

BIBLE STUDY

1/16/14

Beginnings

As they write their openings, narrators encounter the problem of a beginning. Each of the evangelists resolves this problem in a different way.

The primacy effect in narrative: What the narrator presents first will stand out and affect the reading of the rest of the story. The beginning of a narrative can be used to influence the readers' understanding of everything that follows.

This beginning has its roots in the prophets, Isaiah and Malachi, introducing John the Baptist to the scene.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

MATTHEW

This book opens with the book of origins, a parallel to Genesis 2:4 and 5:1 and references Jesus to Abraham and David.

"In the days of Herod...there was a priest named Zacharias...and he had a wife... named Elizabeth. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years."

MARK

This story of Jesus refers to the beginning of the cosmos and to God Himself.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah: "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness..."

LUKE

This introduction is so entrenched in the Old Testament that you might think of each story as a narrative type scene carried over from Genesis.

"The book of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham begat Isaac..."

JOHN

Comparing Mark's and Luke's story of Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood.
Mark 5:21-27 Luke 8

²² One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet ²³ and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; *please* come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live." ²⁴ And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him.

²⁵ A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, ²⁶ and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse— ²⁷ after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind *Him* and touched His cloak.

⁴¹ And there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and *began* to implore Him to come to his house; ⁴² for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him.

⁴³ And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, ⁴⁴ came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak.

Matthew 26:4-12
Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,⁷ a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table.⁸ And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste?⁹ For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor."¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me.¹¹ For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.¹² In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial.

Mark 14:3-8
At Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.⁴ There were some who said indignantly, "Why was the ointment wasted?⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they scolded her.⁶ But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me.⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body for burial.

Luke 7:36-39
One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.³⁷ And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment,³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.³⁹ Now when the Pharisee, *Simon*, who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." (The story ends with Jesus forgiving her sins).

Luke's Characters Sing

Zacharias' Song

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel...And you, child (John the Baptist in his arms)...will go on before the Lord to prepare His ways; to give to His people the knowledge of salvation...To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Angels' Song

Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people...Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.

Simeone's Song

For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

In Concert with Isaiah's Songs

Isaiah

9:2 (Concerning Galilee of the Gentiles): The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who liv in a dark land, the light will shine on them.

42:6 I am Yahweh, I have called you in righteousness, I will also hold you by the hand and watch over you, and I will appoint you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations.

49:6 Yahweh says to Israel, "I will make you a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

51:4 Pay attention to Me, O My people...I will set My justice for a light of the peoples/gentiles; the gentile coastlands will hope for Me, and for My arm they will hope expectantly.

60:1-3 Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you and His glory will appear upon you (Israel). Nations will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice is calling,
“Clear the way for the
LORD in the
wilderness; make
smooth in the desert a
highway for our God,
Let every valley be
lifted up, and every
mountain and hill be
made low; and let the
rough ground become
a plain, and the rugged
terrain a broad valley;
then the glory of the
LORD will be revealed
and all flesh will see
the salvation of God.

Luke’s quote of Isaiah

The voice of one crying
in the wilderness,
‘Make ready the way of
the LORD, make His
paths straight, Every
ravine will be filled,
and every mountain
and hill will be brought
low;
The crooked will
become straight, and
the rough roads
smooth; and all flesh
will see the salvation of
God.”

Matthew’s quote of
Isaiah

The voice of one crying
in the wilderness,
‘Make ready the way of
the LORD, make His
paths straight!”

Mark’s quote of Isaiah

The voice of one crying
in the wilderness;
‘Make ready the way of
the LORD, make His
paths straight.’

Psalm 67

a. (2) May Elohim be gracious to us and **bless us.**

May he shine His face on us.

b. (3) To know on **the earth** Your path,

In all the nations Your salvation.

c. (4) **May the people praise You, Elohim,**

May all the people praise You.

X. (5) May the people rejoice and shout for joy

For You judge the people with fairness,

And the people of the earth You will guide.

c. (6) **May the people praise You, Elohim**

May all the people praise You.

b. (7) **The land** gives its harvest, Elohim,

Our Elohim will bless us.

a. (8) Elohim will **bless us,**

All the ends of the earth will fear Him.

Numbers 6:24-26

²⁴ **The LORD bless you**
and keep you;

²⁵ **the LORD make his**
face to shine upon
you and be gracious
to you;

²⁶ **the LORD lift up his**
face upon you...

Psalm 67:2

May Elohim be gracious to
us and bless us.

May he shine His face on
us.