



BOB'S WORD OF THE WEEK: MATTHEW



BEST NAME

Zerubbabel

(Zerubbabel's in Troubale, the temple's fallen down!)

Leader in restoring the second temple and ancestor of Jesus on his daddy's side.

COOLEST CHARACTER

Matthew, Tax Collector

The old Stan Lee Cameo! Matthew the author inserts himself into a scene for good measure. And who doesn't like dining with tax collectors?!?

FAVORITE STORY

A Ghost! In Matthew 14, Jesus sees the disciples out on the lake, and he "water-walks" toward them in the early morning. The disciples are terrified (who wouldn't be?) and confuse him for a ghost. My daughter squealed with delight when she first heard the story (that adds to its legend for me). It's a demonstration of the hilarity that ensues when humanity seeks to make sense of God's vastness in our midst. We are terrified in every way!






UNIQUE TO MATTHEW

- **Epiphany Story** -- No, there were not magi in Luke's manger!
- **Extensive genealogy** that connects Jesus to 42 generations of the faith story
- **Jesus as a refugee** -- the family flees to Egypt to escape persecution by Herod

TIMELINE

The Gospel of Matthew was composed more than a half-century after the death of Jesus. This community was as far removed from the life of Jesus as we would be from 1973 in 2024.

34 CE	51 YEARS	85-90 CE
Death of Jesus	Composition of Matthew	
		
1971 CE	51 YEARS	2024 CE
FedEx begins operations		Fayetteville St. Raleigh, NC
Battle of the Sexes		Then & Now
Sears Tower Rises		



TROUBLESOME STORIES

Enemies do a fair amount of teeth-gnashing, which is never a good thing; Joseph is applauded for not "quietly dismissing" Mary -- seems like a low bar (not to mention a twisted one!) for righteousness; Herod employs infanticide to achieve his means

THEMES (SOME, NOT ALL!)

Providence and human agency; Jesus as the fulfillment of Torah; Jesus as new Moses and Messiah; Hope in the midst of marginalization and conflict



IF MATTHEW WERE A BAND, IT WOULD BE NAMED...

MATTHEW DOESN'T TALK ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD, BUT INSTEAD THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. IT SEEMS LOGICAL THAT ONE MIGHT NEED A STAIRWAY TO GET THERE, SO I'LL GO WITH LED ZEPPELIN.

