

Matthew 1-2 (December 2025)

Zoom discussion hosted by St Dunstan's 12/31/2025 11:45-1:15 pm (contact Fr Tom for link: t.mcalpine.sr@gmail.com). The following suggest possible discussion topics.

1:3ff Tamar: Gen 38 (NB “She's more righteous than I am” [v.26 CEB]); Rahab: Josh 2; Ruth: Ruth; “the wife of Uriah:” 2 Sam 11-12. (*Why might Matthew be including these women?*)

1:17 “14” is also the numeric value of the consonants in David’s name (DWD 4+6+4).

1:19 ‘righteous’ (Gk *dikaïos*). That adjective and the corresponding noun ‘righteousness’ (*dikaïosunē*) receive particular attention in Matthew. ‘Righteous’ may not be the best translation; both *tsaddîq* (Heb) and *dikaïos* (Gk) designate “doing the right thing by people with whom one is in relationship” (Goldingay *OT Theology* 3:597), as in Gen 38:26.

1:21 ‘Jesus’ is built from the Hebrew verb ‘to save’.

1:23 → Isa 7:14. Matthew’s citations may focus on simply the words cited or the words within their (broader!) context.

2:1f Raymond Brown thinks the apostles’ post-resurrection experience of proclamation and response (some believing, others rejecting) suggested the sequence evident in the Matthew and Luke infancy narratives: “In the second chapter of each infancy narrative we hear how the good news was proclaimed to others and how that proclamation met a twofold response” (*An Adult Child at Christmas* p.9). *Thoughts?*

2:1f In Matthew’s time the story of Moses’ birth (Exodus 1-2) often included Pharaoh being warned of an adversary’s birth and dreams warning Moses’ parents to protect him. *If Matthew is suggesting a Moses/Jesus parallel, what might be the point?*

Further citations: v.6: Mic 5:2; v.15 → Hos 11:1; v.18: Jer 31:15; v.23: Isa 11:1? Judg 13:5?

(More generally:)

Mark starts his account with John the Baptist. Matthew and Luke, both incorporating much of Mark *verbatim*, start earlier. What might starting earlier accomplish?

We might think of Mt 1-2 as an overture, introducing themes that will later be developed. For example, Matthew ends with 28:16-20. What links might there be between that ending and chapters 1-2?

Where do emotions appear in Mt 1-2? What role do they play?

How do Mt 1-2 identify Jesus? (And in an overture, any identification will need fleshing out. What does it *mean* to be “son of David”? Driving out the Romans?)