" like bet la7m in Arabic
  - John 6:35 Christ refers to Himself as the Bread of Life who descended from heaven. So it's befitting that Christ is born in Bethlehem since He is the Bread of Life.
  - This Bethlehem is the one mentioned in Judges 17:7 belonging to Judah different from Joshua 19:15 Bethlehem belonging to Zebulun.
- Jesus was born in time of King Herod, Edomite, son of Antipater who was made king by the Romans
- Wise Men
  - Proper word is Magi - priests and philosophers from Persia and Media. These were dedicated to the study of the stars as astrologers and magicians. We read about them in the book of Daniel. They lived in Iran around the region of the Euphrates.
  - Most icons and pictures portray three wise men as three. There is no biblical documentation for that assumption. We usually assume they are more than three - but because of the three gifts we usually think of them as three. It's unlikely that only three people would make that trip from Iran.

- These wise men discovered an unusual luminous star.
  - Maybe they were originally Jewish and were familiar with Prophecies and how He is called the Star by Balaam (Numbers 24:17)
  - They did not comprehend that Jesus is a heavenly king, not an earthly king. So they went to the palace to find this king.
- Why would King Herod be troubled?
  - This means a threat and danger to his throne
  - Although most rejoiced at the birth of Christ (shepherds, angels, etc) some were troubled (Herod and his friends "all Jerusalem")

<sup>4</sup> And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

<sup>5</sup> So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> 'But you, Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah,  
 Are not the least among the rulers of Judah;  
 For out of you shall come a Ruler  
 Who will shepherd My people Israel.' "

- He inquired of the chief priests and scribes
  - The chief priests were the 24 heads or chiefs of the priests (King David has decided the priests into 24 groups and each one had a chief) - 1 Chronicles 23, 24, Ezra 8
  - Scribes are the successors of Ezra. Ezra used to transcribe the scripture and the Scribes were the ones who transcribed it. So they knew scripture by heart since they were always transcribing and copying it. They are the Theologians.
  - Herod did well by calling these two groups because they are the right ones to answer it.
  - His question to them implies three things
    - The Jews expected the Messiah
    - The Scripture foretold His coming
    - The very place of His birth is foretold
  - They answered without hesitation they knew exactly where He would be born and quoted Micah 5:2
    - They said Bethlehem of Judah to differentiate from Bethlehem in Zebulun
    - In that prophecy, the place of his birth and the Character of the Messiah are made clear: He is a ruler and a shepherd. Though he is a ruler, he will rule with compassion as a shepherd
  - He wanted to know when the star appeared because in his mind the appearance of the star indicated when Jesus was born exactly.
    - He said he wanted to worship Him but this is a plain lie. Hypocrisy. He wants to know where the child was born in order to kill him.
    - God, who searches the minds, knew Herod's plan which is why He redirected the wise men
- He instructed the wise men to go and come back with his authority as King

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found *Him*, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also."

<sup>9</sup> When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.

- They departed immediately after talking to Herod
- St John Chrysostom said this star is not a regular star
  - You cannot follow a star and walk behind it... So this star must have been very low
  - The star was moving from the East to Jerusalem and this is against the natural movement of stars
  - This star stood in place to point out where the child was born
  - So this star must have been a heavenly or angelic power appearing in the form of a star to guide the wise men. The star reminds us of the pillar of fire that guided Israel
- They rejoiced when they saw the star because it confirmed to them that their journey was not in vain, but it must be a true revelation about where the king is to be born. Any vision or revelation from God is cause for rejoicing as the Lord said to us "I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you." (John 16:22)

<sup>11</sup> And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

- It was the custom of the people of the East when they visit kings to present gifts to them.
  - Frankincense to represent his priesthood
    - Expensive fragrant gum from a tree in Arabia
  - Gold to represent his kingship and Kingdom
  - Myrrh represents his suffering.
    - It's an aromatic gum from a thorn bush in Arabia and Ethiopia that has a sweet aroma. It represents the words of the Prophets because their words are like a sweet aroma.
- God uses the magi in a prophetic way to tell us about the role of Christ.
  - Prophet because he told us about the Father. No one has seen the Father but the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father has revealed Him to us. Hebrews 1 "God who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son"
  - King, but His kingdom is not of this world. He is a Heavenly King who came to restore and re-establish the Kingdom of God that was destroyed by Satan
  - The High Priest who offered Himself as the Sacrifice.
- The three gifts prophetically represent the three roles of Christ as the Messiah: King, High-Priest, Prophet
  - At Theophany, the Holy Spirit came down and anointed Christ. Anointed as King of kings, prophet, High Priest

<sup>12</sup> Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

- Divine Intervention
  - Sometimes we are afraid because of threats of persecution or someone wants revenge on us or someone wants to attack us, but we forget that while we are afraid God has His own plan for our protection.
  - He destroyed the plan of Herod and warned the wise men in a dream, and warned Joseph in a dream.
  - Either way, if God allowed us to be killed, it's for our benefit and if He allowed us to live it's for our benefit
    - "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21)

## The Flight into Egypt

<sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

<sup>14</sup> When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, <sup>15</sup> and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

- Hosea 11:1
- "Spoken by the Lord" is accurate because whatever is written in the Scripture are not the words of Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc. but the words of God, Himself. The prophets were merely a channel.
- This prophecy can be interpreted in two ways:
  - Looking back to the calling Israel out of Egypt
  - Prophecy about calling the Lord Christ out of Egypt after the death of Herod
- - Church - literally means "called out"
  - As God called His people out of Egypt, and called His Son out of Egypt, so He is calling us out of the world
  - The Church is "not of this world"
  - "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." (John 15:19)
  - The Church is the Assembly of Believers which are those who are called out of this world.
- Why Egypt?
  - Egypt has an intimate connection with Biblical History
  - Some scholars say the most frequent country named in Scripture after Israel is Egypt
  - In the 1st Century, it was the closest Roman province independent of King Herod
  - Many Jews there with their synagogues
  - It is close to Jerusalem
  - It is considered a place of refuge to many prophets

- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons, Jeremiah, etc.
- We can call Egypt a Holy Land because Christ lived there for 3.5 years
  - Children start speaking at the end of their 1st year, during their 2nd year
  - We can assume that Christ's first words were uttered in Egypt
  - Many scholars assume that Christ probably spoke Coptic when He was young
- Joseph obeyed the vision immediately
  - This should be our attitude when God asks us to do something... sometimes we have a whisper in our ears. We remember to pray before sleeping or eating, or to read the Bible when we wake up... this is the Holy Spirit speaking to us. And we ignore it.

<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

<sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah,  
Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping *for* her children,  
Refusing to be comforted,  
Because they are no more."

- Massacre of the Innocents
  - The harshness of the heart of King Herod
  - Regardless of how hardened your heart is, when you see a little child, your heart becomes soft. To kill children two years and under reflects how hard his heart was.
  - When we become so attached to the pleasures, mind, prestige of the world, it hardens our heart. All of this was done lest he lose his power and his throne
  - He became so angry feeling a mockery of his authority
  - Herod died just a little while later
- Some confuse the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation with the children of Bethlehem.
  - Of course, they are not the same.
  - Bethlehem is a small town with few people
- By slaughtering the infants at Bethlehem, the prophecy in Jeremiah 31:15 is fulfilled
  - Jeremiah is speaking back about the desolation of Israel by Nebuchadnezzar and the survivors of the Israelites were gathered at Ramah and the voice of their lamentation was heard... mothers leaving their offspring. Rachel being the mother of three great tribes: Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin
  - Jeremiah is prophesying about the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem. Rachel is buried in Bethlehem

## The Home in Nazareth

<sup>19</sup> Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, <sup>20</sup> saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." <sup>21</sup> Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

<sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.  
<sup>23</sup> And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

- Herod left three sons and the Kingdom was divided at his death into three parts
  - Herod Archelaus: Judea, Idumea, Samaria
  - Herod Philip: Batanaea and Trachonitis
  - Herod Antipas: Galilee and Perea
  - These three are referred to frequently in the New Testament
- Death of Herod the Great was a signal to Joseph to go back to Israel
- The angel appeared to Joseph
  - He gave him freedom to choose any place in the land of Israel - he didn't tell him to go back to Bethlehem
  - "Those who sought the young Child's life are dead" - it wasn't just Herod who wanted to kill the Lord
- Joseph goes to Galilee
  - Herod Archelaus was said to be harsher than his father Herod the Great
  - Galilee was under Herod Antipas who was much more mild
  - Joseph went to a small village called Nazareth
- Nazareth
  - Was a despised village and the people of Nazareth were despised
  - And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46)
  - This fulfills a prophecy:  
"Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?  
For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground.  
He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him." (Isaiah 53:1-2)
- He shall be called a Nazarene
  - There is no prophecy in the Old Testament that says this
  - Nazarene means "a branch" in Hebrew
    - "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Isaiah 11:1)
    - St Matthew may be using word-play in Hebrew
  - St Jerome has another opinion: That Nazarene refers to the Nazirite - people who separated and consecrated themselves to God. St Matthew says "spoken by the prophets" instead of "prophet" which he said in the previous prophecies. So he may just be referring to a general theme in the Old Testament that the Lord will be dedicated to the ministry of the Lord.