

SCALA GENTIUM

Reading God's Two Books with the Gospel of Matthew

The Last Age of the Cumaean Song

Unit I • Week 1 — the Sibyl's Bargain

WORKBOOK

Everything the student writes this week happens in this book: the Scripture questions and the study day. The margin keys say when, and how long — and the last page, the Quarry, hands this week's material to your writing and memory curricula.

THE WEEK

Week 1 at a Glance

This book holds the story and its worlds — history, mythology, Scripture — and nothing else. Your writing and memory curricula run alongside, daily, on their own schedules; the Quarry, the last page of this book, hands them this week’s material from the story.

Day	Work	Write in
1	Read the Prologue and Ch. I aloud, alternating by paragraph · mark the text per the annotation guide · read Mt 1:1 and Gen 5:1 aloud (DR)	Reader
2	History spread: <i>The Sibyl, the Books, and the Poet</i> (or video episode 1) · Lapide questions, written here · Second Shelf: the first two fables, as time allows	Companion · p. 3
3	The study day: Matthew’s count beside the Sibyl’s — the passage, the commentary again, six questions, the comparison box, the seed — closing at the “whole sin” sentence, here	pp. 5–10
4	Writing-curriculum day, from the Quarry · Second Shelf: the frog fables — the Sibyl’s bargain, in a bog	the Quarry
5	The week’s finished piece read aloud to the family, whatever curriculum it was written in · the three gleanings from your marked pages into your book	your Gleaning book

MARGIN KEYS

Boxes like the ones below run beside every exercise in this book: the day, the time it should take, and where to look when stuck.

ALONGSIDE

Writing and memory are no longer taught in this packet — they have their own books. Feed them from the Quarry.

Three habits to set this week, because the whole year runs on them: read aloud, always — the story is written for the ear. Mark as you read — Friday’s Gleaning lives on what you marked. And when nobody in the room knows, say so: “I don’t know — let’s see if the History Companion does.” The curriculum is built for that sentence.

DAY 2 · SCRIPTURE

Three Questions on Lapidé

THE CRAFT · SEVENTEEN CENTURIES OF READERS

Reading Scripture with a commentator at your elbow is how the Church has always read. The Fathers preached the text line by line; the medievals bound their best sentences into the *Glossa* that surrounded every page of a student's Bible; and Cornelius a Lapide — the Fleming of the stories — gathered all of it, quoting the Fathers by the hundred on every chapter. When you read your weekly excerpt you are not reading one man's opinions; you are overhearing seventeen centuries of readers, and taking your seat among them.

Find it: any facsimile page of the *Glossa Ordinaria* (the text ringed by its readers) · Lapide on Mt 1 (lapide.org; Mossman trans.)

DAY 2 · 25 MIN

Before writing: read the Lapide excerpt on the Reader's Scripture page, twice.

Stuck? The answer to each question is inside the excerpt — no outside knowledge is needed.

Answers in full sentences. One to three sentences each.

1. According to Lapide, why does Matthew begin with the *same words* as Genesis 5:1? What is he claiming by the echo?

2. Why is Jesus called “son of David, son of Abraham” and not, say, “son of Adam” or “son of Noe”? What was promised to each of the two men named?

3. Lapide calls the genealogy “an argument.” What is it arguing, and to whom?

☞ Where this is going

This reading from the Fleming — Cornelius a Lapide, the great seventeenth-century commentator — is the first of nine. The load builds: Matthew’s three fourteens in Week 4, three readings in Week 5 when the genealogy is read entire, and on to the descent into hell in Week 9; the unit exam tests these readings directly. And the question you may already be asking — *how does what the Sibyl says compare with what the Church teaches?* — is the unit’s destination, not its starting point: the “Where Christians differ” boxes (Weeks 5 and 7), the Week 7 exercise — “set the two side by side” — the Sibyl’s cave found again in Virgil on the Shelf, and in Week 9 your own answer, written and defended aloud. First, learn both voices well enough to compare them honestly.

DAY 3 · STUDY

Two Counts

What this study is for: today you will see what the Sibyl's bargain and St. Matthew's genealogy each say about time — and what only one of them can promise.

Part 1 · The passage — 8 min

Read Matthew 1:1–17 aloud from your Bible (Douay-Rheims) — the whole genealogy, every name. Reading alone? Read it twice, and the second time listen for the drumbeat the begots make. Three verses are printed here, because the study turns on them:

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

— Matthew 1:1

And Josias begot Jechonias and his brethren in the transmigration of Babylon.

— Matthew 1:11

So all the generations, from Abraham to David, are fourteen generations. And from David to the transmigration of Babylon, are fourteen generations: and from the transmigration of Babylon to Christ are fourteen generations.

— Matthew 1:17

Two marks to make on the verses above, in your own pen: circle the two names in the first verse by which Matthew announces whose son this is; underline every “fourteen” in the last.

Part 2 · The commentary, again — 5 min

Open the Reader to the Lapide page and read the excerpt once more. On Day 2 you read it for the *promise* — Abraham's and David's. Today read it for the *count*, and stop on the last sentence: the genealogy is “not a list but an argument: it proves, name by name, that the promise was kept.” Keep a finger on that sentence; half the questions below need it.

DAY 3 · 40 MIN

One format for every household. A parent nearby is good; none is needed. The Teacher Manual holds the key and the two-minute close.

Reader open beside you the whole time, and your Bible (Douay-Rheims) with it.

SIX PARTS

The passage · the commentary, again · six questions · the comparison box · one question kept · the seed. Each part is done when its lines are full.

ONE QUESTION STAYS OPEN

Whether the Sibyl's punishment is just. On purpose — Week 9 collects it.

Part 3 · Six questions — 12 min

1. How does Matthew count the generations — how many sets, of how many, running from whom to whom?

2. The middle fourteen runs straight through “the transmigration of Babylon” — the captivity, the nation’s worst hour — and the count does not stop or start over. What does that show about the promise, and about who was keeping it?

3. What does Matthew’s count end in? Not *when does it stop* — what does it arrive at?

4. Now the story. What did the Sibyl ask of Apollo — and what did she forget to ask?

5. What became of her gift? Copy one phrase from the story, with its quotation marks, that shows the gift’s weight.

PART 3 · 12 MIN

Full sentences, as always. Every answer is in the three verses, the excerpt, or the story — no outside knowledge is needed, and the Teacher Manual holds the key.

6. She still counts her centuries, grain by grain — and the story asks: does someone who only wants to die bother to count? What is her counting hoping for, without her knowing it?

Part 4 · The comparison box — 5 min

The left column says what the story knows. The right column is yours to finish.

The myth saw	The Gospel reveals — complete each line
Men long for a life that death cannot end — the Sibyl got hers, and it is her punishment	The generations <i>ascend to life</i> : Matthew's count arrives at _____
She bought her years by bargain, and the bargain became her burden	Abraham and David were given a _____ — kept for them as a gift, nothing they bought
Rome counted its years “as though time were a road that ran nowhere”	Matthew's time is governed: fourteen, fourteen, fourteen — a road that runs to _____
Her whole sin: she asked for years without asking what years are <i>for</i>	Every generation in the count is <i>for</i> the next — each hands the _____ on, until it is kept

PART 4 · 5 MIN

One or two words a line, from Parts 1–3. This box is where the week's two voices meet — and from now on, every unit's study day ends at a box like it.

The Teacher Manual prints it completed.

Part 5 · One question kept from the long conversation — 5 min

The story will not give you a villain for what happened to the boy Gallus: no one decided — grief decided it. The poem went into him “with his milk,” before refusal was possible, because “a child has no defense against such gifts.” Neither had you.

What were you given before you were old enough to refuse it — a name, a language, a faith, a family’s expectation? Name one, and say whether it is unjust, or simply what it is to be a child.

Write what is true, not what sounds good. Nobody grades this answer; it is the seed of the Week 4 exercise and of the Week 9 essay — and whether such a gift can be unjust is the other question this unit leaves open on purpose.

Part 6 · The seed — 5 min

Set two possessions side by side: *the Sibyl’s years* and *Abraham’s generations*. Two sentences on each — what its owner has, how it came, where it is going — then one sentence more: which possession serves its possessor better, and why?

Five sentences, banked for your writing curriculum — the Quarry page points it here. And the move you just made — two things side by side, then a judgment — is an exercise the writing ladder climbs to by name.

Last two steps. Turn the page to *The Whole Sin* and write the closing sentence — the box’s last row has walked you to its edge. Then read your sentence aloud — to whoever is in the house, or to the room. A silent

sentence is a thought; the voice makes it yours.

DAY 3 · STUDY

The Whole Sin

Complete the sentence:

“The Sibyl’s whole sin was ...”

DAY 3 · 5 MIN

Written at the close of the study day, by hand, in your own words — not the story’s.

This sentence is kept. At the end of the unit it is read beside your Week 9 essay.

THE QUARRY

For the Writing and Memory Curricula

For the writing desk

Model sentences, mined from the story:

Hang a jar. ... Put in it a little dust and a voice. That is the Sibyl now.

— three strokes; count the words in each

He was hard, and honest as Romans reckon honesty, and he did not suffer fools.

— a loose sentence: the point first, additions after

What a man is given before he is old enough to refuse it, he will defend until it kills him.

— a periodic sentence: the point withheld to the end

A fable subject, ready to draft: the Sibyl's bargain in three strokes — the ask, the grant, the cost — with Phaedrus's frogs beside it on the Second Shelf. The seed: the study day's Part 6 — two possessions side by side and a judgment between them, five sentences already written. Maxims for elaboration: "the young do not know that youth can be spent" · "meaning well has been enough to ruin many children."

For the memory desk

The week's places, from the story itself — a ready-made walk, in order: the goat-path climbing from the sea · the cave mouth at evening · the jar swaying from the roof · the open palm of dust · the doorway at the back, where once a god stood with the sun behind him.

*Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas;
magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.*

— the Latin over the cave mouth: the last age of the Cumaean song has come;
the great order of the ages is born anew (Ecl. 4.4–5)

A date worth pegging: 40 BC, Pollio's consulship — the year of the poem.
Friday: the week's finished piece, read aloud to the family.

Set in EB Garamond. Scala Gentium · Unit I · Week 1 Workbook · format prototype.

WHAT THIS PAGE IS

This packet no longer carries its own writing and memory drills — the curricula built for them do. This page is the week's ore: take today's exercises from it.

THE RULE

Nothing here is new work. It is the story's material, cut for the tools that will work it.