

HOLY  
BIBLE  

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N R S V

NEW REVISED  
STANDARD VERSION



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# PREFACE to the New Revised Standard Version Anglicised Edition

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The publication of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible in 1990 marked the latest stage in the development of an authoritative English language text, a process that started in England with the translation commonly known as the Authorized or King James Version of 1611. The ongoing task of translation had already resulted in the Revised Standard Version of 1952, and a fuller account of this developmental process can be found in the preface To the Reader.

The RSV rapidly found favour throughout the English-speaking world, and in the United Kingdom the translation was quickly adopted by churches, theological colleges, and university faculties as their standard version. In all these places, the RSV was recognized as being authoritative and accurate, impartial in its scholarship, and well-suited to the needs of the Christian community of that period.

The continuance of the Translation Committee's work after the RSV first appeared is a testimony to the fluid nature of the labour with which it is concerned. Bible translators must try to reflect the language of the people for whom they are writing, and the NRSV, recognizing that the English language was evolving rapidly, adopted terms that are familiar to contemporary readers. Yet the English language has developed in different ways in separate countries, and there has been an ongoing divergence between the language as it is used in the United States of America, and the form most commonly used in the British Isles and other countries where British usage is preferred. Therefore, whilst the appearance of the NRSV was warmly welcomed, it soon became apparent that there was a sufficient number of variances between

American and British usage to suggest that an edition embodying British usage would be appreciated. The task of producing a text that would meet this need was therefore undertaken, with the convenient (if not strictly accurate) description of an Anglicised Edition.

All those participating in the process of 'anglicisation' accepted that no attempt could be made to alter the basic translation in any way; their responsibility was simply to render words that might otherwise be uncertain or awkward into the best generally acceptable equivalent in British usage, whilst at the same time adjusting appropriate points of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

It is the spelling of various words that will for many present the most obvious examples of change. (Readers may care to note that the verb ending *-ize*, in Britain sometimes regarded as American usage, has been retained where this is etymologically permissible.) Other common changes include: the insertion of 'and' into numbers higher than one hundred; the replacement of obsolete (in British usage) past participles such as 'gotten'; the avoidance of subjunctive verbs, still familiar in American but much rarer in British usage; the reinstatement of prepositions such as 'to' and 'for' often elided in US idiom.

The Anglicised Edition's editors also found that words in common use could sometimes have different meanings in various English-speaking cultures, which must affect understanding and interpretation of the text. Thus, references to the (freshwater) Sea of Galilee retain this form, but where the proper name is not given in full, 'sea' is replaced by 'lake', a more unmistakable description for readers to whom sea implies salt water, corresponding to the American 'ocean'. The 'tone' of a particular word may also vary between countries; what is an acceptable 'informal' use in the USA may sometimes be seen as a vulgarism in Britain and other places.

Many smaller alterations have been made, apparently insignificant in themselves, yet which contribute to the overall rendition of the biblical narrative in what may be termed British style.

The intention that lies behind the publication of the New Revised Standard Version Anglicised Edition has been to present an already excellent version of the Scriptures in the form most accessible to its intended readers, so reinforcing their understanding. The editorial

work was carried out in Great Britain, but the active support and encouragement of members of the original Translation Committee has ensured that the foundational scholarship which undergirds the NRSV has been retained, and enhanced for those who prefer British usage. It is the earnest hope of all involved in the task that their efforts will enable still more readers to gain fresh insights into the written Word of God.

Oxford,  
October 1995

# The Gospel According to Matthew

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## The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

**1** An account of the genealogy<sup>a</sup> of Jesus the Messiah,<sup>b</sup> the son of David, the son of Abraham.

<sup>2</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,<sup>3</sup> and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram,<sup>4</sup> and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon,<sup>5</sup> and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse,<sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of King David.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,<sup>7</sup> and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah,

and Abijah the father of Asaph,<sup>c 8</sup> and Asaph<sup>c</sup> the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah,<sup>9</sup> and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,<sup>10</sup> and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos,<sup>d</sup> and Amos<sup>d</sup> the father of Josiah,<sup>11</sup> and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup>And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel,<sup>13</sup> and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor,<sup>14</sup> and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud,<sup>15</sup> and Eliud the father of Eleazar,

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a Or *birth*   b Or *Jesus Christ*   c Other ancient authorities read *Asa*   d Other ancient authorities read *Amon*

and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob,<sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah,<sup>e</sup> fourteen generations.

### The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah<sup>f</sup> took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.<sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.<sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’<sup>22</sup> All this took place to

fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel’,

which means, ‘God is with us.’<sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,<sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son;<sup>g</sup> and he named him Jesus.

### The Visit of the Wise Men

**2** In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men<sup>h</sup> from the East came to Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,<sup>i</sup> and have come to pay him homage.’<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;<sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah<sup>j</sup> was to be born.<sup>5</sup> They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

<sup>e</sup> Or *the Christ*    <sup>f</sup> Or *Jesus Christ*    <sup>g</sup> Other ancient authorities read *her firstborn son*    <sup>h</sup> Or *astrologers*; Gk *magi*    <sup>i</sup> Or *in the East*    <sup>j</sup> Or *the Christ*

for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd<sup>k</sup> my  
people Israel.”’

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men<sup>l</sup> and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ <sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,<sup>m</sup> until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped,<sup>n</sup> they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### The Escape to Egypt

<sup>13</sup>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.’ <sup>14</sup>Then Joseph<sup>o</sup> got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I have called my son.’

### The Massacre of the Infants

<sup>16</sup>When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,<sup>p</sup> 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.<sup>p</sup> <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup> ‘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.’

### The Return from Egypt

<sup>19</sup>When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup>‘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

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k Or rule l Or astrologers; Gk magi m Or in the East n Gk saw the star o Gk he p Or astrologers; Gk magi

dead.’<sup>21</sup> Then Joseph<sup>q</sup> got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> 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.’

### The Proclamation of John the Baptist

**3** In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,<sup>2</sup> ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’<sup>r</sup><sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, ‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”’

<sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.<sup>5</sup> Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan,<sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism,

he said to them, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruit worthy of repentance. <sup>9</sup> Do not presume to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup> ‘I baptize you with<sup>s</sup> water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with<sup>s</sup> the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

### The Baptism of Jesus

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.’ Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up

from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup>And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved,<sup>t</sup> with whom I am well pleased.’

### The Temptation of Jesus

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.’ <sup>4</sup>But he answered, ‘It is written,

“One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”’

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>saying 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.”’

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”’

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

### Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee

<sup>12</sup>Now when Jesus<sup>u</sup> heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. <sup>13</sup>He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the lake, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup>‘Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

<sup>16</sup>the people who sat in darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death  
light has dawned.’

<sup>t</sup> Or *my beloved Son*    <sup>u</sup> Gk *he*

<sup>17</sup>From that time Jesus began to proclaim, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’<sup>v</sup>

### Jesus Calls the First Disciples

<sup>18</sup>As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’ <sup>20</sup>Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup>As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup>Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

### Jesus Ministers to Crowds of People

<sup>23</sup>Jesus<sup>w</sup> went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news<sup>x</sup> of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup>So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. <sup>25</sup>And great crowds followed him from

Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

### The Beatitudes

**5** When Jesus<sup>y</sup> saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely<sup>z</sup> on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## Salt and Light

<sup>13</sup>You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

<sup>14</sup>You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

## The Law and the Prophets

<sup>17</sup>Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. <sup>18</sup>For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter,<sup>a</sup> not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, whoever breaks<sup>b</sup> one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

## Concerning Anger

<sup>21</sup>You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not murder”; and “whoever murders shall be liable to judgement.”

<sup>22</sup>But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister,<sup>c</sup> you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult<sup>d</sup> a brother or sister,<sup>e</sup> you will be liable to the council; and if you say, “You fool”, you will be liable to the hell<sup>f</sup> of fire. <sup>23</sup>So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister<sup>g</sup> has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister,<sup>g</sup> and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup>Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court<sup>h</sup> with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

## Concerning Adultery

<sup>27</sup>You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.”

<sup>28</sup>But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>If your right eye

a Gk *one iota* b Or *annuls* c Gk *a brother*; other ancient authorities add *without cause* d Gk *say Raca* (to an obscure term of abuse) e Gk *a brother* f Gk *Gehenna* g Gk *your brother* h Gk *lacks to court*

causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.<sup>i</sup> <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.<sup>i</sup>

### Concerning Divorce

<sup>31</sup>It was also said, “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.” <sup>32</sup>But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

### Concerning Oaths

<sup>33</sup>Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.” <sup>34</sup>But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup>or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No”; anything more than this comes from the evil one.<sup>j</sup>

### Concerning Retaliation

<sup>38</sup>You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” <sup>39</sup>But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; <sup>40</sup>and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; <sup>41</sup>and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. <sup>42</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

### Love for Enemies

<sup>43</sup>You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.” <sup>44</sup>But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your brothers and sisters,<sup>k</sup> what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup>Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.