

The Gospel of Matthew

This is Jesus the King of the Jews (27:37)						
PERSON OF THE KING EARLY LIFE AND MINISTRY	PRECEPTS OF THE KING SERMON ON THE MOUNT	POWER AND PLAN OF THE KING MIRACLES AND MISSION	PARABLES OF THE KING REJECTION AND REVELATION	PREACHING AND POWER OF THE KING MIRACLES AND RESPONSES	PRESENTATION OF THE KING ENTRY AND CONTROVERSY	PASSION OF THE KING DEATH, RESURRECTION AND COMMISSION
1:1 – 4:25	5:1 – 7:29	8:1 – 10:42	11:1 – 13:52	13:53 – 18:35	19:1 – 25:47	26:1 – 28:20

Purpose Statement for the Gospel of Matthew:

Matthew recorded selected events from the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth in order to confirm to a Jewish audience that Jesus was indeed the promised Old Testament Messiah and to explain the kingdom program of God for the present age in light of Israel's rejection of her King.

An Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew

I. The Author: The Apostle Matthew

Technically Matthew, like the other three gospels, is anonymous. However, both external and internal evidence support the position that Matthew is the author of the Gospel that traditionally bears his name.

A. The external evidence (outside the Bible) for the authorship of Matthew includes:

1. The Didache (c. A.D. 110) quotes Matthew more than any other Gospel, establishing a terminus date of writing and the significance that the book already held in the early church.
2. The letters of Ignatius and Polycarp (c. A.D. 110) reveal a familiarity with the book.
3. The Christians in Rome were acquainted with the book by A.D. 120 (especially the account of the Magi).
4. The epistle of Barnabas (c. A.D. 130) uses the expression, “It is written” in quotation of Matthew 20:16 and 22:14.
5. Many of the early Church Fathers (Justin Martyr, Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, Dionysius, Theophilus, Cerinthus, Valentinus, and Tatian) attribute the book to Matthew.

B. The internal evidence for the authorship of Matthew includes:

1. The Gospel’s superscription is the oldest known witness to its authorship with the earliest form of the title “according to Matthew” with Matthew spelled Maththaios in the uncials Aleph, B, and D. The superscription is found on all known manuscripts of the Gospel. In other words, no one other than Matthew was even suggested as the author of the first Gospel.

2. Matthew uses the designation of “publican” in the list of disciples; whereas the other writers name him simply as Matthew.
 3. According to the two other synoptic writers, Matthew held a feast “in his own house;” whereas Matthew records the general fact “in the house” (Matt. 9:10; Mk. 2:15; Lk. 5:29).
 4. Matthew was knowledgeable of Jewish, Greek, and Roman culture and would be able to speak in Aramaic and Greek as well as Hebrew. This is evidenced within the book.
 5. Matthew’s inclusion of monetary words (three words for money not found elsewhere in Scripture) definitely reflect his background as a tax collector. Unique to Matthew is the account of the payment of the temple tax (17:24-27)
- C. Matthew was the son of Alphaeus (Mk. 2:14) and also bore the surname Levi (Mk. 2:14; Lk. 5:27). Chosen as one of the twelve disciples, the last record of his name is in Acts 1:13.

Conclusion: All the evidence we can gather supports the view that the apostle Matthew penned the first gospel.

II. Date of Writing

- A. Unless one does not accept the possibility of predictive prophecy, such passages as Matthew 24:1-28 require a date before A.D. 70.
- B. Since Luke’s Gospel is earlier than the book of Acts, and Matthew is undoubtedly earlier than Luke, it is believed by many that Matthew must have prepared his Gospel c. A.D. 50.
- C. The phrase “unto this day” (27:8), and “until this day” (28:15) imply a date some time after the resurrection and ascension. If Matthean priority is held, the date could be as early as A.D. 40-45. If the priority of Mark is accepted, a date of c. A.D. 60-65 is reasonable.

III. Historical Background

- A. The original language of Matthew is one of the most debated topics in the study of the First Gospel. How one understands this issue is not a test of orthodoxy nor is it essential. The two main views advanced are an Aramaic original or a Greek original.
1. Those who argue for an Aramaic original point to the statement of Papias, as quoted by Eusebius, which states that Matthew wrote in the Hebrew dialect and then interpreted (translated?) it.
 2. The support for a Greek original of Matthew is taken from the facts that the Greek text explains certain Aramaic words and that the author explains certain Palestinian customs.
- B. The place of origination is usually assigned to either Palestine (in or around Jerusalem) or Antioch of Syria. Those who hold to an Aramaic original of Matthew, normally put the place of writing in Palestine. Since the language of the Jews in Palestine was Aramaic, a Greek original could argue for a place outside Palestine where Greek-speaking Jews predominated. Syria seems a likely place on this view since there were large numbers of Jewish Christians living in the area (Acts 11:19, 27). Antioch specifically is favored by many since this was the second major center for Christianity. The other Gospels are also associated with prominent centers, and the writings of Ignatius indicate a knowledge of the Gospel early in the second century.
- C. The destination of the Gospel is suggested by Ireneaus and Origen to be the Jewish converts. The Church began at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and instantly began to expand (Acts 2:41-47). As commissioned by Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8), the growth and expansion of the early Church progressed geographically from Jerusalem to Rome (cf. the movement of the book of Acts) with (1) a growing number of Jewish converts who had accepted Jesus Christ as their Messiah, (2) reaction from the Jewish community with persistent persecution, and (3) outright opposition, as illustrated in Saul of Tarsus.

IV. Reason for Writing

Matthew recorded selected events from the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth in order to confirm to a Jewish audience that Jesus was indeed the promised Old Testament Messiah, and to explain the kingdom program of God for the present age in light of Israel's rejection of her King.

V. Characteristics

- A. There is a large place given to eschatology in both the parables (ch. 13) and a major discourse of the book (chs. 24–25; 28:20).
- B. Teaching on the Kingdom is dominant and the terminology used is primarily “kingdom of heaven” (“kingdom of God” in the other Gospels).
- C. The royal majesty and authority of Jesus Christ is set forth (25:31-46; 28:18-20), as well as his preeminence over Israel's prized institutions: the Law (5:21-22, 27-28), the Sabbath (12:8), the prophets (12:41), the temple (12:6), and kingship (12:42).
- D. Matthew is the essential bridge between the Old, and New Testament, providing both retrospective and prospective viewpoints as it treats the present ministry of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the prophetic past and the hope of the prophetic future. Precise and detailed references distinguish the presentation of Matthew from the other Gospel writers.
- E. Matthew is the one Gospel that mentions the church (16:18; 18:11).
- F. The teaching ministry of Christ is highlighted through both parables and discourses. There are five major discourses, each of which ends with the statement “when Jesus had finished . . .” (5:3–7:27; 10:5-42; 13:13-52; 18:3-35; 24:4–25:46).

- G. A notable concern is manifested toward the Gentiles (8:11-12; 15:24; 21:43; 28:19), in spite of its Jewish nature.

Matthew recorded selected events in the life of Jesus the Messiah including his great teachings, the opposition and rejection, and his death and resurrection in order to show people in the church age that the kingdom is not done away and that believers in the present age have a responsibility to live according to the words of the Messiah.

The Church Will Prevail

Matthew 16:13-20

- I. The church must ask a great question. 16:13-15
 - 1) Many people try to answer the question of Jesus. 16:13-14
 - 2) You personally must answer the question of Jesus. 16:15

- II. The church must announce a great confession. 16:16-17
 - 1) You must have a personal conviction about Jesus. 16:16
 - 2) You must receive a divine revelation about Jesus. 16:17

- III. The church must answer with a great mission. 16:18-20
 - 1) We are a spiritual building. 16:18
 - 2) We engage in spiritual battle. 16:18
 - 3) We conduct spiritual business. 16:19-20